

Servant Leadership Attributes in Senior Military Officers: A Quantitative Study

Examining Demographic Factors

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Examining Demographic Factors

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Abstract

The research on servant leadership is being renewed. However, limited servant leadership research has been done in the military setting. The problem to be addressed by this quantitative study is that company grade officers are resigning their commissions at a rate higher than in previous years due to their perception that senior leaders in the military services are focused on their success and not that of their subordinates. Servant leadership traits, if possessed by a senior officer, could reduce such perceptions because a servant leader always places the welfare of his subordinates above his own. The purpose of this study was to examine servant leadership attributes in senior military officers and determine the scope of servant leadership attributes and the demographics that differentiate them. Wong and Page's Servant Leadership Profile – Revised (SLP-R) survey was used to measure servant leadership. Participants included 131 male and 32 female current and former U.S. military officers at the Lieutenant Colonel/Commander or Colonel/Captain rank. Eighty-three percent of the participants were current students or alumni of Department of Defense senior service schools and were located predominately in the Washington, D.C. metro area. There were no differences in mean SLP-R scores among senior military officers across all five variables: combat experience, occupational specialty/designator, gender, branch of service, and age. Furthermore, there was no correlation between an officer's age and SLP-R mean score. United States military officers at the Colonel/Captain rank had significantly ($p < .01$) higher mean SLP-R scores than officers at the Lieutenant Colonel/Commander rank.

Eighty percent of the participants surveyed showed strong servant leadership traits. This study provided a baseline for further research and may suggest the need for curriculum changes in officer training. This study confirmed a high percentage of self-identified servant leadership traits in the U.S. senior military officer cadre. Future research should explore why female officers tend to score lower on abuse of power and pride than their male counterparts to assist in the development of a servant leadership model for training. It is recommended that servant leadership be taught at military leadership schools specifically addressing power and pride.

Dedication

In loving memory of my sister, Carina Eileen Farmer (1977–2003), who always encouraged me to pursue my dreams and gave me great advice.

This dissertation is also dedicated to my fantastic grandmother, Dolores, who had a major impact on my educational endeavors and is approaching her 80th birthday. Her erudite pronouncements had a tremendous influence on my life, and helped me appreciate the importance of education and the freedom to explore new adventures.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	vi
LIST OF TABLES	ix
LIST OF FIGURES	x
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION.....	1
Background.....	2
Problem Statement	3
Purpose.....	4
Theoretical Framework	5
Research Questions.....	7
Hypotheses	8
Nature of the Study	9
Significance of the Study.....	10
Definitions	11
Summary.....	13
CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	14
Trait Theory.....	15
Great Man Theory	16
Economic Man Theory	17
Social Man Theory	18
Contingency Theory.....	29
Theoretical Construct.....	22
Measuring Servant Leadership	26
Religious Literature and Theological Construct.....	30
Servant Leadership Aspects of Military Leadership	31
Servant Leadership and Business.....	36
Studies Using the SLP-R	37
Criticisms of Servant Leadership.....	38
Summary.....	41
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY	45
Research Methods and Design	48
Participants	48
Materials/Instruments.....	54
Operational Definitions of Variables.....	55
Data Collection, Processing, and Analysis.....	57
Methodological Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations	59

Ethical Assurances.....	62
Summary.....	64
CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS	65
Results.....	65
Evaluation of Findings	73
Summary.....	76
CHAPTER 5: IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS	77
Implications	78
Recommendations	84
Conclusions	87
REFERENCES	88
APPENDIXES.....	103
APPENDIX A: Servant Leadership Profile-Revised.....	104
APPENDIX B: Informed Consent Form	109
APPENDIX C: Demographic Questions	110
APPENDIX D: Permission Email to Use SLP-R	112
APPENDIX E: NWC Email to Students	113
APPENDIX F: ICAF Email to Students.....	114

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: A Hybrid list of functional attributes that contribute to specific leader movement toward follower empowerment	23
Table 2: Chronology of the Development of Identifiable SL Attributes.....	25
Table 3: Number of Senior U.S. Military Officers	50
Table 4: G*Power 3.010 Analysis of Matched-pairs <i>t</i> tests.....	52
Table 5: G*Power 3.010 A Priori Compute Required Sample Size.....	52
Table 6: Servant Leadership Profile-R Means by Rank.....	68
Table 7: Mean SLP-R Scores by Combat Experience	69
Table 8: Directorate Code by Military Service.....	69
Table 9: Frequency of Most Common Occupations.....	70
Table 10: SLP-R Means by Directorate Code.....	71
Table 11: Number of Participants by Gender and Military Service	72
Table 12: Positive Mean Scores by Directorate Code	74
Table 13: Combat Action by Factor 2 and Positive SL Score	79
Table 14: Percentage of Strong SL Trait by Gender.....	81

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: A Hybrid Model For Servant Leadership.....	26
Figure 2: Central And Noncentral Distributions of Matched-Pairs t tests	51
Figure 3: Basic Conceptual Model.....	57
Figure 4: Military Senior School Experience.....	67

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The concept of leadership existed since the beginning of humankind but it is relatively young as an academic research topic (Stone & Patterson, 2005). According to Yukl (2006), the study of leadership encompasses a vast amount of research, mostly in military, business, and government organizations. Kouzes and Posner (2002) suggested that all individuals are potential leaders and frequently lead by example. Greenleaf coined the term *servant leadership* (SL) in 1970. Servant leadership has strong historical ties to Christianity and the Bible (Anderson, 2008; Sendjaya, & Sarros, 2002; Spencer, 2007). According to Wong (2004), Greenleaf faced “considerable skepticism regarding the relevance of Jesus’ teaching on leadership to the corporate world and government” (p. 3). Greenleaf (1977/2002) has stated that leaders serve followers and great leaders are servants first. He has not explicitly defined servant leadership, but he has stated, “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” (Greenleaf, 1977/2002, p. 27).

Brigadier General Gregg Martin (2000) argued that the military would be best served if it adopted Jesus’ SL principles for its strategic leadership paradigm. Jesus’ SL principles involve love and care for others, teaching and mentoring, servant-hood and humility, leading by example, self-development and care, commitment, and a strong sense of purpose (Martin, 2000). According to Van Heest (1996), General Marshall and General Ridgway both used SL practices well before Robert Greenleaf coined the term in the 1970s. The U.S.

Army (1999b) stated its mission as “preserving [America’s] peace and freedom, defending its democracy, and providing opportunities for its soldiers to serve the country and personally develop their skills and citizenship” (section 2-23, para. 1). The mission of the U.S. Military Academy is “to educate, train, and inspire the Corps of Cadets . . . and a lifetime of selfless service to the nation” (quoted in Snair, 2004, p. ix). This research focuses on SL traits in current and former senior U.S. military officers. Chapter 1 introduces the background, problem statement, the purpose of the study, and the theoretical framework. In addition, the chapter highlights the research questions, the hypotheses, the nature of the study, its significance, and definitions.

Background

In wartime, recruitment and retention in the military is a constant challenge, and divorce and suicide rates among military personnel are higher than in peacetime. (Burgess, 2005; CNN, 2008). The current professionalization of the military and short-term enlistments requires officers to create an environment in which troops want to re-enlist and leverage their skills to the next level. In their study of unsuccessful executives, Kouzes and Posner (2002) found that when managers use “their own power in service of others rather than in service of self, successful leaders transform their constituents into leaders themselves—and wind up with extraordinary results” (p. 191).

A new leadership model is required to fight future domestic and global conflicts (Fry et al., 2005; Puryear, 2000, 2009; Sullivan & Harper, 1996; Wagner, 2004). The military has already transformed a great deal to combat terrorism, but

more changes are needed (Paparone, 2004; Pritchard, 1999; Sullivan & Harper, 1996; U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences, 2005). According to General Alfred Gray, USMC (Ret.), today's soldiers operate from the other side of the globe under extreme "scrutiny from a biased media against an enemy highly skilled in using propaganda to present a distorted view of events" (Puryear, 2009, p. xix). Tactical and operational leadership is vital to mission success. With SL, the military could be more horizontal in its decision-making and execute its mission more from the bottom up than from the top down. Several studies have linked positive relationships between organizational climate and SL (Black, 2008; Hill, 2007; Klamon, 2006; Lambert, 2004). Few studies have been done on SL in the military and it may be a model for adoption throughout the armed services to meet the new challenges the military faces (Earnhardt, 2008; Martin, 2000; Van Heest, 1996; Vicalvi, 2006).

Problem Statement

The problem to be addressed by this quantitative study is that company grade officers are resigning their commissions at a rate higher than in previous years due to their perception that senior leaders in the military services are focused on their success and not that of their subordinates (Fricker, 2007; Henning, 2006; Tilghman, 2007). Servant leadership traits practiced by a senior officer could reduce such perceptions because a servant leader always places the welfare of their subordinates above that of their own (Martin, 2000). Army Major General Bob Scales (2007) stated that "anecdotal evidence of collapse is all around" (para. 1). Many of the military's best officers are leaving the service

(Fricker, 2007; Tilghman, 2007). Tilghman (2007) stated that for the U.S. Military Academy, "...of the nearly 1,000 cadets from the class of 2002, 58% are no longer on active duty" (para. 15). Servant leadership may be used as a model to develop higher job satisfaction and retention rates in the armed forces and improve the organizational climate. Servant leadership has been positively related to job satisfaction levels (Anderson, 2005; Drury, 2004; Hill, 2008; Rude, 2004; Strickland, 2006; Thompson, 2004; VanTassell, 2007).

Research on SL principles in the military is necessary to establish "a baseline for future organizational development interventions as well as an action agenda for future research" (Fry, Vitucci, & Cedillo, 2005, p. 835). If the SL model can be officially injected into each military service, it may make for better trained, equipped, and happier soldiers (Martin, 2000; Van Heest, 1996; Vicalvi, 2006). Servant leadership goes beyond contributing to others' welfare; it involves leading with humility and caring for the followers. Mission readiness in the military is dependent on the total well-being of soldiers, civilians, and their families.

Purpose

The purpose of this quantitative research is to examine the extent to which senior military officers possess SL attributes. Using Wong and Page's (2003) Servant Leadership Profile-Revised (SLP-R; see Appendix A) survey, it was determined if senior military officers have SL traits and to what extent SLP-R scores differed across key demographic variables. The research findings showed if SL scores differed based on demographic variables of the senior military cadre. The results provided a baseline of research for future military leadership

curriculum changes as well as an action agenda for future research on SL training and development. The benefits of this research are the following: several empirical questions were answered concerning the demographic variables, foundational analysis for the further study of SL in the military, and further validation of Wong and Page's (2003) 62-question, self-reported SLP-R.

Theoretical Framework

The study of SL is in its infancy, but SL has strong historical ties to the Bible and the research often integrates scripture (Anderson, 2008; Sendjaya, & Sarros, 2002; Spencer, 2007). The concept of SL and research on the topic are being renewed and a majority of the research has been published in the last decade (Christman, 2007; Daubert, 2008; Dimitrova, 2008; Earnhardt, 2008; McClellan, 2008; Stephen, 2007; Van Tassell, 2007; Wells, 2004). "The servant-leader concept continues to grow in its influence and impact. In fact, we have witnessed an unparalleled explosion of interest and practice of servant-leadership in the past decade" (Spears, as cited in Greenleaf, 2003, p. 13). Principles of leadership can be taught; however, to be truly understood, leadership must be experienced. Senge (1990) stated, "We learn best from our experience, but we never directly experience the consequences of many of our most important decisions" (p. 23). "A search of the Expanded Academic Database in 2003 of published articles using the term 'leadership' returned over 26,000 articles" (Winston & Patterson, 2006, p. 6).

Despite the plethora of leadership books, fewer than 400 have been written on SL, and fewer than 130 dissertations and theses on the specific topic

have been published. Most of the books are either anecdotal or scripturally focused. In the literature, few causal research designs on SL have been published. Most of the research on SL has been descriptive analysis and instrument development and validation. Many dissertations have focused on examining SL principles in a variety of work settings, occupations, and geographic settings (Anderson, 2006; Bliss, 2006; Irving, 2005; Keena, 2006; Lambert, 2004). Over 1,000 books have been written on military leadership, but few have specifically addressed SL in the military. The key works on SL in the military are Earnhardt (2008), Fry et al. (2005), Martin (2000) and Van Heest (1996). Avolio, Walumbwa, & Weber (2009) stated that future SL research should “examine how the personal values of servant leaders differ from those of other leadership styles” (p. 437).

Servant leadership is not without criticisms in the literature. Some scholars have stated that it is too closely tied to Christian spirituality and that it lacks spiritual diversity (Wong and Page, 2007). Bowie (2000) implied that SL would not work in a military setting. According to Wong & Davey, modeling Christ’s humility is impossible without the assistance of the Holy Spirit. As a result, some scholars suggest that SL may be too quixotic and cannot be practiced by everyone (Neuschel, 2005). According to Farling, Stone, and Winston (1999), Servant leadership is not well supported with peer reviewed empirical research. Bowman (1997) stated that most SL research in organizational settings is “anecdotal” (p. 245). This research compliments Earnhardt’s (2008) pioneering work on SL where he tested the causal relationships of Patterson’s (2003) SL

model and validated Patterson's constructs of SL in localized military setting focusing predominately on enlisted personnel.

Research Questions

This study was designed to confirm the level of SL in the senior U.S. military officer cadre and analyze to what extent SLP-R scores differ across key demographic variables. For each research question, the total SLP-R scores and the following 7 sub-factor factors scores were analyzed: (a) Empowering and developing others, (b) Power and pride, (c) Serving others, (d) Open, participatory leadership, (e) Inspiring leadership, (f) Visionary leadership, and (g) Authentic/Courageous leadership. Based on the literature and theoretical construct, the following research questions will be addressed:

Q1: To what extent, if any, do SLP-R scores differ based on combat experience of senior military officers?

Q2: To what extent, if any, do the SLP-R scores differ based on occupational specialty/designators of senior military officers?

Q3: To what extent, if any, do the SLP-R scores differ based on the gender of senior military officer?

Q4: To what extent, if any, do the SLP-R scores differ based on the senior military officers' branch of service?

Q5: To what extent, if any, does the SLP-R scores of senior military officers relate to age?

Hypotheses

Based on the aforementioned research questions the following hypotheses were used to investigate each question:

H1₀: There is no difference in SLP-R scores among senior military officers based on combat experience.

H1_a: There is a difference in SLP-R scores among senior military officers based on combat experience.

H2₀: There is no difference in SLP-R scores among senior military officers based on occupational specialty/designator.

H2_a: There is a difference in SLP-R scores among senior military officers based on occupational specialty/designator.

H3₀: There is no difference in SLP-R scores among senior military officers based on gender.

H3_a: There is a difference in SLP-R scores among senior military officers based on gender.

H4₀: There is no difference in SLP-R scores among senior military officers based on branch of service.

H4_a: There is a difference in SLP-R scores among senior military officers based on branch of service.

H5₀: There is no correlation between the SLP-R score and senior military officers' age.

H5_a: There is a correlation between the SLP-R score and senior military officers' age.

Nature of the Study

This quantitative study determined the level of SL in the senior U.S. military officer cadre and determined the extent SLP-R scores change across demographic factors of U.S. senior military officers. The purpose of this quantitative research is to examine the extent to which senior military officers possess SL attributes. The variables examined in this study were combat experience, occupational specialty/designator, gender, branch of service, age, and rank. Wong and Page's SLP-R (2003) 62 question self-identified SL survey was administered to 166 current and former military officers at the O5 and O6 level of all branches of service. Analysis of variance (ANOVA), correlation analysis, and general descriptive statistics were applied to analyze the data. Fry et al.'s (2005) study of spiritual leadership in the U.S. Army and Earnhardt's (2008) study of SL among U.S. military members are the published studies most relevant to this research. Fry (2005) has noted the link between spiritual leadership and SL as a transformational approach to organizational change. The U.S. military has about 1.5 million active-duty personnel and the same number of reservist and National Guard members. The U.S. Department of Defense peacetime budget is well over \$300 billion annually. A hegemonic superpower, the U.S. military is an organization unparalleled in the world today. As of 2001, 46% of its members self-identified as Protestant or other Christian, and 22% self-identified as Catholic/orthodox (Segal & Segal, 2004). Most military personnel are religious and tend to be politically conservative (Szymalak, 2009).

