

Students' Perception of Teacher's Servant-Leadership Behavior: the Effect of Gender, Habitat, and their Interactions

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Abstract: *Servant-Teacher-Leadership is humanistic, characteristics, and spiritual rather than rational. It puts students rather than curriculum, at the centre of the concentric circles and it motivates students primarily through creating a caring, loving, and supportive classroom rather than through individual incentive systems. The present study examined students' Perception of Teacher's Servant-Leadership Behavior (PTSLB) and effects of gender, habitat, and their interaction between gender and habitat. The sample comprised of 570 students of class XI from three districts; South 24 Parganas, Kolkata, and Hooghly in West Bengal. The Organization Leadership Assessment (OLA) having six sub-scales was administered to collect data from the students in Bengali medium schools under the West Bengal Board of Secondary Education (W.B.B.S.E.). Statistical techniques like; descriptive statistics, ANOVA, and t-tests were used to analysis the data. The results showed that students highly perceive the Teacher's Servant Leadership Behavior. Gender and interaction of gender-habitat have a significant effect on perception of Teacher's Servant Leadership Behavior by students'.*

Keywords: Teacher's Servant-Leadership Behavior

1. Introduction

Servant-Leadership is a type of leadership which comes under democratic style (Olesia, Wekse S, Namusonge.G.S, Iravo, Mike, A, 2014, p.76). Leader and servant are two opposite terms. When the characters of two opposite are used simultaneously in an individual's leadership, the practice of Servant –Leadership takes places only. The servant teacher focused on education as relational, empowering, and liberating instead of on teaching as a one-way, top-down, authoritarian enterprise (Hays, 2008). Servant teaching is positively correlated with student indicators of learning and engagement (Noland & Richards, 2015, p.28; Joe D. Nichols, 2011) stated that, 'As Servant teachers, not only do we serve our students and our immediate school community, but also strategically build and develop democratic classrooms and encourage a life democratic living and principle among our students'.

Each of these three components (Servant, Teacher, & Leader) is critical to the concept of leadership (Metzcar, A. M., 2008, p.20). Similarly, each of these concepts is important to the successful operation of a classroom. 'Servant' is latent in both 'teacher' and 'leader' (Purkait, N, Sen.M.K, 2016, p.93). In his influential book Servant Leadership, Robert Greenleaf (1905-1990) touches on Vivekananda's concept of a leader being "a servant of servant" by saying "The servant leader is servant first. ... It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. This conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead" (Robert K Greenleaf, 2002, p.27). Vivekananda said, "The only true teacher is he who can immediately come down to the level of the student, and see through the student's eyes and hear through his ears and understand through his mind. Such a teacher can really teach and non else" (CW.IV.p.183).

Bass (2000) found (as cited in Kasun, 2009.) that servant-leadership has a place in educational organizations in the

new millennium because servant-leadership is based on team work and community involving others in decision making is strongly based in ethical and caring behavior, and enhance the growth people in the learning organization (p.33). Blanchard (2007) stated (as cited in Kasun, 2009) that servant-leadership not just another management techniques. Servant-leadership is a way of life. Servant-leaders work to establish the vision and values upfront and work bring out the best in those whom the leaders serve.

Laub (1999) assessed the Servant-organization and developed Organization Leadership Assessment (OLA) instrument. He found that gender, education level, age, and ethnic origin have no significant difference in mean OLA scores. OLA (60 items) was mean 223.79 out of total score 300 and SD was 41.08, and correlations among six-sub scales were ranged from 0.41 to 0.79. Don Page and Paul, T. P (2000) developed A Conceptual Framework for measuring Servant – Leadership. They administered self-assessment instrument to 6 male leader and 18 students (10 males and 8 females). The result of pilot study showed that male students self-rating are closer to female students.

Drury, S (2005) measured the perception of servant leadership by using Laub's (1999) Organization Leadership Assessment (OLA). The OLA was administered to 87 college students from one university. Findings of Drury (2005) indicate that students perceive their best instructors (teachers) to have a servant-leader mindset in the classroom.

Barbuto, J.E., and Gifford, G.T. (2010) were found no difference between men and women in servant-leadership behaviors. This means that males and females are equally capable of utilizing servant-leadership behaviors. In a theoretical research, Hannay, M. (n.d.) advocates that the servant-leadership model is a universal one that is a good fit cross-culturally (p.5).

In the light of Laub’s (1999) Servant -Leadership, students’ perception of teacher’s servant leadership behavior means students perceive their best teacher’s behavior that promotes valuing and development of people, the building of community, the practice of authenticity, providing leadership, and the sharing of power and status for common good of each individual and the organizations.

