

Review of: "Unlocking Success in NGOs: The Power of Servant Leadership"

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Unlocking Success in NGOs: The Power of Servant Leadership

Chau Ngoc Minh Little, Wil Martens's article

I. INTRODUCTION

The introduction of the article provides a comprehensive overview of the importance of leadership in NGOs and the significance of project success. However, there are a few potential weaknesses that could be addressed:

- a. Lack of novelty.
- b. The introduction does not clearly state the novelty or original contribution of the study. While it mentions that the subject has not received sufficient attention in the current literature, it does not explicitly highlight how this study adds to the existing body of knowledge. Including a clear statement about the unique contribution of the research would enhance the motivation for conducting the study.
- c. Limited justification for the chosen theories
- d. The introduction introduces the concepts of servant leadership and social identity theory but does not provide a strong justification for their selection. It would be beneficial to explain why these theories are particularly relevant to the context of NGOs and how they address the specific research questions or objectives.
- e. Lack of clarity on research questions and objectives
- f. The introduction does not clearly articulate the specific research questions or objectives of the study. It mentions examining the dynamics and mechanisms underlying project management practices and the importance of team identity and climate, but it does not clearly state the specific aims of the research. Providing clear and specific research questions or objectives would help readers understand the scope and focus of the study.
- g. Limited discussion of the theoretical framework
- h. While the introduction briefly mentions servant leadership and social identity theory, it does not provide a comprehensive discussion of how these theories relate to each other or how they are integrated into the study. Expanding on the theoretical framework and its relevance to the research questions would provide a stronger foundation for the study.

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

Theoretical frameworks provide a basis for understanding and exploring research topics, but they also have limitations and weaknesses. Here are potential limitations of the theoretical framework presented in the article:

1. Simplification of complex constructs

The theoretical framework combines multiple theories, such as servant leadership theory and social identity theory, to explain the relationships between leadership, team climate, team identity, and project success. While this integrative approach can be valuable, it also runs the risk of oversimplifying complex constructs. For example, social identity theory encompasses various dimensions of identity, such as cultural, national, and organizational identity, but the framework does not explicitly address these nuances. Failing to consider the complexity and multidimensionality of social identities may limit the framework's explanatory power.

2. Lack of consideration for contextual factors

The theoretical framework does not extensively consider the influence of contextual factors on the relationships between servant leadership, team climate, team identity, and project success. NGOs operate in diverse social, cultural, and political contexts, which can significantly shape the dynamics within the organization and its interactions with the community. Ignoring these contextual factors may limit the applicability and generalizability of the framework, as the effects of servant leadership and team dynamics can vary across different contexts.

3. Absence of alternative perspectives

The theoretical framework primarily focuses on the positive impact of servant leadership on team climate, team identity, and project success. While there is merit in exploring the potential benefits of servant leadership, it is equally important to consider alternative leadership styles or factors that may also contribute to project success. By not incorporating alternative perspectives or potential competing variables, the framework may present a one-sided view of the relationships under investigation.

III. METHODOLOGY

Based on the provided methodology, there are a few weaknesses that can be identified:

a. Sampling Method

The study population consists of individuals with experience implementing projects in NGO settings across diverse regions. The sampling technique used is random selection based on a comprehensive Google search. While this method provides some level of representativeness, it relies heavily on the availability and accessibility of NGOs on the internet. This may introduce bias, as NGOs that are not well-represented online or have limited online presence may be excluded from the sample. Additionally, the reliance on self-reported data from NGO representatives and individuals directly involved in the projects may introduce response bias.

a. Generalizability

The study includes a diverse sample of NGOs and projects from different regions. However, the generalizability of the findings may be limited due to the specific selection of NGOs and the focus on humanitarian and development projects. The findings may not be applicable to other types of organizations or industries.

a. Statistical Assumptions

a. Limited impact of variables

The methodology mentions the use of statistical techniques such as hierarchical regression and binary logistic regression. However, it does not provide details about the specific assumptions made for these analyses, such as normality of data, linearity, and independence of observations. It is important to assess whether these assumptions are met to ensure the validity of the statistical analyses and interpretations.

IV. THE FINDINGS

The bivariate analysis indicates that only the "Job Position" variable has a significant influence on project success. Other variables such as gender, age, education, and project characteristics do not show significant impacts. This suggests that the model may not fully capture the complex factors that contribute to project success, and there may be other unaccounted variables at play.

a. Inconsistent results

The multivariable regression models show inconsistent results. In Model 2, the influence of job position on project success becomes statistically insignificant, while servant leadership, team identity, and team climate show positive influences. However, in Model 3, the interaction effects of these variables do not yield statistical significance, except for the negative association between servant leadership and team identity. This inconsistency raises questions about the robustness and reliability of the findings.

- a. Negative coefficients: In Model 4, which incorporates a three-way interaction between servant leadership, team identity, and team climate, the adjusted R² increases slightly, but the results show a negative coefficient for the interaction effect. This negative coefficient contradicts the initial expectations and suggests that the combined effect of these variables may not synergistically contribute to project success. There may be complex interactions or moderating variables that are not accounted for in the analysis.
- b. Non-significant impact of categorical variables. The binary logistic regression analysis reveals that categorical variables, such as project characteristics and specific job positions, do not have a significant impact on project success. This finding raises questions about the relevance and influence of these variables in the context of the study.
- c. Deviation from normality. The analysis of residuals indicates a deviation from normality, as evidenced by significant p-values in Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests. This deviation suggests that the underlying associations or the presence of outliers may be influencing the results. It is important to address this non-normality to ensure the robustness of the analysis.

V. DISCUSSION

- a. Response Bias and Common Method Bias: The use of a quantitative questionnaire to gather data can introduce response bias, as participants may not provide completely accurate or honest responses. Additionally, common method bias, which occurs when the same method is used to measure multiple variables, can influence the results and introduce systematic errors. The study acknowledges these limitations and highlights the need for caution in generalizing the findings.
- b. Likert Scale Interpretation: The study utilized a 7-point Likert scale for different groups of items, which may introduce variability in the interpretation of responses. This variability can complicate the analysis and potentially affect the reliability and validity of the results.
- c. Scope of Success Criteria: The study's scope is defined by the success criteria developed by Ika (2012), which are specific to development projects. While these criteria are relevant to the context of the study, they may not capture the full range of factors that contribute to project success in NGO settings. Future research could consider incorporating additional success factors, such as relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability.
- d. Generalizability: The findings of the study are based on responses from NGOs operating in various regions. However, the generalizability of these findings to other contexts or populations remains unclear. The study acknowledges the need for further research to determine the applicability of the findings to different types of workers and contexts.
- e. Limitations in Applicability: The study notes a multigroup analysis indicating similarities between volunteer workers and paid workers only for the effect of servant leadership and team climate on project success. This observation suggests potential limitations in the applicability of the findings to different types of workers within NGOs. It is important to consider these limitations when interpreting and applying the findings.

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