Wagner (2004) provided a leadership model for the 21st-century battlefield and asserts that SL will inspire Marines to seek the common good above self-interest, help them perfect their combat skills and unit capabilities in battle, and decentralize authority and execution so that Marines can adapt more effectively to the rapid pace of change in combat. Given the continuing global war on terrorism, the modern military is in constant flux. New leadership paradigms must be examined (Fry et al., 2005). Earnhardt (2008) has published a limited journal article on SL in a military setting. No research has adequately covered SL at the military senior-officer level. Research needs to determine whether military leaders have SL attributes.

Significance of the Study

Research on SL in the military is extremely limited. Only a few articles and dissertations have focused on this specific topic. Fry et al., (2005) studied spiritual leadership, a close cousin to SL, in a limited military study. Earnhardt (2008) tested an SL theory among a localized, mostly enlisted U.S. military cadre and reported the results in a roundtable paper. Martin (2000) and Van Heest (1996) argued for using SL in the military from a scriptural and historical perspective. Haller (2005) noted a general officer who used SL principles in his leadership style. The literature is sparse on the extent of which senior military officers hold SL principles. This research provided a baseline for future studies on SL in the military and extended Earnhardt's (2008) research, which showed that the causal relationships proposed in Patterson SL model (2003) were supported.

Definitions

The definition of terms section is provided to clarify the meaning of instrumental terms used in this study. Several terms may have alternate definitions; however, the most appropriate definition for this military research was selected. Having a common understanding of the terms associated with any research effort is paramount.

Agapao. Spencer (2007) defined *Agapao* as “an ancient Greek term that is synonymous with the idea of charity as an unreciprocated expression of love” (p. 9).

Altruism. Altruism is unselfish concern for others' welfare, involving personal sacrifice without personal gain (Kaplan, 2000).

Humility. Sandage and Wiens defined humility as the ability to keep one's accomplishments and talents in perspective and to focus on others rather than self (as cited in Patterson, 2003, p. 14).

Military leadership. Hawkins (n.d./2008) paraphrased the definition of military leadership from the Army Field Manual on Leadership. He describes Military leadership as "the art of direct and indirect influence and the skill of creating the conditions for organizational success to accomplish missions effectively" (para. 3.1).

Senior military leader. For the purpose of this research, a senior military leader is defined as a current or former officer with a rank of O5 or O6, Lieutenant Colonel/Commander or Colonel/Captain equivalent respectively in each military service. The minimum time-in-service for promotion in the target

zone is established by federal law (10 U.S.C.). In general, to achieve O5 takes 16 years and O6 requires 22 years of service. The exceptional soldiers and sailors could reach O5 and O6 a year sooner if they were below the promotion zone for O4 and O5. Below-the-zone promotions are limited to 10% of the eligible pool of recommended candidates (10 U.S.C.). Many of the respondents of the survey were selected for O6 but were 6-12 months from obtaining the rank and thus were reported with a rank of O5.

Servant leadership. Irving (2005) defined SL as “a process of leaders and followers partnering together for the purpose of achieving a common vision in which the good of the led are placed over the good of the leaders” (p. x). Laub (1999) defines SL as “an understanding and practice of leadership that places the good of those led over the self-interest of the leader” (p. 81). Greenleaf (1977/2002) has stated that the “servant-leader is servant first” (p. 27). Patterson (2003) defined SL as leaders who are focused on the followers over organizational concerns. Patterson (2003) said “the servant leader leads and serves with (a) an altruistic approach, (b) empowers followers, (c) acts with humility, (d) exhibits love, (e) leads with service, (f) is trusting, and (g) is visionary for the followers” (p. 5). Hunter (2004) defined a servant leader as a person of character skilled in influencing and inspiring others to contribute enthusiastically their hearts, minds, and other resources toward goals identified as for the common good.

Spiritual leadership. According to Fry, Matherly, Whittington, and Winston (2007), spiritual leadership is based on “vision, altruistic love and hope/faith that

is grounded in an intrinsic motivation theory” (p. 4). Spiritual leadership relates to the needs of both leader and follower for spiritual survival where the individual is appreciated and accepted unconditionally.

Summary

Because the research base on SL with regard to the senior military officer cadre is extremely limited, this study provided new information. Descriptive statistical analysis, correlation analysis, and ANOVA methods are therefore particularly suitable in answering the research questions. In summary, this research applied a cross-sectional quantitative survey design to examine SL attributes in senior military officers. It answered questions regarding the state of SL among America’s top military officers, provided a foundation for future research, and provided guidance for possible curriculum changes for military leadership training. The purpose of this quantitative study was to extend the current knowledge in the field by correlating and comparing SL and demographic variables in the senior military officer cadre.

Maye, Bardes, and Piccolo (2008) empirically found that servant leaders help satisfy follower needs. A significant SL presence in the senior military officer cadre could suggest SL may be an approach worth expanding to counter the exodus of the military’s best junior officers from the service. In order to signify the importance of conducting this dissertation study, the next chapter consists of an extensive literature review that is intended to show how this investigation extends the currently available research in the area of SL in the senior military officer ranks.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The purpose of this research was to study the presence of SL traits and factors in the U.S. military among current and former officers with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel/Commander or Colonel/Captain. Military leadership has been around since the early formations of the human race. However, it has not been studied as a specific discipline in an academic setting until the 20th century. Before discussing the history of SL, a broader discussion of the history and literature leadership theory will be discussed. According to Yukl's (2006) summative textbook on *Leadership in Organizations*, "researchers usually define leadership according to their individual perspectives and the aspects of the phenomenon of most interest to them" (p. 2). Leadership is not discovered in isolation. Leadership rises from the struggle of wrestling with organizational and social challenges. Leadership emerges from the zeal of working to make a difference in one's life, family, organization, and community. In the beginning, God created man in His own image. In Genesis 1:26 God said that humanity was charged to govern, in other words-- subdue, or provide management over the earth. Scullion (1992) added that the idea of "subdue" implies that men and women should obey God's decrees and demonstrate a high-level of respect for their responsibility as leaders serving as a vicar for God. The study of leadership is as old as civilization; however, the first documented evidence of this relationship between the leaders and his followers is in Egyptian hieroglyphs. Yukl wrote that scientific research on "leadership did not begin until the twentieth century" (p. 2). In the early 1950s there were only a few foundational leadership

concepts. In the later part of the 1900s, the field exploded and now there are thousands of leadership models and theories to consider. This literature review highlights the following major leadership theories: (a) trait, (b) great-man, (c) economic-man, (d) social-man, (e) relational, (f) behavioral, (g) contingency, and (h) servant. It also includes the theoretical constructs, measurements, SL aspects of military leadership, SL and business, studies using the SLP-R, and criticisms of SL. Aspects of Christian leadership are interwoven throughout the aforementioned groups. An emergence of literature on SL theory (Joseph & Winston, 2005) and Jesus' leadership styles are burgeoning (Blanchard & Hodges, 2006; Briner & Pritchard, 1997/2008; Castleberry, 2004; Pascarella, 1999).

Trait Theory

Trait theory was one of the earliest approaches for studying leadership that emphasized "leaders' attributes such as personality, motives, values, and skills" (Yukl, 2006, p. 13). In the 1920s and 1930s, the research attempted to identify the traits that differentiated leaders from non-leaders. These early leadership theories were content theories, focusing on the characteristics of an effective leader (Bass, 1997). The trait approach to understanding leadership assumes that certain physical, social, and personal characteristics are innate in leaders. This contradicts the theory that all individuals are potential leaders (Kouzes & Posner, 2002). Jesus' approach to picking leaders involved selecting a few faithful teachable disciples to become fishers of men (Matt 4:19, Luke 6:13-17, Mark 3:13-19). They were not scholars or men with practical knowledge of

how to fulfill their new role. The disciples were just ordinary men Jesus could shape and sculpt into leaders within three years.

The trait approach supports the use of written tests and interviews in the selection of leaders. Jesus did not need to test the disciples before selecting them, He only needed them to be totally committed to follow His instruction (Matt 4:19). When the researcher selects employees, he focuses on hiring individuals with traits that mattered to Jesus, a person with a committed servant attitude. Traditional trait theory posits the following key traits for successful leadership: high energy, integrity, self-confidence, and socialized power motivation (Bass, 1997; Yukl, 2006). No leader or individual is perfect, but the person who tries to mirror the leadership traits and styles demonstrated by Jesus Christ may be the most effective leader.

Great Man Theory

The great man theory is closely tied to trait theory and suggests that usually tall white men are born with the traits required for leadership such as charisma, genius intellect, or political prowess. The theory has been attributed to the 19th century philosopher Thomas Carlyle, who commented, "The history of the world is but the biography of great men" (Quoteworld.org, 2008). Although the great man theory is out of vogue, trying to be like the one "great man" that has walked on the earth – Jesus Christ, is not only practical but also morally sound. God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all

the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground" (Gen. 1:26-27 NIV).

From a scriptural perspective, the great man theory does apply when referencing God as the one and only great man and our own image in His likeness. The important traits required for leadership are available to everyone to develop. John 8:12 states "'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.'" To follow Jesus' commandment is to lead others and "make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you" (Matt 28:19-20). In order to do this, we must die to self. "Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it" (Matt 16:24-25). Every person has leadership potential that can be developed and learned. Unfortunately, the world promotes selfish and negative traits with respect to pride, ego, materialism, and status of being a leader.

Economic Man Theory

The nucleus of economic man theory is homo economicus, the economist's model of human behavior (Zsolnai, 2002). Its traditional roots are in classical economics and in neo-classical economics where it was viewed that people acted in their own self-interest with competitive instincts (Persky, 1995). Critics of economic man theory find it to be amoral because it ignores the social

values unless it has self-utility. Economics is not just about the “causes and consequences” of the actions of people but also the reasons for them (Hausman & McPherson, 1996, p. 38). Scripturally, the economic man theory is contrary to the teachings of Jesus. Blanchard and Hodges (2006) stated, “Jesus spoke the perils of distortion borne out of a false sense of security and self-worth that comes about when we edge God out” (p. 62). Jesus tells us not to store up treasures on earth, but to store up treasures in heaven. He also says that where your treasure is, your heart will be also (Matt 6:19-21).

From a leadership perspective, it is easy in the corporate culture to value maximizing profits at all costs. In the military, shrinking resources coupled with increased missions and the expectation of zero defects creates an organizational culture of high stress (Taylor & Rosenbach, 2005). Agency theory portends that a person’s contractual obligation with a firm influences behavior (Eisenhardt, 1989). Even in an all-volunteer military, there are oaths and contracts with the service that greatly influences soldier behavior. Self-identity is expressed through a leader’s words, intentions, and actions to unite others (Bandura, 1986). The social aspects of leadership cannot be ignored and must be a key tenant in one’s leadership style.

Social Man Theory

Social man theories include but are not limited to the following: Tuckman's (1965) group development model, Janis' groupthink concept, LMX theory, Bandura's (1986) social learning theory, Senge's (1990) learning-organization concepts, and transparent social networks in organizations. Leader-member-

exchange theory (LMX) is a process centered in the interactions between leaders and followers. Research of Graen and Uhl-Bien (1995) addressed how LMX theory was related to organizational effectiveness. Graen and Uhl-Bien found that high-quality leader-member exchanges resulted in: less employee turnover, more positive performance evaluations, greater organizational commitment and participation, and better job attitudes. Leader-member-exchange theory is closely tied to relational leadership theory (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). Social learning theory considers that people learn from one another, including such concepts as observational learning, imitation, and modeling (Bandura, 1986).

Yukl (2006) stated that “dyadic relationships evolve over time, and take different forms, ranging from a casual exchange to a cooperative alliance with shared objectives and mutual trust” (p. 16). The best example in history of LMX is that of Jesus Christ and his disciples. Jesus’ in-group of 12 men that he developed, trusted, and equipped were able to affect and share His vision with billions of people in the last 2,000 years. No other leader in history has had such an effect on the world. Jesus’ used a myriad of leadership techniques, theories, and styles to accomplish His mission. He practiced SL, authoritative leadership, and charismatic leadership to name only a few (John 13:1-17, Mark 1:22, Matt 4:19, Mark 4:40). He also cared for, disciplined, and told stories to His disciples (Mark 1:40-42, Mark 1:35, Mark 3:23).

Contingency Theory

Yukl (2006) described contingency theory as “an aspect of leadership that applies to some situations but not to others” (p. 19). Contingency theories are a

class of behavioral theory that connote there is no one best way of leading. Furthermore, an effective leadership style for one situation may be applicable for another. Jesus did not just use one leadership style; he used different leadership styles unique to individual situations. Briner and Pritchard (1997/2008) focused on 51 of Jesus' leadership styles that are demonstrated in the first 16 chapters of Mark. For example, Jesus ate with His followers (Mark 2:15); He pre-planned (Mark 3:9); He prepared his successors (Mark 5:37); He held a leadership retreat (Mark 6:31), and He was flexible (Mark 5:17). Jesus was a situational leader demonstrating low competence and high commitment (Blanchard & Hodges, 2003; Hersey, 2004). He also used a coaching style of leadership demonstrating high directive and supportive behavior (Matt 17:20; Blanchard & Hodges, 2003).

Martin (2000) argued that Jesus' leadership style is not only applicable in military but that it should be taught, integrated, and followed by its leaders. The best practices of Jesus' leadership traits seem simple, but they are often not followed. For example, Jesus often sought solitude to recharge his batteries and spend one-on-one time with his heavenly father. Even when leaders have subordinates and followers, they are still responsible to those above them (Taylor & Rosenbach, 2005). Often in today's high operational tempo military milieu, sacrifices must be made to balance competing priorities. Too often military leaders cut out sleep, physical exercise, recreational activities, and family time to meet mission requirements. The leadership style of Jesus is difficult to model because He demonstrated a unique power-influence model. Yukl (2006) described power-influence research with the efficacy, type, method, and amount

of power a leader exercises. Men and created beings may have some power over other created things, but this power is limited. Only God's power is unlimited such that He has all power over all created things (Acts 17:24, Job 42:2, Matthew 19:26). While on earth, "Jesus still possessed all power because He was still God. But in order to fulfill His purpose here as a human servant (Philippians 2:6-8), He limited His use or exercise of His power, so He did not use it in any way that would conflict with His purpose as servant" (Matthew 26:53,54, Matt 4:1-11, Pratte, 2005, para. 9). In today's business and military, the application is easy; God gave everyone the perfect instruction manual to apply the SL style of Jesus.

Many consider Robert Greenleaf the father of SL. He started his career in the 1920s working for American Telephone and Telegraph (AT&T). After retiring from AT&T in 1964, he began consulting for organizations and companies. Greenleaf (1977/2002) introduced the concept of SL into the leadership literature in 1970. He described a servant leader as follows:

The servant leader is servant first [and] begins with the natural feeling that 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, perhaps because of the need to assuage an unusual power drive or to acquire material possessions. For such, it will be a later choice to serve after leadership is established. . . . 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. (p. 27)

From an academic perspective, the literature on SL is new. According to Young (2003), “Most of the literature on servant literature is written from a reflective, philosophical, or theological point of view and focuses on the individual as a servant leader” (p. 1). As a result, the literature tends to be self-perpetuating at times because of the limited number of studies (Young (2003).

