BRIDGING TOP AND BOTTOM: MULTI-LEVEL MODEL OF SERVANT LEADERSHIP, IDENTIFICATION WITH LEADER AND TEAM CREATIVITY

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Abstract. In the dynamic world of business where creativity is the sole way to be competitive, employees’ creative role is considered the most treasured. Winning employees’ creativity requires attention from all levels, thus requiring an eternal exchange between top and bottom of an organization. Valuing this decree, this study focuses on unveiling the association between servant leadership of top level management, and its effects on team leadership (again servant leadership – a leadership effect embraced from the top), and followers’ identification with their leader and team creativity. This study also values the moderating role of LMX in the relationship of second level servant leadership and identification with that leader. HLM analysis of 223 respondents (8 organizational heads, 31 team leaders, and 184 employees) from service organization revealed that team leaders adopt the leadership style of top management, while followers identify with the team leaders with servant behavior, and

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ultimately resulting in high team creativity. Limitations, future direction and implications are also given at the end.

Keywords: LMX, servant leadership, identification with leader, team creativity

I. INTRODUCTION

In competitive world of today, organizations could only survive through continuous innovation and creativity, as the competitive advantage is merely dependent upon the continuously improving and innovating (Hoegl & Parboteeah, 2007; Liao, Liu, & Loi, 2010). While looking at various determinants of creativity the role of leader is reported to be exceptional and meritorious (e.g. Neubert, Kacmar, Carlson, Chonko, & Roberts, 2008; Eisenbeiss & Boerner, 2010; Eisenbeiss, van Knippenberg, & Boerner, 2008; Wang & Cheng, 2010), but to the best of our knowledge there is dearth of academic literature focusing on the two different levels of leadership and their interdependence and flow from one level to other. Against this backdrop, this study aims at investigating the role of leadership in predicting team creativity through mediation of organizational identification and moderation of LMX.

Previous studies (e.g. Liao et al., 2010; Yoshida, Sendjaya, Hirst, and Cooper, 2014) have investigated the role of leader – follower relations in dyads and its influence on team creativity; but the cascading effects of leadership from one level to develop leadership at another level (e.g. Amundsmen & Martinsen, 2015) and leading to the creativity is yet to be investigated, in details. Moreover, there is famine of academic investigation focusing on the explanatory role of servant leadership (e.g. Neubert et al., 2008; Yoshida et al., 2014), in predicting creativity at workplace.

Servant leadership focuses on the leader – follower relation characterized by rationality, emotional, moral and spiritual dimensions resulting in the enhancement of their personal capabilities, and sense of self-worth (Yoshida et al., 2014). Servant leadership is believed to excite one’s interests in organizational objectives rather than merely leader’s defined interests, thus leading to situation of trust, safety and fairness at work (Hu & Liden, 2011; Kark & Carmeli, 2009; Liden, Wayne, Zhao, & Henderson, 2008; Schaubroeck, Lam, & Peng, 2011; Sendjaya, Sarros, & Santora, 2008; van Dierendonck, 2011). This premise is very much in
line with the assumptions of Manz and Sims (2001) about “leading others to lead themselves” (p.4); later on termed as self-leadership [a process through which individuals control their own behavior, influencing and leading themselves through the use of specific sets of behavioral and cognitive strategies] (Neck & Houghton, 2006, p. 270). Considering the theoretical premise, here we focused on the role of servant leadership in self-development, where a follower borrows the leadership characteristics from her leader and imitates it and further cascades to the followers. Thus, moving a step beyond the self-leadership, this study assumes that leadership influences followers to adapt/adopt their styles, and a servant leader will create more servant leaders.

Servant leaders depict an altruistic and persistent commitment to develop their followers (Giampetro, Meyer, Brown, Browne, & Kubasek, 1998). Thus placing good of others over self as a mean to serve others (van Dierendonck, 2011), hence more workable to teams where each one has to serve the goals of team instead of individuals. The underlying team ambitions at servant leadership create the perceptions of identification and may influence overall team performance (Yoshida et al., 2014). Moreover, servant leadership focuses on affective-based trust (instead of cognitive based trust), thus focusing on nurturing of team members’ well-being. Deriving the premise from relational identification concept, we assume that servant leadership promotes followers’ development (Cooper & Thatcher, 2010), thus leading to followers’ defining of self with the leader and creating a relationship with the leader, i.e. leader’s identification (Aryee, Chen, Sun, & Debrah, 2007). This identification, in turn, ignites followers’ zeal and zest to succeed and achieve their goals; thus triggering employee creativity (Kark & Carmeli, 2009).

Considering the outcomes of leadership, we further presume that the outcomes of leadership are dependent upon the past association of leader and followers. The better the past experiences about leader – follower relation (Leader – member exchange), the greater are the propensity of outcome. Thus LMX is assumed to moderate the relationship of leader and follower outcomes. Though LMX has widely been investigated as a source of positive outcomes, but its role in development of others as leader and psychological aspects is still largely under-investigated. Thus this study attempts to answer and explain this role.
II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESES

Servant leadership (SL) focuses on the leader–follower relation characterized by rationality, emotional, moral and spiritual dimensions resulting in the enhancement of their personal capabilities, and sense of self-worth (Yoshida et al., 2014). SL is believed to excite one’s interests in organizational objectives rather than merely leader’s defined interests, thus leading to situation of trust, safety and fairness at work (Hu & Liden, 2011; Kark & Carmeli, 2009; Liden, et al., 2008; Schaubroeck, Lam, & Peng, 2011; Sendjaya, et al., 2008; van Dierendonck, 2011). This premise is very much in line with the assumptions of Manz and Sims (2001) about “leading others to lead themselves” (p.4); later on termed as self-leadership [a process through which individuals control their own behavior, influencing and leading themselves through the use of specific sets of behavioral and cognitive strategies] (Neck & Houghton, 2006, p. 270). Considering the theoretical premise, here we focused on the role of servant leadership in self-development, where a follower borrows the leadership characteristics from her leader and imitates it cascade to the followers. Thus, moving a step beyond the self-leadership, this study assumes that leadership influences followers to adapt/adopt their styles, and a servant leader will create more servant leaders.