2. Objectives

The following objectives were formulated for the present investigation

- 1) To investigate the students’ Perception of Teacher’s Servant-Leadership Behavior (PTSLB).
- 2) To investigate the effect of gender, habitat, and their interaction on students’ Perception of Teacher’s Servant-Leadership Behavior (PTSLB)

Hypotheses

H₀1: There will be no students’ percept of teacher’s servant-leadership behaviour

H₀2: There will be no significant effect of (a) gender, (b) habitat, and(c) their interaction between gender and habitat on students’ perception of teacher’s servant-leadership behaviour.

H₀2.1: There will be no significant effect of gender on students’ perception of teacher’s servant-leadership behaviour.

H₀2.2: There will be no significant effect of habitat on students’ perception of teacher’s servant-leadership behaviour.

H₀2.3: There will be no significant effect of interaction between gender and habitat on students’ perception of teacher’s servant-leadership behaviour.

3. Methodology

The study involved 570 students of class XI (Just passed the M.P-2016) from three districts (South 24 Parganas, Kolkata, and Hooghly) in West Bengal, India. Data were collected using Bengali version of Laub’s (1999) Organizational Leadership Assessment (OLA) of 60 items.. The questions were scored on a five point Likert scale with answers ranging from 1-strongly disagree to 5-strongly agree. This was adapted for the purpose of this study. The instrument was modified by the researcher with the aim of measuring perception of Teacher’s Servant Leadership Behaviour. The English version questionnaire was translated and modified accordingly into Bengali.

To determine the level of perception of Teacher’s Servant Leadership Behavior, following score range in table used as guide,

Table 1: Range Perception of Teacher’s Servant-Leadership Behavior

Score	Level
1.00-2.00	Low
2.01-3.00	Moderate Low
3.01-4.00	Moderate High
4.01-5.00	High

Source: Nunnally et al. (1994).

ANOVA, t-tests are used for testing the hypotheses.

4. Results and Discussion

First the sample and item ratio 9.5(570:60) proved the sample size criterion. The KMO measure of sampling adequacy was calculated; and the value was 0.855 (great, Kaiser, 1974), and the Bartlett’s Sphericity test (Chi- Square test) the χ^2 value was 651.376($p < .01$) which indicated that there were a pattern relationship between items .and the data were suitable for the factor analysis (Ibrahim et.al. 2014). The Principal Components Analysis (PCA) with Varimax rotation (Orthogonal) was conducted. Only three items (3, 20, and 58) were excluded due to no loadings in any component of salient order factor structure. So, 57 items out of 60 items were retained. Numbers of factors to be extracted was determined primarily from (i) Kaiser’s Latent root criterion, (ii) Scree test, (iii) the over-factoring method i.e. delete those factors failing to yield salient loadings typically greater than 0.3(Chung, D., 2009, p.95), (iv) parallel analysis criterion, and(v) a prior criterion.

The Scree test result indicated that 6 was the maximum of factors to extract as there were 6 points above elbow; the point at which the curve changes direction and becomes horizontal. In over –factoring method the rotated component matrix showed only six factors were satisfactory laid in salient loading. The Monte Carlo PCA for Parallel Analysis programme was used to get the number extracted factors. Only those eigenvalues that exceed the corresponding values from the random data set are retained (Pallant, 2005; Tabachnick, & Fidell, 2007). Used the program by O’ Conor(O’ Conor, B.P., 2000) and the result revealed that the eigenvalues of five components were greater than the criterion value from parallel analysis. Though, eigenvalues of 6th component was slightly greater than the criterion value. In a prior criterion the researcher honoured to factor structure of Laub (1999), and finally six factors were extracted.

Table 2: Pearson Correlation Analysis with item no. and Cronbach’s Alpha of Teacher’s Servant Leadership Behavior dimensions (N=570)

Sl. No.		No. of item	VP	DP	BC	DA	PL	SL	Cronbach's Alpha(α)
1	VP	12	1						0.756
2	DP	9	.562**	1					0.705
3	BC	10	.491**	.394**	1				0.674
4	DA	9	.546**	.481**	.496**	1			0.632
5	PL	9	.457**	.321**	.395**	.394**	1		0.596
6	SL	8	.378**	.393**	.380**	.383**	.250**	1	0.544
7	Entire Test	57	.825**	.724**	.729**	.764**	.661**	.607**	0.887

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

VP: Values People, DP: Develops People, BC: Builds Community, DA: Displays Authenticity, PL: Provides Leadership, SL: Shares Leadership.

Shares Leadership	.624
Eigen value	3.129
% of variance	52.155

The extracted factors were interpreted as Values People, Develops People, Builds Community, Displays Authenticity, Provides Leadership, and Shares Leadership.

The scale reliability was estimated by Cronbach’s alpha method and it was ranges from 0.544 to 0.756; while the reliability of the entire test was 0.887. Six sub-test were significantly correlated with each other and the co-efficient of correlation values ranges from 0.250 to 0.562($p < 0.001$). It proved the intrinsic validity of the test. These six factors were explained 31.969% of variance of scores.