As stated previously, in the last 10 years SL has seen a substantial increase in the organizational and leadership literature (Wong & Davey, 2007). This may be partially attributed to the high profile corporate scandals, greed, and egotism found in the popular press.

Theoretical Construct

Patterson’s (2003) original model detailed “how the servant leadership constructs work together beginning with *agapao* love and ending with service” (p. 10). Patterson’s SL model, which several scholars have expanded, defines servant leaders as acting without concern for the organization’s outcomes and doing what is right for their followers. Patterson identifies the SL “constructs of (a) love, (b) humility, (c) altruism, (d) vision, (e) trust, (f) empowerment, and (g) service” (p. iii). Within the spiritual leadership literature, there is some overlap with respect to the virtues of love, vision, trust, and humility (Fry, 2003; Fry et al., 2005). “Both servant leadership and authentic leadership concepts embrace the notion of humility in leaders” (Winston & Patterson, 2006, p. 15). Spencer analyzed SL constructs in the literature and found there were many that overlapped (see Table 1).

Table 1

*A Hybrid List of Functional Attributes That Contribute to Specific Leader**Movement toward Follower Empowerment*

Researcher(s)	Attributes
Patterson (2003)	Agapao
Patterson (2003); Sendjaya (2003); Russell and Stone (2002)	Humility
Patterson (2003); Barbuto and Wheeler (2006); Sendjaya (2003)	Altruism
Patterson (2003); Russell and Stone (2002) Spears (1996, 2004, 2005); Bennett (2001); Page and Wong (as cited in Dennis & Winston, 2003)	Vision
Patterson (2003)	Hope
Russell and Stone (2002); Bennett (2001); Page and Wong (as cited in Dennis & Winston, 2003); Sendjaya (2003)	Commitment
Bennett (2001); Patterson (2003); Russell and Stone (2002); Spears (1996, 2004, 2005); Winston (2003)	Trust
Bennett (2001); Russell and Stone (2002); Sendjaya (2003); Spears (1996, 2004, 2005);	Emotional intelligence
Russell and Stone (2002); Liden, Wayne, Zhao, and Henderson (2006); Page and Wong (as cited in Dennis & Winston, 2003); Patterson (2003);	Empowerment
Bennett (2001); Liden, Wayne, Zhao, and Henderson (2006); Patterson (2003); Page and Wong (as cited in Dennis & Winston, 2003); Russell and Stone (2002); Spears (1996, 2004, 2005);	Service

Note. From "The New Frontier of Servant Leadership," by J. L. Spencer, July 2007, *Servant Leadership Research Roundtable Proceedings*, p. 8. Adapted with permission.

Figure 1 is a hybrid model incorporating the significant characteristics from the previous research into a new construct. Spencer's (2007) analysis showed that the hybrid revision of the *hope-modified* version of Patterson's (2003) original without deteriorating the original intent (p.8).

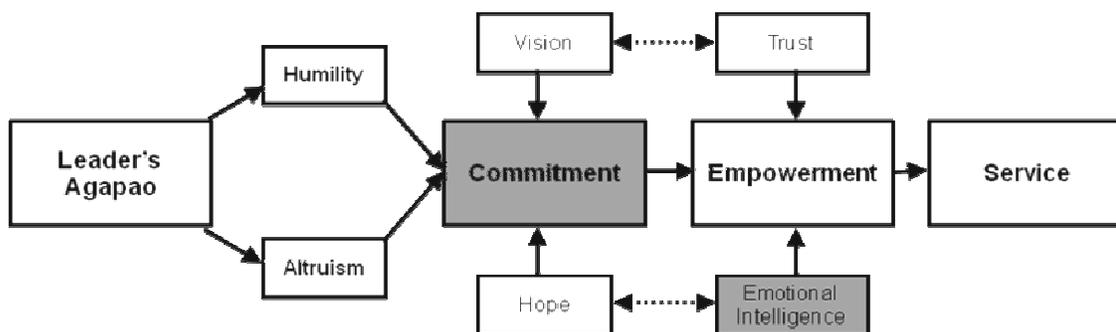


Figure 1. A hybrid model for servant leadership.

From "The New Frontier of Servant Leadership," by J. L. Spencer, July 2007, *Servant Leadership Research Roundtable Proceedings*, p. 8. Adapted with permission

Spencer (2007) stated:

The ongoing theoretical discussions surrounding SL must not be viewed as a sign of weakness with the theory, but rather as an indication that the theory, until now, has not 'gotten over the hurdle' of finalizing associated variables and establishing a recognized operational construct. (p. 4)

Barbuto and Wheeler (2006) posited, "Despite several conceptual papers on the topic of servant leadership, there is no consensus construct for empirical research" (p. 304). Ostensibly, SL research has not evolved and is more differentiated than integrated in the literature (Barbuto & Wheeler). Most SL constructs focus on SL attributes and are descriptive in nature (Braye, 2002;

Burkhardt & Spears, 2002; Page & Wong, 2000; Patterson, 2003). Spencer chronologically depicts SL's major attributes (see Table 2).

Table 2

Chronology of the Development of Identifiable SL Attributes

Researcher(s)	Attributes
Spears (1996, 2004, 2005)	Listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to people's growth, community building
Bennett (2001)	Listen, heal, persuade, conceptualize, develop, dream, trust and build, communicate, evolve, promote
Barbuto and Wheeler (2006)	Same attributes as Spears's, plus calling
Russell and Stone (2002)	Nine functional attributes (vision, honesty, integrity, trust, service, modeling, pioneering, appreciation of others, empowerment) plus 11 accompanying traits
Sendjaya (2003)	Covenantal relationship, transforming influence, transcendental spirituality, responsible morality, authentic self, voluntary subordination
Page and Wong (as cited in Dennis & Winston, 2003)	Leading, servanthood, visioning, developing others, team building, empowering others, shared decision-making, integrity
Patterson (2003); Winston (2003)	Leader's agapao, humility, altruism, vision, trust, hope, empowerment, service
Liden, Wayne, Zhao, and Henderson (2006)	Emotional healing, creating value for the community, conceptual skills, empowering, helping subordinates grow/succeed, putting subordinates

first, behaving ethically

Note. From “The New Frontier of Servant Leadership,” by J. L. Spencer, July 2007, *Servant Leadership Research Roundtable Proceedings*, p. 5. Adapted with permission.

Measuring Servant Leadership

Over the last decade, several instruments have been developed to measure SL (Dennis, 2004; Laub; 1999; Page & Wong, 2000). According to Greenleaf (1977/2002), “The best test, and difficult to administer, is the: Do those served grow as persons? Do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants?” (p. 27). Page and Wong (2000) have developed an instrument for measuring SL’s conceptual framework. The instrument lists 22 SL keys that fall into four categories: adaptation, self-identity, relationships, and validation. Wong and Page (2003) reported seven factors in their 62-item SLP-R for both self-assessment and 360-degree evaluation. These factors are empowering and developing others; power and pride; serving others; open, participatory leadership; inspiring leadership; visionary leadership; and courageous leadership.

Dennis (2004) developed the Servant Leadership Assessment Instrument to assess the presence of SL qualities identified by Patterson (2003) in organizational leaders. This instrument was validated to measure five of the seven factors identified in Patterson’s SL model: “(a) love, (b) empowerment, (c) vision, (d) humility, and (e) trust” (p. iii). The Servant Leadership Assessment Instrument was the first to measure five factors on SL identified in Patterson’s SL model (Dennis, 2004).

Spears (1998) identified a set of 10 characteristics as important aspects of a servant leader's development: "listening, empathy, healing, persuasion, awareness and self-awareness, foresight, conceptualization, stewardship, commitment, and building community" (pp. 4–6). Laub (1999) developed the Servant Organizational Leadership Assessment (SOLA; reliability of 0.98), which differs from the Wong and Page (2003) and Dennis (2004) models. The Servant Leadership Assessment Instrument showed higher SL scores for participants who had higher perceptions of job satisfaction as servant leaders.

Ledbetter (2003) extended Laub's (1999) work in validating the Organizational Leadership Assessment instrument (OLA) and examined the application and presence of SL among law enforcement leaders. Ledbetter's (2003) sample consisted of nine law enforcement agencies from seven states yielding a 36% response rate. A test/retest of the OLA instrument yielded a combined total of 466 surveys with a return rate of 27%. Bivariate Correlation and the Reliability (Pearson's R) of the OLA were conducted. The participant pool was 81% male and 90% Caucasian with 32% having bachelor's degrees. The combined item-to-item correlations between the test and the retest were all positive and ranged from .44 to .78 with a significance level of $p < .01$. Ledbetter (2003) found a high correlation between the subscales with the lowest at 0.80 and the highest at 0.98.

Irving (2005) investigated the relationship between SL and the effectiveness of teams. The sample came from a U.S. division of an international non-profit organization. The data collected were gathered using three

instruments: (a) The Organizational Leadership Assessment (Laub, 1999); (b) The Servant Leadership Assessment Instrument (Dennis, 2004); and (c) The Team Effectiveness Questionnaire (Larson & LaFasto, 1989). Pearson r correlation analyses were used to examine the relationship between team effectiveness and the other variables associated with SL and job satisfaction. A statistically significant and positive correlation was found for each of the variables associated with SL and job satisfaction when analyzed in reference to team effectiveness.

Barbuto and Wheeler (2006) analyzed data from 80 leaders and 388 raters to develop an integrated construct of SL and “to test the internal consistency, confirm factor structure, and assess convergent, divergent, and predictive validity” (p. 300). To test the psychometric properties of the questionnaire, a convenience sample was used from a statewide professional organization in the Midwestern United States. The sample consisted of 65% women and 50% had a bachelor’s degree. “The average age of participants was 51 years” (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006, p. 310). Leaders “filled out the self-report version of the servant leadership instrument 4 weeks prior to the workshop and the self-report version of the multi-leadership behavior questionnaire (MLQ)” (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006, p. 310). Barbuto and Wheeler (2006) used a varimax rotation with Kaiser normalization “to identify items with strong and unique loadings to components identified in the analysis and to guide potential reduction of factors” (p.311). According to Pohlmann (2008), varimax rotation is “an orthogonal rotation criterion which maximizes the variance of the squared

elements in the columns of a factor matrix. Varimax is the most common rotational criterion” (para. 56). Simple statistics means and standard deviations, were calculated for all leader and rater subscales. “The standard deviations were fairly consistent across the five subscales, ranging from 0.49 to 0.58” (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006, p. 311). Barbuto and Wheeler (2006) used the SPSS scale internal reliability α functions to assess the Leader (α ranges .68 to .87). and rater (α ranges .82 to .92) versions of the subscales. Because of the high Cronbach Alpha scores, no opportunities existed for subscale improvement.

Barbuto and Wheeler (2006) used confirmatory factor analysis to test the factor loading structure of the subscales. LISREL 8.54 (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 2003) maximum likelihood confirmatory factor analysis was used for the estimation. According to Barbuto and Wheeler (2006), “Maximum likelihood confirmatory factor analysis makes it possible to assess the goodness of fit of a factor structure to a set of data. The non-normed fit index was .96. The data appear to support the five-factor structure” (p. 314).

To assess the predictive validity of the subscales, several outcome variables were correlated with other subscales of different instruments (MLQ, LMX). To address the issue of single-method, single-source data, Barbuto and Wheeler (2006) “assessed the correlates of the self-reported servant leadership subscales with the rater-reported outcomes” (p. 316). In summary, factor analyses showed “five factors derived from the 11 potential servant leadership characteristics—altruistic calling, emotional healing, wisdom, persuasive

mapping, and organizational stewardship—which appear to be conceptually and empirically distinct” (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006, p. 318).

Religious Literature and Theological Construct

There is also a biblical SL construct, which focuses on the teachings of Jesus. According to Sendjaya and Sarros (2002), the SL’s philosophical foundations began with Jesus:

As appealing and refreshing as Greenleaf’s conceptualization of servant leadership is, Greenleaf is not the individual who first introduced the notion of servant to everyday human endeavor. It was Christianity’s founder, Jesus Christ, who first taught the concept of servant leadership. From the narrative accounts of his life in the Bible, it is evident that servant leadership was taught and practiced more than two thousand years ago. (p. 1)

Sendjaya and Sarros highlight the Matthew 20:26–27 passage “Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave.” In the popular media and culture, a servant is one of the lowest occupations in terms of prestige. The word servant does not connote a picture of a leader or someone who holds power. They also note that Jesus taught about SL and demonstrated SL by washing the disciples’ feet (John 13). Many argue Jesus is the best example in history of SL (Blanchard & Hodges, 2006; Briner & Pritchard, 1997/2008; Dennis, 2004; Sendjaya & Sarros, 2002; Wong & Davey, 2007). Leading as Jesus did means leading with humility and knowing your limitations (Romans 12:3). Blanchard and Hodges argue that SL

involves serving God first. Several researchers have integrated a strong religious context into their work on SL (Christman, 2007; Dennis, 2004; Hunt, 2002; Russell, 2003; Wong & Davey, 2007).

Servant Leadership Aspects of Military Leadership

The military is often referred to as the service. A member of the military serves his or her country. Selfless service means doing what is right for the nation, one's organization, and people—and putting these responsibilities above one's own interests. Puryear (2000) devoted the entire first chapter of his book *American Generalship* to the topic of selflessness. The needs of the service and nation must come first. The greatest act of service is to give one's own life for someone else. "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45). "No greater love has any man than to lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13). In the military, each person is constantly looking out for the person on his or her right or left, protecting the freedom democratic nations hold so dear.

Scholars have pointed out that the military's hierarchical structure has permeated the business world and is the predominant organizational model used (Yukl, 2006).

Bernard M. Bass reports some findings that might be counterintuitive to the Army culture. Bass does not see transformational leadership as being the result of a hierarchical position. No studies attributed higher transformational leadership ratings to hierarchical or rank position. (Paparone, 2004, p. 7)

Effective leadership is not about rank and giving orders, it is about practicing “good followership” (Taylor & Rosenbach, 2005, p. 83).

According to the U.S. Army’s (2006) Leadership Field Manual, FM 6-22, “An officer’s responsibility as a public servant is first to the Nation, then to the Army, and then to his unit and his Soldiers” (p. 24). The act of service is not only expected, but it is required. Love is the cornerstone of the servant leader and follower relationship that Patterson (2003) described as *agapao* love. Winston (2002) stated that *agapao* refers to love in a social or moral sense, “doing the right thing at the right time for the right reasons” (p. 5). According to Winston, this love causes leaders to consider each person not simply as a means to an end but as a complete person, someone with needs, wants, and desires. Spencer (2007) stated, “*Agapao* is an ancient Greek term that is synonymous with the idea of charity as an unreciprocated expression of love” (p.9). Dennis (2004) noted that the love of SL includes truly caring about team members as people, valuing them and being genuinely concerned about their lives.

All four military services claim that they take care of their troops; however, when operational tempos are high, families’ and service members’ needs are sometimes forgotten. Nevertheless, anecdotal evidence suggests that U.S. military leaders have demonstrated *agapao* love for their followers (Puryear, 2000; Sullivan & Harper, 1996). The U.S. Army (1999a) leadership manual stated that leaders show character, competence, appropriate skills, and knowledge of their troops. Further, military leaders “must earn their [followers’] trust: they must know from experience that you care about them and would not ask them to do

something—particularly something dangerous—unless there was a good reason, unless the task was essential to mission accomplishment” (pp. 1–4). The military and its leaders have spent enormous amounts of money showing *agapao* love to their soldiers. In general, war and defense are not family- and people-friendly. Fry et al. (2005) reported that some “soldiers felt that their leaders were too quick to punish them when they were trying to do their jobs as well as possible, without regard for the soldiers and their families” (p. 850). However, overall the military has been doing its best with its limited resources during the ongoing war on terrorism. Mention of the SL virtue of humility is not readily found in the military leadership literature. The military’s competitive, war-fighting, hierarchical nature hinders leaders’ being humble. The word *humble* appears only once within the 274 pages of the U.S. Army (1999a) leadership manual.

The U.S. Army (2006) FM 6-22 is the Army’s keystone field manual on leadership and describes General Chamberlain as a “brilliant but humble leader, brave in battle and respectful in peace” (p. 133). Anecdotal evidence suggests that some U.S. generals have demonstrated humility while leading their soldiers (Puryear, 2000; Sullivan & Harper, 1996). General Ridgway said leadership “stands for selflessness, modesty, humility, willingness to sacrifice when necessary, and in my opinion, for faith in God” (Ridgway, as cited in Van Heest, 1996, p 11). Several times during World War II General Ridgway risked his career by doing the right thing, protecting his troops, even though it meant going against the plans of higher ranking officers and the theater commander (Van Heest, 1996). General Marshall was another great leader who used SL principles

throughout his career, well before Greenleaf coined the term. General Marshall always showed passion for his work and took personal involvement in each of his troops and their families.

As previously mentioned, altruism is unselfish concern for others' welfare. Discussions of unselfishness, or selflessness, are found throughout the military leadership literature (Fry et al., 2005; Meigs, 2001; Puryear, 2000; Sullivan & Harper, 1996; U.S. Army, 1999a). Fry et al. (2005) stated that unselfishly valuing an individual's capability and potential might improve positive growth for themselves and others around them. Snair (2004) described how cadets at the U.S. Military Academy are indoctrinated with *selflessness*. For example, whenever food is served, lower ranking soldiers eat before higher ranking ones. This attitude of taking care of the troops and their families permeates military culture. As a result, the U.S. Army and other military branches are a high-performing, cohesive team.

The military also has an abundance of the SL trait of vision. The military's ability to develop weapon systems decades beyond the current publicly known capability requires great vision. Hitchens (2005) stated that the Department of Defense (DoD) and the Air Force has their future space vision and strategy in "impressive detail" (para. 3). The military has been transformed since the end of the Cold War; it is now a more global, agile fighting and responsive force because of its change in vision (Sullivan & Harper, 1996; Townsend & Gebhardt, 1997). According to Irving (2005), "When personal values are linked with servant

leadership that is characterized by vision, team performance can be enhanced” (p. 40).

Trust, empowerment, and service are elements found in the military leadership model. The U.S. Army (1999a) leadership manual stated “To motivate your people, give them missions that challenge them...When they succeed, praise them...People who are trained this way will accomplish the mission, even when no one is watching” (p. 18). Despite its extremely hierarchical structure, the military does a good job of empowering individuals at all levels to make crucial decisions. Trust is a given attribute in the military. If a teammate is untrustworthy, he or she should not be part of the team. When lives are at stake on a daily basis, trust is a necessity.

Earnhardt’s (2008) research focused on investigating Patterson’s (2003) SL “model and its causal relationships in the military context” (p. 7). Earnhardt used Dennis and Bocarnea’s (2005) SL instrument to survey military members at a joint-forces DoD facility in Colorado. Although 200 service members participated in the study, only 18 were officers (7 Air Force, 7 Navy, 3 Army, 1 Marine Corps, and 0 Coast Guard). Earnhardt’s survey was distributed in person via a service representative and respondents were given 20 minutes to complete the survey and return it to the representative. The survey instrument had well established internal reliability and validity (Dennis & Bocarnea, 2005; Dennis, 2004). Earnhardt found that gender and military affiliation were not determining factors for SL characteristics. However, the number of participating females in the study was not mentioned and a low number may account for the lack of

significance. However, he found that military rank “did have a significant difference for the visionary construct” (p. 10). Earnhardt’s findings support the causal relationships proposed in Patterson’s SL model (2003) in a joint military setting. Earnhardt’s (2008) study postulated that “gender, rank, and military service have no impact on the seven constructs, with the exception of vision and rank” (p. 10-11). Earnhardt (2008) explained that his study had few military officers participate in his study and that a larger cross sectional sample with different geographic areas and career fields are needed. Earnhardt’s research is the closest match to this SL research topic relating specifically to senior military officers. It is clear that a larger more diverse SL study should be conducted on senior military officers.

Servant Leadership and Business

Elsenpeter (2006) wrote an article for the Minneapolis-St. Paul Star Tribune on how Medtronic, a medical technology company with over 40,000 employees, fully embraced the concepts of SL to improve the organizational climate and to give back to the community. More than 35 organizations in the Fortune 100 are involved in the SL movement (Hunter, 2004). Several of these companies consistently appear on Fortune magazine’s list of 100 best companies to work for in America including TDIndustries, Herman Miller, The Men’s Wearhouse, and The Container Store (CNN, 2009). Other successful companies such as Costco, the Toro Company, Synovus Financial, and The Men’s Wearhouse are known for having CEO’s who practice SL (Hamilton, 2005; Wong & Davey, 2007). Ostensibly, data is mounting that SL is great for business

(Wong & Davey, 2007). Romig (2001) established that when SL practices were put into operation through leadership training in a business, performance has improved by 15 – 20% and work group productivity by 20 – 50%. Scientifically proving SL is a direct cause for increasing shareholder value is difficult, but SL focuses more than on the bottom line, it is about serving the customer better and developing a better organizational culture for the employees. According to Wong and Davey (2007), several business writers have endorsed SL; “these include Peter Drucker, Peter Block, Sheila Murray Bethel, Jim Kouzes, Barry Posner, James Autry, Warren Bennis, John Maxwell, Ken Blanchard, Max DePree, Bill Pollard, John Bogle, John Carver, Joe Batten and Dennis Romig” (p. 3).

Studies Using the SLP-R

Hundreds of organizations have used Wong and Page’s (2008) SLP-R. However, few scholars have focused on the instrument itself. Some doctoral students have used the SLP-R for their dissertations (Bartholomew, 2006; McClellan, 2008; Reuschel, 2007; Stephen, 2007, Vidic, 2007). Bartholomew (2006) researched whether there were correlations between SL and gender, age, and locus of control. Bartholomew’s sample consisted of a 65% male population with an average age of 24 years attending the Culinary Institute of America. Using analysis of variance and regression, Bartholomew (2006) found no SL “correlation between gender and only modest correlation with age and locus of control” (p. 4). Rude (2004) found that servant led organizations had higher levels of SL qualities and job satisfaction and lower burnout levels. Stephen found statistically significant differences in self-perception with regard to SL

between male and female principals and between principals of different ethnic backgrounds. McClellan used the SLP-R to conduct a correlation analysis of the relationship between psychological hardiness and SL among leaders in higher education. McClellan (2008) found that SL is “correlated with sensory demands or stressors, and work meaning, commitment, and satisfaction. Servant-leaders experience higher levels of hardiness, cognitive stress, and work meaning, commitment, and satisfaction than those with alternate philosophical leadership approaches (p. 2).” Vidic (2007) examined the relationships between emotional intelligence core beliefs and leadership styles to include SL. The research sample included 535 male and female junior college and high-school cadets at the New Mexico Military Institute. The results showed a strong, positive relationship between four components of emotional intelligence and the three leadership styles: transactional, transformational and servant.

Criticisms of Servant Leadership

Wong and Davey (2007) have found six common criticisms of SL in the literature: (a) SL is too quixotic; followers may take advantage of their leader’s kindness and perceive the leader as weak (Johnson, 2001); (b) SL will not work in a military setting (Bowie, 2000); (c) SL is too restrictive and too closely tied to Christian spirituality. It lacks spiritual diversity; (d) “It is impossible for people to model after Christ’s humility without being redeemed and transformed by the Holy Spirit” (Wong & Davey, p. 4); (e) many people who claim to be servant leaders actually lead like dictators and are therefore viewed as hypocrites; and (f)

the SL model is too foreign of a concept for leaders to be guided by it (Wong & Davey).

Smith, Montagno, & Kuzmenko (2004) posited, “The servant leadership model works better in a more stable environment and serves evolutionary development purposes, whereas transformational leadership is the model for organizations facing intense external pressure where revolutionary change is a necessity to survival” (p. 87). Critics feel that SL theory and Jesus’ quintessential model has no place in the corporate milieu. In general, leadership is not synonymous with being a servant. Being fallible and living in this world, it is difficult and challenging to be the “salt of the earth” (Matt 5:13-16). In Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5:1-12) He says, “Blessed are the meek” and also “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness.” Leaders are called to do the right thing in every situation and circumstance.

Despite the criticisms, the benefits of SL principles practiced in organizations appear to be overwhelming. “Based on theoretical analysis, empirical research, and case studies,” Wong and Davey (2007) posited 14 reasons why SL may qualify as the best leadership style for all situations (p. 6).

1. Being freed from egotistic concerns, such as insecurity and self-advancement, Type S leaders are able to devote their full attention to developing workers and building the organization.
2. Type S leaders have a positive view of workers as individuals who are capable of developing their full potentials and

becoming leaders, if they are given a supportive and caring work environment.

3. Being concerned with individual needs and sensitive to individual differences in personality, Type S leaders are able to bring out the best in the workers.
4. Being situational leaders, Type S leaders recognize situations in which absence of their power actually facilitates self-management and productivity.
5. Being good stewards, Type S leaders will do whatever necessary and appropriate to maximize leadership effectiveness in all kinds of situations.
6. Being worker-centered and growth-oriented, Type S leaders can turn ordinary workers into future leaders by developing their strengths.
7. SL serves as an antidote to corruption and abuse in power positions.
8. SL can help reduce burnout and build an emotionally healthy organization.
9. SL focuses on cultivating the intrinsic motivation through inspiring workers to believe in their own growth and embrace the vision and purpose of the organization.

10. SL seems most suitable for the next generation of workers, who are very cynical of authority and demand authenticity from their bosses.
11. SL seems most suitable for knowledge workers, who value independence and creativity.
12. SL recognizes that leadership is a group process, which should not be centralized in one or two individuals.
Therefore, SL is based on team-building.
13. SL is deeply rooted in humane, spiritual, and ethical values.
14. SL represents the most effective and comprehensive approach to human resources management and development. (p. 6-7)

Summary

Levering and Moskowitz (2000) identified SL principles in three of the five best places to work in America according to *Fortune* magazine. Costco CEO Jim Sinegal is an excellent example of someone who practices SL. He is humble, humane, ethical, and practical. His employee retention rate is the highest among retail chains. Wall Street criticizes Mr. Sinegal for not raising markups and lowering employee salaries, but he is clearly building an organization to last over the century. Pfeffer (1998) argued that companies needed to put people first to build profits. In essence, SL principles are about putting people first. Pascarella (1999) viewed SL as serving God first in everything for His glory and honor. When dealing with the daily situations of life, one should be seeped with God's

written word and use that knowledge as a guiding beacon to navigate through life. Jesus said to His disciples, “I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing” (John 15:5).

Review of the SL literature shows that much research is being done in terms of theoretical constructs, instrument development, and application. The literature can be divided into two categories: publications that omit or limit discussion of Jesus as the exemplary perfect servant leader and publications that focus heavily on SL’s Christian aspects. In Spears and Lawrence (2004), one researcher of SL stated that she was Buddhist; the other contributors omit religious discussion. Sendjaya and Sarros (2002) have conceptually examined SL’s philosophical foundations by exploring Greenleaf’s spiritual elements and Jesus’ examples of SL in the Bible. The work of Blanchard and Hodges (2003, 2006) offered specific biblical examples of how to become a servant leader.

Although the military is unlikely to fully adopt SL as its mantra and eliminate its hierarchal structure, it is slowly adopting many SL principles. The U.S. Naval Academy has included SL materials in its curriculum (Johnson & Harper, 2005; Van Heest, 1996). However, follow-on training must take place at the mid and senior level service schools. According to Van Heest (1996), all services schools, from the non-commission officers to the senior war colleges should include SL sections in the curriculum. Servant Leadership principles can be taught at the various military leadership training venues without using Biblical references and examples. Traditions of altruism, vision, trust, empowerment, and

service are deeply rooted in its organizational culture. Army values of *LDRSHIP* (loyalty, dedication, respect, selfless service, honesty, integrity, and personal courage) and the Army's Well-Being Strategic Plan—which includes physical, mental, material, and spiritual well-being—are like “unconnected pieces in a puzzle” (Fry et al., 2005, p. 854).

If the SL model is officially injected into each military service, it may make for better trained and equipped soldiers. The main advantage of using SL is that it is extremely flexible. Whether a leader is charismatic, direct, task driven, down to earth, or laissez-faire, one can always benefit from practicing SL principles. Wong and Davey (2007) argued, “No leader can be effective in a culturally diverse workplace by adopting only one leadership style” (p. 6). Most importantly, SL tends to curb abuse of power. “SL prevents and reduces all kinds of problems directly related to command-and-control leadership” (Wong & Davey, 2007, p.6). Can SL thrive in a strict command and control hierarchical leadership setting? Van Heest (1996) and Martin (2000) stated that SL could work in the military and is needed for asymmetric warfare that will be with us for the foreseeable future.

Adopting SL in the military training curriculum can only make all soldiers better leaders. Wong and Davey (2007) summarized that SL is one of the simplest yet most difficult and “profound” leadership style to implement (p. 7). Servant leadership is difficult to implement because it is not a skill that one can just learn in a classroom. It requires that a person change their heart and perspective on how they look at life and people. Servant leadership necessitates an inner transformation and total change in attitude requiring one to *die to self*

and put other peoples' needs above their own needs. Perhaps this is why there are so few servant leaders in the world today.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

The problem to be addressed by this quantitative study is that company grade officers are resigning their commissions at a rate higher than in previous years due to their perception that senior leaders are focused on their success and not that of their subordinates (Fricker, 2007; Henning, 2006; Tilghman, 2007). Servant leadership traits practiced by a senior officer could reduce such perceptions because a servant leader always places the welfare of their subordinates above that of their own (Martin, 2000). The purpose was to examine the extent to which senior military officers possess SL attributes. A wide variety of research methods have been used in SL dissertations. These methods include mixed methods (interviews, observations, surveys, and documents), as used by Anderson (2006) and Keena (2006); quantitative surveys (Anderson, 2005; Arfsten, 2006; Irving, 2005); case studies (Dingman, 2006; Walker, 2006); correlation studies (Anderson, 2005; Bivins, 2005; Irving, 2005); historical and ethnographic studies (Hunt, 2002); qualitative studies (Bliss, 2006; Strickland, 2006); instruments (Dennis, 2004; Laub, 1999); and theoretical models (Patterson, 2003). Each method or design has weaknesses and strengths. Most SL measurements have focused on the attributes of organizations or leaders (Spencer, 2007).

This quantitative study employed several statistical research methods to describe, and answer key questions about senior military officers. The survey research provided the following: the percentage of senior military officers who practice SL principles in their daily leadership activities and factors that influence

SL traits among senior military officers. Based on the literature and theoretical construct, the following research questions will be addressed:

Q1: To what extent, if any, do SLP-R scores differ based on combat experience of senior military officers?

Q2: To what extent, if any, do the SLP-R scores differ based on occupational specialty/designators of senior military officers?

Q3: To what extent, if any, do the SLP-R scores differ based on the gender of senior military officer?

Q4: To what extent, if any, do the SLP-R scores differ based on the senior military officers' branch of service?

Q5: To what extent, if any, does the SLP-R scores of senior military officers relate to age?

Hypotheses

Based on the aforementioned research questions the following hypotheses were used to investigate each question:

H1₀: There is no difference in SLP-R scores among senior military officers based on combat experience.