Table 3: Principal Component Factor Matrix for Teacher’s Servant Leadership Behavior (N=570)

Variables	Component
	1
Values People	.809
Develops People	.735
Builds Community	.733
Displays authenticity	.775
Provides Leadership	.637

Results (Table 3) revealed that one single factor was extracted ultimately which was found to account 52.155% of the total variance. Though, the solution was not rotated. This suggests that the test has sound construct validity, measuring only one factor i.e. Perception of Teacher’s Servant-Leadership Behavior.

Descriptive Statistics

The results showed that 324 students perceived Teacher’s Servant Leadership Behavior is high, 228 students’ perceived moderate high and only 18 students’ perceived moderate low. The mean score of students’ perception of Teacher’s Servant Leadership Behavior is 4.136. This result revealed that students’ perception of Teacher’s Servant Leadership Behavior is high. So, H01 is rejected.

Present study considered 2x2 ANOVA (2 types for gender, 2 types for habitat) to investigate whether mean scores in perception of Teacher’s Servant-Leadership Behavior differed due to gender , habitat , and due to their interaction.

Table 4: Results of 2x2 ANOVA by Gender and Habitat on Students’ Perception of Teacher’s Servant-Leadership Behavior (N=570)

Dependent Variable: TSLB

Source	SS	df	MS	F-ratio	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared	Observed Power
G: Gender	4039.067	1	4039.067	7.714	.006	.013	.792
H: Habitat	267.113	1	267.113	.510	.475	.001	.110
G x H	7287.481	1	7287.481	13.919	.000	.024	.961
Error	296343.329	566	523.575				
Corrected Total	305403.272	569					

SS: Sum of Squares, MS: Mean Square

5. Interpretation

Results of F-ratio is found to be significant on gender and on interaction, but insignificant on habitat. These results indicated that boys and girls group, and also different sub-groups differ significantly with refer to mean scores on perception of teacher’s servant- leadership behavior, but rural and urban do not differ significantly on the same.

Effect of Gender (G) on students’ Perception of Teacher’s Servant-Leadership Behavior

F-value for the mean scores on perception of teacher’s servant-leadership behavior with gender (boys and girls) is, $F(1,566) = 7.714$, $p < 0.01$, which is significant at 0.01 level of confidence. It means that the mean scores of boys and girls significantly differ in perception of teacher’s servant-leadership behavior. The mean scores of perception of teacher’s servant-leadership behavior of boys are significantly higher as compared to the girls. That is to say, the boys are likely to percept high in perception of teacher’s servant-leadership behavior. The results also reveal that the study has sufficient power to detect significant effect of gender on perception of perception of teacher’s servant-leadership behavior (as the static power is above .80). The gender accounts for 1.3% variance of perception of teacher’s servant-leadership behavior. So, the effect of gender on perception of perception of teacher’s servant-leadership

behavior is significant and of medium size ($\eta^2 = .013$). Therefore, the null hypothesis that there will be no significant effect of gender on students’ on perception of teacher’s servant-leadership behavior is unable to accept it, and hence **H02.1** is rejected. Therefore, the alternatives hypothesis upon students’ perception of teacher’s servant-leadership behavior mean scores of boys is higher than that of girls’ is accepted.

Effect of Habitat (H) on students’ Perception of Teacher’s Servant-Leadership Behavior

F-value for the perception on perception of teacher’s servant-leadership behavior with habitat (Rural and Urban) is, $F(1,566) = .510$, $p > 0.05$, which is not significant. It means that mean scores on perception of teacher’s servant-leadership behavior do not differ significantly by habitat (Rural and Urban). The results also reveal that the study has no sufficient power to detect the significant effect of habitat on perception of teacher’s servant-leadership behavior (as the static power is below .80) and the habitat accounts for .17% of perception of teacher’s servant-leadership behavior. Students’ perception of teacher’s servant-leadership behavior did not vary significantly by gender and the effect size is negligible ($\eta^2 = .001$). Thus, the null hypothesis that there will be no significant effect upon perception of teacher’s servant-leadership behavior is unable to reject, hence **H02.2** is accepted.

Effect of Interaction between Gender (G) and Habitat (H) on students' Perception of Teacher's Servant-Leadership Behavior

F-value for the mean scores on perception of teacher's servant-leadership behavior with interaction between gender and is $F(1,566) = 13.919, p < .01$, which is significant at .01 level of confidence. It means that interaction of gender and habitat produce significant effect on perception of teacher's servant-leadership behavior. The result also reveals that the study has sufficient power to detect any significant effect of interaction of gender and habitat on perception of teacher's servant-leadership behavior as obtained power static is above .80. Students' perception on teacher's servant-leadership behavior influenced significantly by interaction between gender and habitat with larger effect size ($\eta^2 = .024$).