H1_a: There is a difference in SLP-R scores among senior military officers based on combat experience.

H2₀: There is no difference in SLP-R scores among senior military officers based on occupational specialty/designator.

H2_a: There is a difference in SLP-R scores among senior military officers based on occupational specialty/designator.

H3₀: There is no difference in SLP-R scores among senior military officers based on gender.

H3_a: There is a difference in SLP-R scores among senior military officers based on gender.

H4₀: There is no difference in SLP-R scores among senior military officers based on branch of service.

H4_a: There is a difference in SLP-R scores among senior military officers based on branch of service.

H5₀: There is no correlation between the SLP-R score and senior military officers' age.

H5_a: There is a correlation between the SLP-R score and senior military officers' age.

Based on the survey design, descriptive analysis, correlation analysis, chi-square analysis, and ANOVA were applied to address the research questions. To analyze the officers' different SL levels, ANOVA was used to examine differences by combat experience, occupational service or designator and service branch. Chi-square was used to test the association of SL with gender. Correlation analysis was used to test SL with the variable, age. This chapter includes research methods and design, participants, materials/instruments, definitions of variables, data collection, processing, and analysis, methodological assumptions, limitations, and delimitations, and ethical assurances.

Research Methods and Design

This research employed a cross-sectional quantitative survey design to examine SL attributes in senior military officers. Analysis of variance and correlation analyses were used to describe and answer key questions about the officers. Several researchers have recommended further SL research on demographic and organizational variables such as ethnicity, culture, religion, and gender (Braye, 2000; Parolini, 2007; Sendjaya & Sarros, 2002). To analyze officers' different SL levels, ANOVA was used to test for differences by combat experience and service branch. Chi-square was used to test for SL differences by gender. Analysis of variance was used to analyze the relationship between military occupation/designator and SL score. Correlation analysis was used to analyze the relationship SL score and age of the senior military officer.

Participants

The population consisted of the alumni from the previous classes of the war college consortium and new students of the National Defense University (NDU) at both the National War College (NWC) and the Industrial College of the Armed Forces (ICAF). The population was current U.S. students with 100% sampling of the two senior service colleges within NDU and alumni from the war college consortium of schools and other O5 and O6 current and retired officers obtained from private war college forum discussion groups. The population is well defined as a representative cross sectional group of senior military officers proportionally represented across all services. The joint senior service schools, NWC and ICAF, select the number of students based on the services' overall

size of the officer pool. As a result, the population is a proportionally derived subset within the larger senior military officer cadre.

The National Defense University is the nation's premier center for joint professional military education. The university is an accredited graduate-level institution that provides an educational and research environment to prepare future leaders of the armed forces and other civilian agencies for high-level policy, command, and staff responsibilities. (Thomas, 2008, para. 6)

The Industrial College of the Armed Forces grants an MSc in national resource strategy and NWC grants an MSc in national security strategy. All subjects had at least a Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university and most had advanced degrees. According to the NDU website, collectively, the two schools graduate approximately 543 military students annually: 90% from U.S. military services and 10% from foreign militaries. The average student age was 42. The officers are typically at the O5 Lieutenant Colonel/Commander promotable or O6 Colonel/Captain level with 16 to 22 years of active duty military service. Student selection to the NDU is proportionally represented across the given services.

Service members come from all military occupational specialties and designators. Because the student population is at the O5 and O6 level, the class generally represents high achieving officers in the service. Attendance at a senior war college is required for promotion to the rank of general officer. The subjects were geographically located throughout the world, but a large percentage of the participants were located in the Washington, D.C. metro area. Within the military

service, personnel generally change positions and/or geographic location every two to three years.

According to the U.S. Department of Defense (2009), military officers number 28,191 at the O5 level and 11,681 at the O6 level. Therefore, the total target population of O5 and O6 officers in all U.S. military services is 39,872 (see Table 3). Junior officers, majors/ lieutenant commanders, and warrant officers were excluded in Table 3 because they do not attend senior service schools.

Table 3

Number of Senior U.S. Military Officers

Rank (Grade)	Army	Navy	Marine Corps	Air Force	All services
General/admiral (O10)	12	10	4	12	38
LT general/vice admiral (O9)	53	42	16	36	147
MAJ general/rear admiral (U) (O8)	90	65	23	104	282
BRIG general/rear admiral (L) (O7)	151	112	41	148	452
Colonel/captain (O6)	4,221	3,224	686	3,550	11,681
Lieutenant colonel/commander (O5)	9,516	6,735	1,857	10,083	28,191

Note. Adapted from *Department of Defense Active Duty Military Personnel by Rank/Grade*, by U.S. Department of Defense, January 31, 2009.

Power analysis software is crucial to ensuring that sample sizes are adequate to obtain statistically significant results. Statistical power analysis helps researchers determine the appropriate sample sizes with which to examine their theory within a population. When using a quantitative survey design, a researcher must determine sample size and manage nonresponse bias. Power

analysis helps a researcher determine a sufficient population estimate for a study to have a statistically significant research design. To compute the power analysis for this study, Faul, Erdfelder, Lang, and Buchner's (2007) G*Power 3.010 software was used. Keppel and Wickens (2004) recommended this software to determine power and sample size. To analyze the officers' SL levels, ANOVA was used to test for differences by self-identified combat experience, and branch of military service. For t tests with an error probability of .05 and an effect sample size of $d = 0.8$, the a priori sample size needed to be at least 35 for each group. The large n for each group was difficult to obtain for the gender variable because only approximately 10% of the NDU graduates are female. For the gender analysis, a matched-pairs technique required only 27 subjects per group for an error probability of .05 (see table 4).

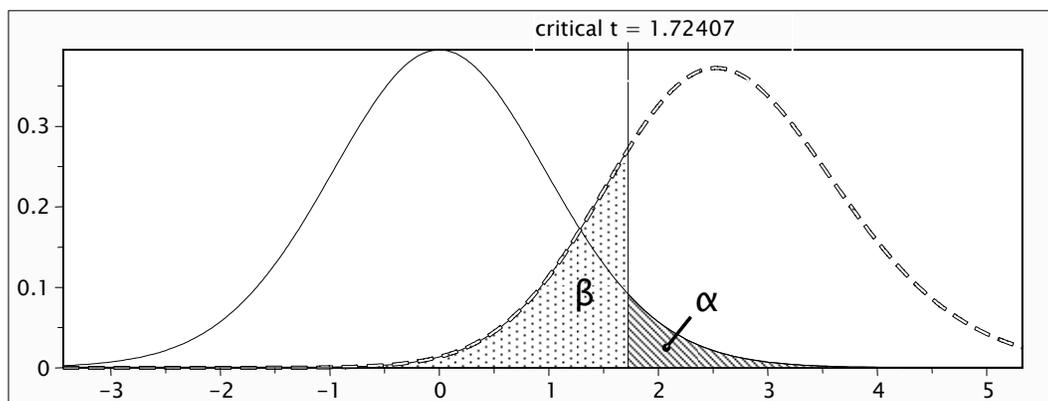


Figure 2. Central and noncentral distributions of matched-pairs t tests.

From "G*Power 3: A Flexible Statistical Power Analysis Program for the Social, Behavioral, and Biomedical Sciences," by F. Faul, E. Erdfelder, A.-G. Lang, and A. Buchner, 2007, *Behavior Research Methods*, 39, p. 175-191.

Table 4

*G*Power 3.010 Analysis of Matched-pairs t Tests*

<i>t</i> tests: <i>M</i>	Difference between 2 dependent means (matched pairs)
Analysis	Compromise: compute implied α and power
Input	
Tail(s)	1
Effect size <i>dz</i>	0.5
β/α ratio	4
<i>N</i>	27
Output	
Noncentrality parameter δ	2.60
Critical <i>t</i>	1.72
<i>df</i>	26
α error probability	0.048
β error probability	0.19
Power (1 – β error probability)	0.81

For a Pearson's correlation of SL with age, the a priori sample size needed to be at least 112 to achieve an error probability less than .05 (see table 5).

Table 5

*G*Power 3.010 A Priori Compute Required Sample Size*

Input: Tail(s) =	One
Effect size $ r $	0.3
α err prob	0.05
Power (1- β err prob)	0.95

Output: Noncentrality parameter δ	3.31
Critical t	1.66
Df	109
Total sample size	111
Actual power	0.95

Based on the aforementioned analysis, the suggested sample size of the population for the intended study needed to be greater than 112 participants to achieve a 95% confidence level.

The online survey was e-mailed to approximately 400 current and former students and posted on two alumni discussion groups with military and civilian populations of approximately 550. The meta-analysis literature for survey responses in academic settings lists the average response rate of 55.6% (Baruch, 1999). Executive survey response rates average 32% (Cycyota & Harrison, 2006). Archer's (2007) research of web based surveys showed that researchers should expect the following average response rates: (a) meeting/conference evaluations - 57%; (b) needs assessments - 40%, and (c) output/impact evaluations - 52%. Given the large student populations of each class and an alumni cohort totaling over 400 students and graduates, obtaining the necessary 112 participants was easily accomplished. Rater bias increases with low response rates (Archer, 2007). A high survey response was expected because the researcher is an alumnus of NDU and there was strong support from the school administration.

Materials and Instruments

The Wong and Page (2003) 62-question self-reported SLP-R (see Appendix A) was used to conduct this study. The SLP-R is a 7- point Likert-scale instrument using anchors of *strongly disagree* and *strongly agree*. The SLP-R is copyrighted and permission was obtained to use the survey free of charge and the scoring key was provided to the researcher (see Appendix E). According to Wong and Page (2008), "In the last five years, this instrument has been used in hundreds of doctoral and master's level research projects" (para. 7). Major corporations, hospitals, educational institutions, salespeople, international aid workers, and the Australian navy have used the SLP-R (Wong & Page, 2008).

Wong and Page (2008) describe the seven factors as developing and empowering others, power and pride (vulnerability and humility), authentic leadership, open or participatory leadership, inspiring leadership, visionary leadership, and courageous leadership. Power and pride can be negative factors if they are abused. Wong and Page (2008) portended that a servant leader will score high on servanthood and leadership but low on abuse of power and pride. Furthermore, scoring high on abuse of power and pride automatically disqualifies one as a servant leader. Their research shows that an average score on all positive factors greater than 5.6 suggests a strong servant leader.

Wong (2003) stated, "The opponent-process model is predicated on the interactions between two underlying opposing motivational forces: Serving others vs. self-seeking. Thus, the model posits that servant leadership is present to the extent that self-seeking is absent" (p. 6). Wong described the benefits of the

opponent-process model as pointing out the deficiencies of prideful and authoritarian leaders and predicting the absence and presence of SL. The opponent-process model can support conceptual, empirical, and practical research.

Rude (2004) demonstrated the theoretical construct and the internal consistency of the SLP-R, which had a high positive intercorrelation (.74 – .92) on all aforementioned subscales. McClellan (2008) found high “intercorrelations in relation to the component variables,” with Cronbach α scores of .88 for the SL total average (p. 190). Stephen (2007) found the SLP-R to have a Cronbach α of .92 for all 62 items. Dennis and Winston (2003) conducted a factor analysis of Page and Wong’s original SL instrument and reduced the 99-item scale to 20 items yielding three factors: vision (.97 Cronbach α), empowerment (.89 Cronbach α), and service (.94 Cronbach α). Overall, the instrument’s reliability seems well documented in the literature. McClellan’s (2008) research supports the validity of the instrument.

Operational Definitions of Variables

The independent or predictor variables in the study were the following demographic variables (see Figure 2): combat experience (X_1), occupational specialty, or designator (X_2), gender (X_3), branch of service (X_4) and age (X_5).

Combat Veteran and experience (X_1) was a nominal variable having the possible values yes and no. In addition, participants were asked if they were given a combat action medal or ribbon. To qualify for combat experience a soldier would need to have served in a combat theater or received a combat service medal or

ribbon and/or received imminent danger or hostile fire pay or tax benefits (Department of Veterans Affairs, 2009). To receive a combat action medal, badge or ribbon, a service member O6 and below needs to have actively participated in air, ground, or surface combat. The principal eligibility criterion is that the individual must have participated in a bona fide air, ground or surface combat fire-fight or action during which he/she was under enemy fire and his/her performance while under fire was satisfactory. Service in a combat area does not automatically entitle a service member to the combat action medal or ribbon.

Occupational specialty or designator. This independent variable (X_2) was a nominal variable and has over 117 different specialties such as intelligence officer, helicopter pilot, fixed wing pilot, acquisition, chaplain, legal, infantry, logistics, public affairs, physician, space, Special Forces, submariner, surface warfare, and ordnance. Demographic question F was used to collect the data. The most common occupational specialties or designators of the participants were collapsed into the following categories for additional analysis: intelligence, infantry, logistics, physician, pilot, Special Forces, and surface warfare. Demographic question G, common directorate codes, was used to assist in the collapse of occupational codes.

Gender (X_3) was a nominal variable with values of male or female. Demographic survey question D was used to collect the data for this variable.

Branch of service (X_4) was a nominal variable having the possible values of Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, and Coast Guard. Demographic survey question B was used to collect the data for this variable.

Age (X_5) was a scale variable measured in years. Demographic survey question E was used to collect the data for this variable.

Figure 3 shows the various independent variables and how they may associate with the dependent variable, the SLP-R score.

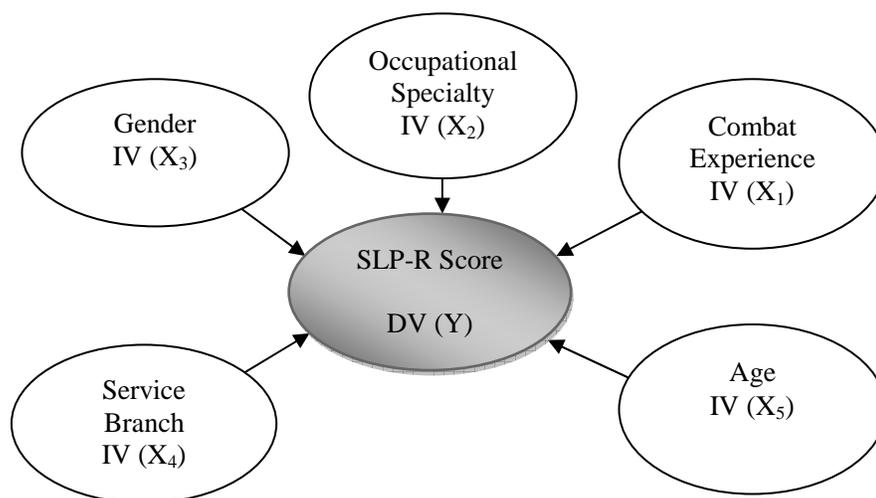


Figure 3. Basic conceptual model.

Data Collection, Processing, and Analysis

After Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval from Northcentral University, permission from the Defense Data Manpower Center, and the NDU was obtained, an e-mail was sent to participants with a secure link to SurveyMonkey.com, where they confirmed informed consent and read the details of the study, provided demographic data, and completed the SLP-R (Appendix A). The online survey was selected for speed of delivery, cost-effectiveness, and ease of data collection. The NDU IRB director was emailed in advanced to increase the likelihood of approval military officers would participate.

To increase responses, a follow-up e-mail was sent 3 days after the initial solicitation (Archer, 2007). Cobanoglu and Cobanoglu (2003) suggested

researchers use incentive drawings for large prizes to increase response rates. However, during the Department of Defense review of the proposal, it was recommended that the researcher not use any incentives to reduce ethical complications and eliminate the need to submit a private or professional email address. On request via email to the researcher, respondents will receive an executive summary of the research results or the complete dissertation. Three respondents requested a copy of the research findings.

Once the required sample size was reached, the data set was validated and screened for input errors by reviewing the demographic distribution patterns. The participant input error was minimized by using the online survey software, which required all fields to be selected before the survey could be submitted. Several variables need to be recoded and categorized before analysis. The data was analyzed and the various tests were completed. Standard distribution analysis was conducted. Once the analysis research is completed and presented, the results will be released to the public and to the NDU.

Using SurveyMonkey, the data was captured from Wong and Page's (2003) SLP-R and demographic information in Excel (Version Office 2007) and exported into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS, Version 16.0). The SLP-R contained seven-point Likert-scale items. ANOVA procedures were used to answer questions one, two, and four that examine statistically significant differences between the demographic variables and SLP-R. Descriptive frequency statistics were calculated and analyzed. Association tables were examined to determine if gender, combat experience, branch of service, and

military occupational specialty/designator are associated with the SL scores of individuals. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences scale internal-reliability α function was calculated on the instrument used.

A complete analysis for differences by categories and for any associations between the independent and dependent variables were conducted using ANOVA to statistically compare means of various groups and test hypotheses one, two, and four. Hypothesis three was tested using Chi-square analysis. Hypothesis five was tested using correlation analysis to determine if there is a relationship between SL and the age of the military officers. Scale reliability analysis on the instrument was conducted. The associations between SL and the demographic variables were measured using the Chi-squared test of association.

Methodological Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

The study had the following methodological assumptions about the participants: (a) they were current or recent members of a military service; (b) they had the ability to read and comprehend the electronic survey that was e-mailed to them or posted in an alumni online forum; (c) they voluntarily completed the survey information based on their own perceptions, without coercion or input from another person; (d) after reading the electronic informed consent form and checking the agreement box, they clearly understood they were not required to participate and could withdraw from the study at any time; and (e) they knew that all information would be kept strictly confidential.

This research used a cross-sectional quantitative survey design to examine SL attributes in senior military officers. Correlation analysis and

comparative statistical research methods were used to answer key questions about senior military officers. Analysis of variance was used to examine the means for equality across multiple groups. The chi-square test provided a method to describe the association between SL scores and gender. A correlation research design clarifies the relationships between multiple variables. Such a design has many advantages; it enables easy setup and the ability to examine an unlimited number of variables. Further, such a design offers a starting point for advanced research designs that answer how or why a relationship exists (Mitchell & Jolley, 2007). "Once you use a descriptive design to find out what happens, you can use an experimental design to try to find out why it happens" (Mitchell & Jolley, 2004, p. 145). The disadvantages of a descriptive correlation research design are (a) the design does not explain relationships and (b) there are no control variables. However, such a design suits a study of SL in the senior military officer cadre because there is little research on the topic. Correlation research will pave the way for empirically based research that hones in on independent variables likely to affect the dependent variable.

One limitation of the study was that service members attending the war are typically the best of the military cadre. The population sample did not fully capture the marginal or average senior military officer. Therefore, results may not reflect the entire senior officer pool at the O5 and O6 level. However, 17% of the participants did not have any senior service school experience, thereby creating a more reflective sample of the overall O5 and O6 officer pool. Another limitation was that cause and effect could not be determined from a research study based

on Chi-square, t-test, and correlation. Although the survey sample from the competitive war colleges and other senior military officers produced a wide sample from across the services, the sampling was not a true systematic random sampling of the entire senior officer pool. The RSL-P was self-rated and the results are typically higher than when a 360 degree approach is used (McClellan, 2008). The small number of females at the NDU is 3% less than the overall service demographic and therefore the results regarding gender should be interpreted with caution (Williams, 2005). However, the overall female participation rate was slightly higher than the senior female officer pool.

The conclusions about the results are limited to the significance of the relationships between variables and the differences between means. The lack of control groups, random selection, and independent variable manipulation prohibit determining causality. Threats to internal validity may be high with unaccounted confounding variables. Construct validity may be threatened by the possibility that the instrument is not measuring SL. The confidence level of the instrument will increase with more studies confirming the construct validity of the measure. Because the sample had extensive militaristic training and indoctrination with respect to leadership, generalizing the findings to other populations and other settings from other countries should be done with extreme caution.

Delimitations included the elimination of surveying participants at the O4 or Major/Lieutenant Commander and general officer level (O7 and above). Officers at the O4 level, while considered a field grade officer, are not selected for attendance at the NDU senior service colleges. There is a substantial

difference in training and responsibility at the general officer level in comparison to non-flag ranked officers. In addition, there would be an unbalanced and limited sample size if flag officers were included in the sample population. Since Earnhardt's (2008) SL research focused mostly on the enlisted personnel, this research was narrowly focused on the senior military officers at the O5 and O6 level.

Ethical Assurances

Before data collection began, IRB approval and Department of Defense approval was obtained to protect the participants' rights. Informed consent was obtained from participants indicating they read details of the study and a statement about the strict maintenance of privacy, confidentiality, and the right to decline participation without penalty at any time. The NDU had its own internal IRB to review and approve all surveys given to its student body. In addition, the DoD has a policy requiring pre-approval of survey instruments given to DoD personnel. The research proposal met the qualifications for exemption from formal review under DoDI 8910.01 and was approved by the DMDC. Permission was obtained from NDU's IRB to survey class of 2010 students at the beginning of the academic school year in August 2009. Access to survey the students at NDU is extremely limited, but permission was granted because of the military senior officer focus and application for possible curriculum changes. Participants were U.S. military officers over the age of 18 who gave informed consent and received a participation summary articulating the study's confidentiality and anonymity (see Appendix B). Each officer had the choice to participate and his or

her decision was strictly confidential. Participants, especially the female officers, may have been sensitive about revealing their branch of service, combat experience, military occupational specialty, gender, or age because with the small female population one could be identified by the demographic information. However, the survey was anonymous to the greatest extent possible, and all data was handled consistent with the Privacy Act of 1974. Adequate security measures for storage and handling of the data included a password-protected file and computer login with strong encryption. Only the researcher had access to the raw data. Three participants requested an executive summary or final copy of the dissertation by emailing the researcher's private email address as indicated in the introductory information of the survey. The e-mail addresses will be destroyed using electronic shredding techniques once the executive summaries and dissertation have been electronically delivered. Because the study participants were anonymous adults who shared their attitudes about SL in an academic setting, an expedited IRB review was appropriate and granted for this study.

As an employee of the U.S. government, the researcher was careful to abide by Executive Order 12333 of 1981, which restricts the collection of intelligence information directed against U.S. citizens. This research was for academic purposes only. The opinions of the researcher expressed in the dissertation are the researcher's sole responsibility and do not reflect the opinions of the Department of Defense or any other U.S. government agency.

The researcher is an alumnus of the NDU and is a former U.S. Army officer. The researcher is a current member of the intelligence career field with a national intelligence agency. The male researcher is also a Christian and a practitioner of SL principles. Effort was made to reduce the researcher bias by selecting a well substantiated quantitative instrument and by thinking critically about the constructs and demographic variables selected. To protect the anonymity of individuals, the results were reported as group means and no identifying personnel information was collected. Interpretation of differences with SL scores by the demographic variables was reported with strict factual representation. The researcher intentionally avoided making positive or negative comments with respect to the demographic variables and was sensitive to the dynamics of the topic. Concerns over bias can be leveled against any research method or individual, but it is imperative to reduce bias to the greatest extent possible.

Summary

The quantitative methods used to examine SL attributes in senior military officers were adequate and were on par with other studies that used the SLP-R. Distributing the survey via SurveyMonkey.com through secured socket layer allowed for confirmed informed consent and data safeguards to reduce errors and missing ratings before submission. Data collection, processing, and analysis was easily handled using SurveyMonkey.com and exporting the data set to SPSS 16 for final analysis.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

The purpose of this quantitative research study was to examine SL attributes in senior military officers at the O5 and O6 level by examining the following key demographic variables: combat experience, occupational specialty or designator, gender, branch of service, and age. Wong and Page's (2003) SLP-R (see Appendix A), was delivered online to current and former war college students and senior military officers to explore the extent to which they possess SL traits and the factors, if any, that differentiate them. The following sections report the results obtained in this study, an analysis, and evaluation of the findings, and a summary of the findings.

Results

A total of 166 surveys were submitted with an approximate return rate of 28%. An exact rate of return cannot be determined with the use of restricted discussion group alumni postings of the survey link. Three surveys were eliminated from the data set because of incomplete surveys or partial duplication of an individual response. All of the participants gave informed consent and agreed with the guidelines of the study. Seventy percent of the respondents were on active duty and 30% were retired. While most of the participants were located in the Washington, D.C. metro area, following graduation at NDU, a majority of the officers will be given new assignments across the globe. Using IP address identification within SurveyMonkey, the participants' geographic location was global in nature, to include responses from Iraq and Afghanistan.

Survey data from the SLP-R was divided into multiple averages. A raw total average was calculated for the overall SL score by averaging the positive factors (a) empowering and developing others, (b) serving others, (c) open, participatory leadership, (d) inspiring leadership, (e) visionary leadership, and (f) authentic/courageous leadership, with the negative factors of power and pride. Power and pride factors were converted to a positive one by scoring it in reverse based on Wong and Page's (2008) recommendation. Scoring high on abuse of power and pride automatically disqualified one as a servant leader, regardless of high scores on the other subscales (Wong & Page, 2008). A score greater than 2.0 on the negative Factor 2, abuse of power and pride, would eliminate someone as a strong servant leader. Since Wong and Page's (2008) research showed that an average score on all positive factors greater than 5.6 suggests a strong servant leader, a variable was created to determine if the 5.6 threshold was met for each participant. Forty-one percent of the participants scored too high on abuse of power and pride to be considered a servant leader. However, 80% of the participants showed strong SL traits on the positive factors such as (a) empowering and developing others, (b) serving others, (c) open, participatory leadership, (d) inspiring leadership, (e) visionary leadership, and (f) authentic/courageous leadership.

Descriptive statistics and correlation analysis obtained from the data will be presented next. The tables in the paper will have varying totals depending on the variables being analyzed, some may total, 160, 162, or 163. The researcher

included all valid responses for each variable analyzed to maximize the statistical properties.

Figure 4 represents the war college experience of the participants. The majority of the participants, 42%, were current students or alumni of ICAF. There were no Coast Guard participants in the study, which was expected given that typically only one or two students attend NDU each year at either ICAF or NWC.

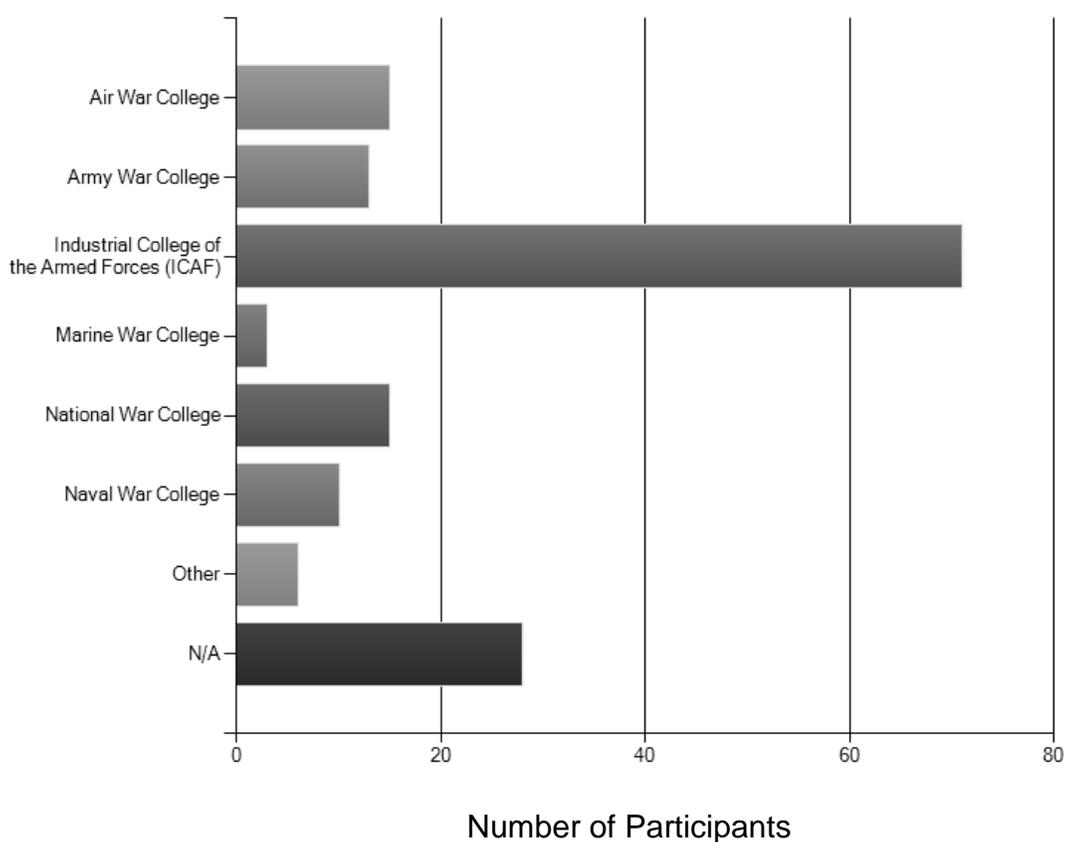


Figure 4. Military Senior School Experience of Participants

Since the researcher is an alumna of ICAF, response rates might have been higher from those students because they wanted to show support for a fellow student. As with the entire military population, there is a strong professional rivalry between the senior service schools (US Army War College, 2009). The

NWC only represented 10% of the participants. Seventeen percent of participants did not have any senior service school experience creating a more reflective sample of the larger O5 and O6 military officer pool. Sixty percent of the participants held the rank of O5 and 40% held the rank of O6. The one-way ANOVA, $F(1,161) = 9.35$, $MSE = 5.019$, $p = .003$, demonstrated statistically significant differences in mean SL score between O6 Col/Capt officers and O5 Lt. Col/CMDR officers, as Earnhardt's (2008) study suggested (see Table 6).

Table 6

Servant Leadership Profile-R Means by Rank

Rank	<i>n</i>	SLP-R		
		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SEM</i>
Lt Col/CMDR (O5)	97	5.39	.78	.08
Col/Capt (O6)	65	5.75	.65	.08

Q1: Combat experience of senior military officers. Analysis of variance showed there was no statistical difference of mean SL score between those with combat experience and those without. Combat veteran's comprised 63% of the respondents with 34% having received a Combat Action Badge/Medal/Ribbon. Over one third of the participants had significant combat experience who engaged in live fire combat with the enemy. Table 7 shows the mean SL scores by combat experience and by combat action medal/ribbon.

Table 7

Mean SLP-R Scores by Combat Experience

Combat Veteran	<i>n</i>	SLP-R		<i>SEM</i>
		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
No	60	5.94	0.98	0.13
Yes	102	5.91	0.87	0.09
Combat Action Medal/Ribbon				
No	106	5.95	0.80	0.08
Yes	56	5.87	1.09	0.15

Q2: Occupational specialty/designators of senior military officers. The SLP-R scores based on occupational specialty/designators of senior military officers did not vary (see Table 10). Table 8 shows which directorate code that best described the respondent's current or most recent occupation by military service.

Table 8

Directorate Code by Military Service

Directorate Code	Military Service				Total
	Air Force	Army	Marines	Navy	
1 - Manpower, Personnel, and Administration	7	12	2	6	27
2 - Intelligence	5	5	0	8	18
3 - Operations	18	17	5	13	53
4 - Logistics and Security	10	6	4	4	24
5 - Plans and Policy	2	4	2	1	9

Directorate Code	<u>Military Service</u>				Total
	Air Force	Army	Marines	Navy	
6 - Communications	1	5	0	0	6
7 - Training	2	7	1	4	14
8 - Finance, Resources and Assessments	2	5	1	3	11
Total	47	61	15	39	162

The directorate code question forced respondents to assign their specific occupation/designator into a general common sub list of directorate codes common across all services. An open ended response question was provided to respondents to input their specific military occupational specialty/designation. However, the results had over 115 different classifications. The most common occupations are shown in Table 9.