Thus, the null hypothesis that, there will be no significant effect of interaction between gender and habitat on students' perception of teacher's servant-leadership behavior is unable to accept it, hence $H_0 2.3$ is rejected. So, the alternative hypothesis is, interaction between gender and habitat produce a significant effect on students' perception of teacher's servant-leadership behavior. But, F-value of interaction between gender and habitat does not tell about the trend of the effect of the interaction on perception of values people. So, interaction of gender and habitat is shown in the figure (Figure 1). Estimated marginal mean scores presented graphically had been compared further in view of significant F-value and graph, using t-tests. Table 5 presents the results of t-tests.

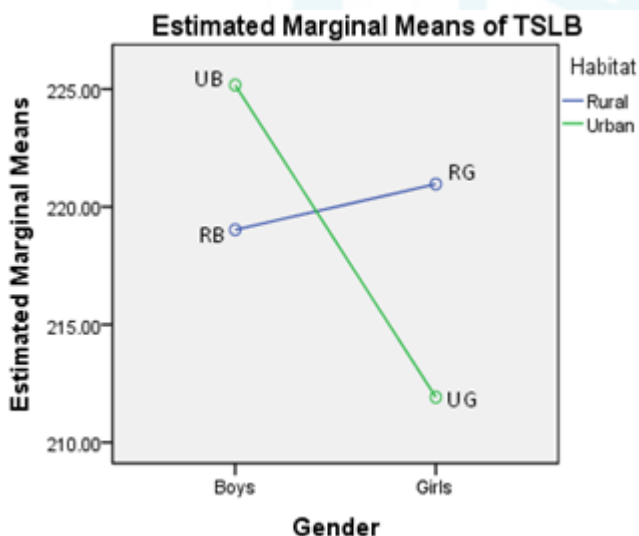


Figure 1: Gender by Habitat Interaction on Perception of Teacher's Servant Leadership Behavior

Table 5: t-ratio for the different combination of groups of interaction between Gender and Habitat for TSLB

Group	N	RB	RG	UB	UG
RB(M=218.063)	221	----	2.688**	4.175**	.348 NS
RG(M=222.353)	156		----	2.906**	1.206 NS
UB(M=225.168)	95			----	4.238**
UG(M=219.918)	98				----

** $p < .01$, RB; Rural Boys, RG; Rural Girls, UB; Urban Boys, UG; Urban Girls, M; Mean Score

Results of the t-test (Table 5) reveal that on Perception of Teacher's Servant Leadership Behavior; mean score(s) of

- 1) Rural girls is significantly higher than rural boys
- 2) Urban boys is significantly higher than rural boys and rural girls
- 3) Urban boys is significantly higher than rural girls
- 4) Urban girls do not differ from rural boys and rural girls significantly

6. Summary and Conclusion

This study measured students' perception of teacher's servant-leadership behavior and findings suggest that students highly perceive the teacher's servant-leadership behavior as their best teacher's behavior. This means that students' perceived their best teachers as servant-teacher. So, teacher's servant-leadership behavior has great acceptance to students and very much in demand. The reviewed literature reveals that 'the servant teaching is not only possible but also desirable' (Hays, 2008). This is a healthy sign where servant teachers have received high respect as best teachers from the students of Bengali medium schools in West Bengal.

This study also tested the gender effect of differences on perception of teacher's servant-leadership behavior and found significant differences. These findings are counter to the prior research report (Laub, 1999; Barbuto, J.E., & Wheel, 2006; Barbuto, J.E., & Gifford, G.T., 2010; Hannay, M., n.d.; Reynolds, K., 2016). Explanation of this finding- that boys perceived teacher's servant-leadership behavior higher as compared to girls- may be related to culture of shared decision-making and provides leadership. Servant-teacher creates a culture of shared decision-making that focus on students' achievement, collaboration, and open communication are likely to produce learning community that enhance school effectiveness including student achievement. Moreover servant teacher encourage students to take risks even if they may fail and help them to lead in future- these are the lucrative features of boys. So, boys perceived teacher's servant-leadership behavior higher than girls.

Results of the present study also indicate that habitat did not effect on perception of teacher's servant-leadership behavior. This finding of this study is supported prior studies. Blanchard (2007) concluded that 'I truly believe that servant-leadership has never been more applicable to the world of leadership than it is today(p.1). Kasun (2009) advocated, servant-leadership is not about controlling people, but instead about caring for people and being useful resource for them (p.23). Chaudhuri, A. (2011) called servant-leadership is not a character; it is the way of life. Moreover, interaction between gender and habitat has significant effect on perception of teacher's servant-leadership behavior- may be related to the socio-cultural condition context of West Bengal.

The results of this study demonstrate that students' perceived servant-teacher-leader as their best teachers. School teachers need to inform and even teacher's training,, institution should provide training and include servant teaching as a teaching style.

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