Table 9

Frequency of Most Common Occupations

Occupation	<i>n</i>	Percent
Pilot	21	13.0%
Intelligence	10	6.10%
Logistician	10	6.10%
Surface Warfare	8	4.90%
Infantry	7	4.30%
Physician	6	3.70%
Special Forces	4	2.40%

Table 10

SLP-R Means by Directorate Code

Directorate code	<i>n</i>	SLP-R <i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
1 - Manpower, Personnel, and Administration	23	6.18	0.47
2 - Intelligence	18	5.93	1.11
3 - Operations	53	5.90	0.94
4 - Logistics and Security	24	5.86	1.21
5 - Plans and Policy	9	5.88	0.58
6 - Communications	6	5.88	0.31
7 - Training	14	6.00	0.48
8 - Finance, Resources and Assessments	11	5.90	0.48
9 - Civil Military Operations/Inter agency	4	5.18	2.26
Total	162	5.93	0.91

Q3 & Q4: Gender and service of senior military officers. The mean SLP-R scores for males and females were equal among the senior military officers. There was no statistical difference in mean SLP-R scores based on the senior military officers' branch of service or directorate code. Table 11 shows the distribution of participants by gender and military service. The low percentage (19.6%) of female senior officers was expected given that the West Point class of 2009 was 14% women (Quigley, 2009). The Army and Navy have female field grade officer (O4 – O6) percentages of 12.8% and 14% respectively. Female Marine field grade officers comprise only 2.5% of its field grade officer cadre (Looney, 2004). According to the Air Force Personnel Center (2009), only 18% of Air Force officers are female.

Table 11

Number of Participants by Gender and Military Service

Gender	Military Service				Response Percent	Response Count
	Air Force	Army	Marines	Navy		
Female	13	14	1	4	19.6%	32
Male	35	47	14	35	80.4%	131

Q5: Senior military officers' age. Correlation analysis did not suggest any relationship between SLP-R scores of military officers and their age. The average age of the respondents was 47 years with a minimum of 36 and a maximum of 68 with a *SD* of 6.46. The age distribution was normal within the range.

Evaluation of Findings

In examining *Q1: To what extent, if any, do SLP-R scores differ based on combat experience of senior military officers?*, there were no statically significant differences in mean total SLP-R scores for both combat veterans and those with a combat action medal, ribbon, or badge. Critical examination of each of the seven sub factors of SLP-R scores showed no statistically significant difference for combat veterans. However, for those with a combat action medal, ribbon, or badge, the one-way ANOVA, $F(1,162) = 5.905$, $MSE = 7.43$, $p = .016$, demonstrated statistically significant differences in Factor 2 (abuse of power and pride) mean SL sub score.

In examining *Q2: To what extent, if any, do the SLP-R scores differ based on occupational specialty/designators of senior military officers?*, there were no statistically significant difference in mean SLP-R scores and all seven SLP-R sub scores when comparing the nine different directorate codes. Analysis of the top seven most common occupational codes (see Table 7) provided no statistically significant differences in the mean total SLP-R scores or positive SLP-R scores. There was little variance in means scores across the directorate codes. (see Table 12).

Table 12

Positive Mean Scores by Directorate Code

Directorate Code	<i>M</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SEM</i>
1 - Manpower, Personnel, and Administration	6.04	28	0.94	0.18
2 - Intelligence	5.93	18	1.11	0.26
3 - Operations	5.90	53	0.94	0.13
4 - Logistics and Security	5.86	24	1.21	0.25
5 - Plans and Policy	5.88	9	0.58	0.19
6 - Communications	5.88	6	0.31	0.12
7 - Training	6.00	14	0.48	0.13
8 - Finance, Resources and Assessments	5.90	11	0.48	0.14
Total	5.93	163	0.91	0.07

In examining Q3: To what extent, if any, do the SLP-R scores differ based on the gender of senior military officers?, there were no statistically significant differences in SLP-R scores between genders of senior military officers. Analysis of all of the seven sub factors also found no differences in both positive and total SLP-R scores among genders. When examining the negative factors of power and pride, women had a higher SL attribute than men. The one-way ANOVA, $F(1,162) = 4.82$, $MSE = .960$, $p = .030$, demonstrated statistically significant differences between men and women in those meeting the SL threshold of those scoring less than 2.0 on Factor 2. Corriere (2006) found that male military health service executives were more likely to exhibit a "Directive" leadership style than

women military health service executives (p. 139). A more directive leadership style may partially account for having a high power and pride score.

In examining Q4: To what extent, if any, do the SLP-R scores differ based on the senior military officers' branch of service?, there were no statistically significant differences found between the services. However, when examining the differences of the SL test of having a high positive SL score and low pride and ego score, one-way ANOVA $F(1,162) = 3.79$, $MSE = .572$, $p = .012$, demonstrated statistically significant differences between the services. Specifically, only 4 out of the 15 Marines in the study showed a strong SL trait when accounting for delimiting high pride and ego scores. As a result, there was a statistically significant difference in a strong SL presence between Marine and Naval officers ($p < .01$).

In examining Q5: To what extent, if any, does the SLP-R scores of senior military officers relate to age?, there were no statistically significant relationships, $r = .072$, $p < .38$ (two-tailed), between the age of the military officers and SLP-R scores. In addition, there were no relationships between the age of the military officers and the seven sub factors of SL. Finally, there was no relationship between the age of the military officers and the servant leadership trait.

There were no differences in mean SLP-R scores among senior military officers across all five variables: combat experience, occupational specialty/designator, gender, branch of service, and age. Furthermore, there was no correlation $r = .072$, $p < .38$ (two-tailed) between an officer's age and SRL-R mean score. Therefore, none of the five null hypotheses can be rejected. The

mean SLP-R scores of an officer's rank at the O5 and O6 level differed significantly ($p < .01$). Although this variable was collected in the survey, it was not part of the five research questions. This study confirms Earnhardt's (2008) research that gender has no impact on the SL constructs. However, it confirms that rank and branch of service may be a determining factor in an officer's SL traits. The field of SL in a senior military officer setting is greatly impacted by the results of this research. Several key questions have been answered in a quantitative manner indicating that researchers should no longer explore SL traits relating to standard demographic variables. The reliability statistics for the instrument was high with a Cronbach's Alpha of .975. This Cronbach α is similar to Rude (2004) and McClellan (2008) reliability scores.

Summary

This study provided a scientific baseline for SL in the senior military officer cadre. This study expanded Earnhardt's (2008) research on SL in the military. This research confirms that a majority of O5 and O6 military officers have strong SL traits. Eighty percent of the military officers showed strong servant leadership traits on the positive factors such as (a) empowering and developing others, (b) serving others, (c) open, participatory leadership, (d) inspiring leadership, (e) visionary leadership, and (f) authentic/courageous leadership. Additional discussion of this study's implications and recommendations for potential future research studies will be presented in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5: IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS

This quantitative study determined the level of SL in the senior U.S. military officer cadre and determined the extent, if any, SLP-R scores change across demographic factors of U.S. senior military officers. Navy Adm. Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told the Senate Appropriations Committee's defense subcommittee in June 2009 that recruitment and retention should be a high priority in the budget. Vadell (2008) researched junior Air Forces officers and found that there is a strong relationship between commitment and intent of junior officers leaving. Hill (2008) found that that "servant-leadership characteristics positively influence employees' job satisfaction ($r = .521, p < .05$)" (p. 63). Vadell found that trust is a growing factor in leadership and junior officers leaving the Air Force and that there is a relationship between trust and commitment. Trust has been closely tied with SL practices and theory (Hamilton & Nord, 2005; Patterson, 2003).

The purpose of this quantitative study was to examine SL attributes in senior military officers and determine the scope of SL attributes and the demographics that different them. Wong and Page's SLP-R (2003) 62 question survey was administered to current and former military officers at the O5 and O6 level of all branches of service. All of the respondents had attended a senior service school with the majority coming from ICAF. The limitations of the study center on the non-causal model used for the research. In addition, the time of the survey administration to the current students of NDU competed with other required new student survey forms (see appendix G) and may have contributed

to a lower than expected response rate. Another limiting factor is that the high percentage of senior service school attendance may not be reflective of the overall general military population of O5 and O6 officers. As a result, the sample population may not be representative of the larger military senior officer cadre. On the recommendation of review officials from the Defense Management Data Center (DMDC), the proposed five \$100 random gift card drawings were eliminated prior to deployment of the research instrument. This change eliminated any possible ethical conflicts of active duty members being double compensated for their time and other appearances of unethical conduct. However, this change may have lowered the response rate of the instrument.

Chapter 1 was an introduction of the problem statement, the research questions, and definitions pertinent to this study. Chapter 2 was a review of the literature. Chapter 3 was a discussion of the research methods, design, instrument, data collection, assumptions, and ethical assurances. Chapter 4 reported the results and findings. This chapter will discuss the research hypotheses and the data analysis regarding any support or rejection of the hypotheses mentioned in chapter 1. The chapter will also discuss practical implications of the study and present recommendations for future research.

Implications

Overall, there were few differences in SLP-R scores found across the demographic variables of the senior military officers sampled. The dissertation findings were consistent with Earnhardt's (2008) research study that found the demographic variable of gender had no impact on the SL constructs. For

research Q1: To what extent, if any, do SLP-R scores differ based on combat experience of senior military officers?, there were no statistically significant differences based on combat experience of senior military officers. As a result, $H1_0$: There is no difference in SLP-R scores among senior military officers based on combat experience, is not rejected. However, for those with a combat action medal, ribbon, or badge, the one-way ANOVA, demonstrated statistically significant differences in Factor 2 (abuse of power and pride) mean SL sub score. Table 13 shows that senior officers with a combat action medal, ribbon, or badge had a statistically higher mean score ($p < .05$), for the negative factors of abuse of power and pride. On average, the combat action recipients scored too high on abuse of power and pride to be considered a servant leader. However, there was little difference between the overall SL percentage between those with and without combat action.

Table 13

Combat Action by Factor 2 and Positive SL Score

Combat Action	<i>n</i>	Factor 2 <i>M</i>	SL %	<i>SE</i>
No	107	2.66	82	0.107
Yes	56	3.11	77	0.154
Total	163	2.81	80	0.089

The threshold to receive a Combat Action medal, ribbon, or badge is very high. As previously discussed, a soldier, sailor, or marine must engage in direct combat with the enemy. Combat experience may have an influence in how an officer perceives individual power and pride. Hoge, Castro, Messer, McGurk, Cotting, and Koffman (2004) found that U.S. military personnel engaged in major

ground combat and hazardous security duty in Iraq and Afghanistan had a significant risk of mental health problems such as major depression, generalized anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Only 23% to 40% of those tested positive for a mental disorder sought mental health care. The senior officers who received the Combat Action award had a different level of leadership traits in the areas associated with power and pride. The specific cause of this difference cannot be determined in this study.

For research Q2: To what extent, if any, do the SLP-R scores differ based on occupational specialty/designators of senior military officers?, there were no differences found in SLP-R scores by occupational specialty/designators of senior military officers. As a result, H_{20} : There is no difference in SLP-R scores among senior military officers based on occupational specialty/designator, is not rejected. Despite the wide range of respondent occupations, each senior military officer had similar leadership training throughout his/her career that was well structured and formalized at each career milestone. All of the officers had basic officer training, a 20 week O3 level course, and a 10 month O4 course such as command and staff school designed to educate and train field grade officers to be adaptive leaders. Ostensibly, officer leadership training prior to senior service school attendance is consistent across the services and may account for the similar SL scores found across the different occupational specialties of senior military officers.

For research Q3, To what extent, if any, do the SLP-R scores differ based on the gender of senior military officers?, there were no differences in SLP-R

scores between male and female senior military officers using Chi-square analysis. As a result, $H3_0$: There is no difference in SLP-R scores among senior military officers based on gender, is not rejected. In addition, women and men had approximately the same percentage of strong SL traits when measuring the positive factors (see Table 14).

Table 14

Percentage of Strong SL Trait by Gender

Gender	<i>n</i>	Strong SL Trait	<i>SD</i>	<i>SEM</i>
Female	32	78%	0.42	0.07
Male	131	81%	0.39	0.03
Total	163	80%	0.40	0.03

Table 13 shows the percentage of respondents having strong SL traits among the positive factors by gender. There was no statistically significant difference in the percentages of strong SL traits among the positive factors by gender.

However, examining the negative factors of SL, abuse of power and pride, found that 44% of the women and 25% of the men scored below the threshold to be considered a SL ($p < .05$). While significant, the results of gender should be interpreted with caution given that the number of men respondents was 4 times as large as the number of women who participated in the study.

For research Q4: To what extent, if any, do the SLP-R scores differ based on the senior military officers' branch of service?, there were no differences found in the mean SLP-R scores based on the branch of service. As a result, $H4_0$: There is no difference in SLP-R scores among senior military officers based on branch of service, is not rejected. ANOVA Post Hoc Bonferroni showed a

statistically significant ($p < .05$) difference in overall strong SL mean scores between Navy and Marine senior officers. The results should be interpreted with caution given that the Marine senior officers numbered 15 and only accounted for 9% of the sample population, as compared to 39 and 23% respectively for the Navy senior officers. Overall, when examining the total SLP-R scores, the military branch of service appeared to have no impact.

For research Q5: To what extent, if any, does the SLP-R scores of senior military officers relate to age?, there was no relationship between SLP-R scores and the age of the senior military officers. As a result, $H5_0$: There is no correlation between the SLP-R score and senior military officers' age, is not rejected. There was no correlation between age and any of the seven sub factors of SL. Given that minimum years of service thresholds must be met to obtain each rank, age did correlate with rank ($p < .001$).

Due to the extremely limited research focused on SL in military settings, this study has extended the knowledge in the field of SL. This investigation heightened the understanding in the field regarding combat experience, occupational specialty/designator, gender, age, rank and SL, as it appears to be the only study that has focused on SL at the O5 and O6 military officer level.

In the book, *The Leadership Secrets of Colin Powell*, Harari (2003), describes SL as being one of General Powell's ten leadership principles. Brigadier General Gregg Martin (2000) argued that SL principles should be taught, integrated, and followed by its military leaders. This research revealed that 80% of the participants showed strong SL traits on the positive factors such

as (a) Servanthood, (b) Leadership, (c) Visioning, (d) Developing others, (e) Empowering others, (f) Team-building, (g) Shared decision-making, and (h) Integrity. However, only 41% of the respondents met the threshold on the negative factor of abuse of power and pride to be considered a servant leader. Perhaps efforts should be made to change the senior officer's view of power and pride when leading others. One could also argue that the current leadership style and traits held by the senior military officers give them an edge in combat.

Some of the limitations that may have affected the interpretation of the results have to do with using a self-scoring assessment; the participant's own standards or evaluations will influence the results. No two people will agree on what constitutes strongly agree or disagree on the 62 different items. The respondents from this study sample came from new entering students at the NDU and alumni who were working in operational environments or who may have retired. As a result, some respondents might have answered survey questions differently depending on whether they were in an academic environment or an operational environment. A few of the participants completed the survey from an active war zone that might have affected the results. Since each respondent had many years of leadership training throughout his/her career, it is conceivable they answered the questions from an idealistic standpoint instead of recording their actual motivations and behaviors (Jacobson, 2009). Another limitation was inherent with the different cultures represented by the respondents. No demographic data was collected on race, culture, and religion. In addition, the SL survey administered by NDU competed with several

other new student surveys and may have contributed to a lower than expected response rate.

The results and analysis of this research data fulfills the purpose of examining SL traits among U.S. senior military officers at the O5 and O6 level. The results have possible significant impact on leadership training curriculums across the services with respect to the abuse of power and pride factor. According to General Kelley, the officer core of the military establishment is held to the highest standards of behavior and is made by the “humility, honesty, moral courage, trust, and allegiance manifested by honorable men and women” (Kelly as cited in Puryear, 2009, p. 458). Humility is a key aspect of SL that is often at odds within the U.S. military’s strong sense of pride. The Navy SEAL creed (2009) best describes the importance of military humility and self-sacrifice:

My loyalty to Country and Team is beyond reproach. I humbly serve as a Guardian to my fellow Americans always ready to defend those who are unable to defend themselves. I do not advertise the nature of my work or seek recognition for my actions. I voluntarily accept the inherent hazards of my profession placing the welfare and security of others before my own (para. 3).

This research expanded Earnhardt’s (2008) study on SL in the military and filled a critical void in the existing literature on SL. The results also provided new insights for future SL research in military settings.

Recommendations

Based on the results of this study, it is recommended that the variables: combat experience, occupational specialty/designator, and age be carefully considered before additional research is conducted exploring SL traits in the

senior military officer setting. However, given the significant results for rank, further research should be conducted in a military officer context at the ranks above and below the O5 and O6 levels to see if there is a direct linear relationship between mean SLP-R scores and rank O1 through O10. Based on the significant results for rank, SL appears to be an approach worth further exploration to possibly counter the exodus of top caliber junior officers leaving the military (Martin, 2000; Tilghman, 2007). Since positive job satisfaction has been linked to SL, attrition may be lowered if officers can be better practitioners of SL. Given Earnhardt's (2008) results for SL regarding rank in the non-commission officer and enlisted rankings, a random and representative comprehensive study comparing all ranks and services should be conducted. Causation studies are also needed to determine if the presence of SL in the military work environment causes increased job satisfaction and retention of junior officers.

All of the services except for the U.S. Marines had similar results across the negative factor of abuse of power and pride. A more extensive study focusing on SL in the Marine Corps should be explored. There is a unique esprit de corps that distinguishes the U.S. Marines from other U.S. armed services (Johnson, 2009). All Marines, except for the elite U.S. Marine Band members, are trained as an infantry soldier, and are prepared to go to the front of the battlefield at any given moment. General Paul Kelley, USMC (Ret.), stated the following, "It is fitting, I believe, that for 230 years Marines have been influenced and motivated

by two simple Latin words—*Semper Fidelis*—Always Faithful” (Kelley, as cited in Puryear, 2009, p. 458).

Further SL research should be conducted on the aspects of gender differences on the factors of power, pride, and humility within a military context. Overall, gender differences were not present in mean SLP-R scores, which may indicate consistent leadership training for both genders prior to senior service school attendance. Further research is needed to determine if the SL model should be more formally applied to the 21st century military organization. From this research, ostensibly positive SL traits are commonly found in the senior military officer cadre. Since the religion variable was eliminated omitted from this study, the researcher was unable to determine if one’s religious self-identification had any relationship to SL traits.

The DoD should consider using the results from this study to refine its officer leadership curriculum at all the service academies, officer candidate school, O3 level training, command and staff (O4) training, and senior service schools. While 80% of the participants had strong SL traits on the positive factors, 59% of the respondents failed to meet the threshold on the negative factor of abuse of power and pride to be considered a servant leader. As a result, much work is needed to educate officers on how to use effectively their position of leadership and to humbly server their country. Ostensibly, officers with a high abuse of power and pride score can negatively influence subordinate officers’ retention rates and the overall command climate. It is recommended that a SL

block be taught at the aforementioned leadership schools specifically addressing power and pride of the military officer.

Conclusions

In summary, it is important to understand the benefits of implementing SL principles in the military setting. Most of the SL variables are indirectly and directly mentioned in the military leadership literature. Adopting SL principles in the military may lead to higher officer retention rates by having senior officers emphasize building relationships and serving others as much as they emphasize organizational metrics. A majority of senior military officers surveyed had strong SL traits across all of the services. However, 41% of the participants scored too high on abuse of power and pride to be considered a servant leader. Further research is needed to examine why senior military officers scored high on abuse of power and pride. This study answered Earnhardt's (2008) call to research SL with larger cross sectional sample with different geographic areas and career fields. This study also added to the reliability research of the SLP-R instrument and confirmed a high reliability score. This study showed that O6 officers surveyed had higher mean SL scores than O5 officers. Ostensibly, with the war on terrorism, the stakes are especially high for America's military as the role of the military officer is becoming increasingly more complex and challenging in a global battlefield.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

Servant Leadership Profile-Revised

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Leadership matters a great deal in any organization's success or failure. This instrument was designed to measure positive and negative leadership characteristics.

Please use the following scale to indicate your agreement or disagreement with each statement in describing your own attitudes and practices as a leader. If you have not held any leadership position within an organization, answer the questions as if you were in a position of authority and responsibility. There are no right or wrong answers. Simply rate each question in terms of what you really believe or normally do in leadership situations.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree (SD)			Undecided			Strongly Agree (SA)

For example, if you strongly agree, you might circle 7. If you mildly disagree, you would circle 3. If you are undecided, circle 4, but please use this category sparingly.

- | | |
|---|---------------|
| 1. To inspire team spirit, I communicate enthusiasm and confidence. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |
| 2. I listen actively and receptively to what others have to say, even when they disagree with me. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |
| 3. I practice plain talking; I mean what I say and say what I mean. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |
| 4. I always keep my promises and commitments to others. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |
| 5. I grant all my workers a fair amount of responsibility and latitude in carrying out their tasks. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |
| 6. I am genuine and honest with people, even when such transparency is politically unwise. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |
| 7. I am willing to accept other people's ideas whenever they are better than mine. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |
| 8. I promote tolerance, kindness, and honesty in the workplace. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |

9. To be a leader, I should be front and center in every function in which I am involved. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
10. I create a climate of trust and openness to facilitate participation in decision-making. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
11. My leadership effectiveness is improved through empowering others. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
12. I want to build trust through honesty and empathy. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
13. I am able to bring out the best in others. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
14. I want to make sure that everyone follows orders without questioning my authority. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
15. As a leader, I expect my name to be associated with every initiative. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
16. I consistently delegate responsibility to others and empower them to do their job. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
17. I seek to serve rather than be served. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
18. To be a strong leader, I need to have the power to do whatever I want without being questioned. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
19. I am able to inspire others with my enthusiasm and my confidence in what can be accomplished. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
20. I am able to transform an ordinary group of individuals into a winning team. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
21. I try to remove all organizational barriers so that others can freely participate in decision-making. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
22. I devote a lot of energy to promoting trust, mutual understanding, and team spirit. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
23. I derive a great deal of satisfaction from helping others succeed. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
24. I have the moral courage to do the right thing, even when doing so hurts me politically. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
25. I am able to rally people around me and inspire them to achieve a common goal. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

26. I am able to present a vision that others readily and enthusiastically embrace. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
27. I invest considerable time and energy in helping others overcome their weaknesses and develop their potential. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
28. I want to have the final say on everything, even in areas in which I lack competence. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
29. I don't want to share power with others because they may use it against me. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
30. I practice what I preach. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
31. I am willing to risk mistakes by empowering others to "carry the ball." 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
32. I have the courage to assume full responsibility for my mistakes and acknowledge my own limitations. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
33. I have the courage and determination to do what is right in spite of difficulty or opposition. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
34. Whenever possible, I give others credit. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
35. I am willing to share my power and authority with others in the decision-making process. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
36. I genuinely care about the welfare of people working with me. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
37. I invest considerable time and energy equipping others. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
38. I make it a high priority to cultivate good relationships among group members. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
39. I am always looking for hidden talents in my workers. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
40. My leadership is based on a strong sense of mission. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
41. I am able to articulate a clear sense of purpose and direction for my organization's future. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
42. My leadership contributes to my employees'/colleagues' personal growth. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

43. I have a good understanding of what is happening inside the organization. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
44. I set an example of placing group interests above self-interest. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
45. I work for the best interests of others rather than self. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
46. I consistently appreciate, recognize, and encourage others' work. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
47. I always place team success above personal success. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
48. I willingly share my power with others, but I do not abdicate my authority and responsibility. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
49. I consistently appreciate and validate others for their contributions. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
50. When I serve others, I do not expect any return. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
51. I am willing to make personal sacrifices in serving others. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
52. I regularly celebrate special occasions and events to foster a group spirit. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
53. I consistently encourage others to take initiative. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
54. I am usually dissatisfied with the status quo and know how things can be improved. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
55. I take proactive actions rather than waiting for events to happen to me. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
56. To be a strong leader, I need to keep all of my subordinates under control. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
57. I find enjoyment in serving others in any role or capacity. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
58. I have a heart to serve others. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
59. I have great satisfaction in bringing out the best in others. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

60. It is important that I be seen as superior to my subordinates in everything. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
61. I often identify talented people and give them opportunities to grow and shine. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
62. My ambition focuses on finding better ways of serving others and making them successful. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

APPENDIX B

Informed Consent Form*

Examining Servant Leadership Attributes in Senior Military Officers

Purpose: Your school/institution has agreed to participate in a research study being conducted for a Ph.D. dissertation. The purpose of this study is to examine servant leadership attributes in senior military officers. Servant leadership is a concept introduced by Robert K. Greenleaf in the 1970s and expanded on since then. There is no deception in this study, which is intended to measure opinions about the presence of servant leadership in the senior officer cadre.

Participation Requirements: Military officers with rank of O5 or O6 (Lieutenant Colonel/Commander or Colonel/Captain) are asked to complete the Wong and Page (2003) 62-question self-reported revised servant-leadership questionnaire, which should take approximately 15–20 minutes.

Research Personnel: The following person is conducting this research project and may be contacted at any time: Shanan Farmer, srfarmer2000@yahoo.com.

Potential Risk/Discomfort: Although this study does not entail any known risks, some of the demographic questions may be viewed as personally sensitive. Participants may withdraw at any time and may choose not to answer any question that they feel uncomfortable answering.

Potential Benefit: All respondents may request an executive summary and dissertation of the research results. The results may have scientific implications resulting in the improvement of military officer training, curriculum, and education.

Anonymity/Confidentiality: The data collected in this study are confidential. All data are coded so that your organization will not be associated with them. Only the researcher will have access to the raw data. Email addresses required for the random drawing and executive summary will be kept in a separate secure, coded file removed from the main data set. Email addresses will be destroyed once the prizes and executive summaries have been distributed. No names will be collected for this survey.

Right to Withdraw: If participants do not wish to answer particular questions on the questionnaire, they may omit answering those questions. They also have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

By checking this box, I indicate that I have read the above description of the proposed study and understand the conditions of participation. I understand the data will be coded and anonymous. My submission of this survey indicates that I agree to participate.

*Adapted from *Northcentral University Dissertation Handbook*, 2009.

APPENDIX C

Demographic Questions

- A) Military Status: Active Duty, Retired, Separated
- B) Combat Veteran: Yes, No
- C) Have you received a Combat Action Badge/Medal/Ribbon?: Yes, No
- D) Military Senior Service School: Air War College, Army War College, Industrial College of the Armed Forces (ICAF), Marine War College, National War College (NWC), Naval War College, Other, N/A.
- E) Military Service: Air Force, Army, Marines, Navy, Coast Guard
- F) Rank: O5, O6
- G) Gender: Female, Male
- H) Age
- I) Occupational Specialty/Designation
- J) Directorate code which best describes your current or most recent occupation:
 - 1 – Manpower, Personnel, and Administration
 - 2 - Intelligence
 - 3 - Operations
 - 4 – Logistics and Security
 - 5 – Plans and Policy
 - 6 - Communications
 - 7 - Training

8 – Finance, Resources and assessments

9 - Civil Military Operations/Inter agency

Appendix D

Permission Email to Use SLP-R

From: Shanan Farmer [mailto:srfarmer@hawaiiintel.net]

Sent: Monday, September 15, 2008 11:12 PM

To: Don Page

Subject: RE: Requesting permission to use the revised servant leadership profile

“Okay, then please go ahead with what you already have as you can score the results yourself.

Permission granted.”

APPENDIX E
NWC Email to Students

From: Sherwood, Susan
Sent: Monday, August 17, 2009 10:03 AM
To: NWC-Students
Subject: NDU Institutional Review Board: Survey Opportunity

Good morning,

The National Defense University Institutional Review Board (IRB) occasionally gets requests from outside parties to offer survey participation to our students. We review each of these very carefully and approve only those that focus on research that has potential value for the military services, agencies, and departments that we serve. We ask you to give us a lot of internal feedback and we don't want to overburden you with other requests.

The IRB met and reviewed a proposal from a 2003 NDU graduate (ICAF) last spring and approved offering the survey participation opportunity to ICAF and NWC students this fall. Participation in this research project, which focuses on leadership, is strictly voluntary. However, if you are interested in assisting this researcher and receiving a copy of his findings, you can simply click on the link and complete the survey.

https://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=7_2b8SU7vzn0NZITfnqF_2bHkg_3d_3d

Thanks!

Susan

APPENDIX F

ICAF Email to Students

From: Clark, Judith
Sent: Thursday, August 13, 2009 11:09 AM
To: ICAF-STUDENTS
Cc: Keys, Randall; Herr, Sean; Dorsey, Harry L.; Clark, Judith; Jungdahl, Adam
Subject: Surveys/Critiques to Complete

Importance: High

Listed below are your first Surveys/Critiques. As a reminder, we will not be able to track the responses on any of the surveys you take back to you so please be frank in your responses. We are able to track who has completed each of our surveys, but not the actual responses that an individual makes. If you have any questions about this process, please feel free to stop by room 218 and I will be happy to show you our tracking tools.

Interservice Perception Instrument (ISPI) -- every student is required to complete this

This instrument will be administered to you twice this year. The first time is now to gain your initial impressions and the second time will be at the end of the year to gauge how your views have changed. We are looking for both positive and negative changes. This instrument can be found in DES at <http://jfscdesweb/des/>. After logging in, you will see *Interservice Perception Instrument - Initial* between the *Electives Program Information* and the *Student Bio Form* boxes. Click on the link to bring up the survey. **Please complete this survey before close of business next Tuesday, 18 August.**

Inprocessing Survey -- every student is required to complete this

Take this opportunity to let us know what we've done right/wrong this first week of school. The Inprocessing Survey can be found by clicking on http://survey.ndu.edu/ss/wsb.dll/icafadmin/2010_inprocess_xxx. **Please complete this survey by close of business Tuesday, 25 August.**

Additional VOLUNTARY Survey for current and former United States active duty 05 or 06 military officers--VOLUNTARY

As part of a PhD program, one of our ICAF graduates is seeking your assistance in gathering data. He would greatly appreciate if you took a few minutes to complete his survey. The survey should take no more than 10 minutes to complete and can be found at https://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=7_2b8SU7vzn0NZITfnqF_2bHkg_3d_3d. He would also appreciate if you complete the survey by **COB Monday, 24 August.**

RECAP

DATE DUE	SURVEY	LOCATION	COMMENTS
18 August	ISPI	http://jfscdesweb/des/	Required
25 August	Inprocessing	http://survey.ndu.edu/ss/wsb.dll/icafadmin/2010_xxx.htm	Required
24 August	Alumni Request	https://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=7_2b8SU7vzn0NZITfnqF_2bHkg_3d_3d	Voluntary for U.S. 05 & 06

As always, if you have any questions or problems do not hesitate to contact me **AND** Adam Jungdahl. One of us will be glad to assist you ASAP.

Thanks for your continued cooperation.

Judy Clark

Program Analyst

Industrial College of the Armed Forces