Employees’ identification with organization (classical identification) is a widely investigated concept (e.g. Sluss & Ashforth, 2007), but followers’ identification with leader (relational identification) has gained less attention in the past (Yoshida et al., 2014). This study values this gap and attempts to see the possible effects of exchange relations with and its role in fostering leader-member identification. Leader and follower relation has been valued as the most important while employees define themselves with work or organization (Aryee et al., 2007), as leaders provide them the sense of self consistency (Cooper & Thatcher, 2010), self-expansion (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995), and sense of connection (Aryee, sun, Chen & Debrah, 2008). Furthermore, relationship identification is the level up to which followers partially define themselves and their individual identities with a leader-follower relationship (Sluss & Ashforth, 2007). Hence, the prime focus of followers is on their relationship with leaders and supervision quality. Literature is evident of the fact that servant leaders’ behavior (e.g. providing guidance to followers, willingness to sacrifice for them, and
employing ethical dimensions at work) develops respect and loyalty (Sendjaya et al., 2008; van Dierendonck, 2011; Walumbwa, Hartnell, & Oke, 2010). Such relations, in return, foster followers’ beliefs, feelings, and behaviors and creative positive relationships with leaders (Kark, Shamir, & Chen, 2003; Sluss & Ashforth, 2007). Servant leader focuses on the development of employees (Yoshida et al., 2014), which makes this relation different from conventional leader-member relations (i.e. LMX; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995).

It is widely accepted and acknowledged that servant leaders create a situation where followers show high level of trust, identify, and relation with leaders which works as a powerful and personal source of motivation to work creatively (Yoshida et al., 2014). This relation could be explained with relationship identification theory (henceforth, RIT; Cooper & Thatcher, 2010; Sluss & Ashforth, 2007), broaden and build theory of emotions (Fredrickson, 2001) and psychological safety theory (SST, Edmondson, 1999). Considering the premise of RIT, it is assumed that followers’ assume their leaders as attractive (due to their ethical behavior, efforts for followers’ development, source of motivation etc.), thus feel identified with them (Cooper & Thatcher, 2010; Sluss & Ashforth, 2007; Sluss, Ployhart, Cobb, & Ashforth, 2012). This association could be attributed to the fact that followers feel that their social-psychological needs are being met by their leader, thus fosters empathy, liking, and cooperation for common goal. Moreover, leaders’ attention towards followers’ development also creates positive emotions, which become basis for their personal, social, psychological, and intellectual resource (Fredrickson & Branigan, 2005). It is also implied that positive emotions foster cognition and attention, thus creating problem solving capability which is basis for creativity (Amabile, Barsade, Mueller, & Staw, 2005; Friedman & Förster, 2001). It is also to believe that leader and follower relation create a sense of psychological safety in the relationship, which makes them feel that they are safe while taking risk and implementing novel ideas (Edmondson, 1999). Such safety is further fostered when leaders see themselves as part of team and show their commitment towards achievements of teams (Baer & Frese, 2003; Oldham & Cummings, 1996).

Additionally, this study assumes that the outcomes of leadership are dependent upon the past association of leader and followers (Graen &
Uhl-Bien, 1995). The better the past experiences about leader–follower relation (Leader–member exchange), the greater are the propensity of outcome (Ahmed et al., 2014; Islam et al., 2014). Thus LMX is assumed to moderate the relationship of leader and follower outcomes.

Thus literature helps us formulate following three distinctive hypotheses:

H1: Servant leadership of organizational head cascades to team leaders as they opt for the same leadership style, resulting in followers’ identification with leader.

H2: The relationship between servant leadership style of team head and followers’ identification with leader is largely dependent upon their relationship in past; thus high LMX in may strengthen the association and vice versa.

H3: Followers’ identification with servant leader will foster their creativity (at all levels: individual, team and organizational) at workplace.

FIGURE 1
Conceptual Model and Hypotheses

III. METHODOLOGY
SAMPLE AND RESPONSES
A survey was conducted among 36 teams working in various IT firms located in Lahore. The survey was conducted at two points of time, where at time-I team leaders responded for servant leadership of organizational heads and LMX with them. While team members responded for servant leadership of their team leaders. At time-II, team leaders responded for team creativity, while identification with leader and
LMX with team leader was reported by team members. This time lagged survey was designed to overcome the issue of common method biasness (Antonakis, Bendahan, Jacquart, & Lalive, 2010; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). Response for LMX between team leaders and members was also acquired from team leaders as well, so the difference between leaders and follower responses could be obtained. The mean score for LMX-TL and LMX-TM was not significantly different (X=3.95 and 3.89 respectively). All in all, we obtained response from (29, 80.55% teams) with 29 leaders and 116 team members (average 4 members from each team). Majority of the team leaders (93.10%) were male and average age of team leaders was 35.75 years (SD=4.79), with 41.37% of them having masters’ degree, and were attached with this firm for last 3.74 years. Team members were also predominantly male (83%), with average age of 31.87 years (SD=6.49), had bachelor degree (86%), and working with this team for last 3 years. The questionnaire, as tool of data collection, was personally administrated by research team in office hours with special permission of HR department of the organization. The HR department, after due permission, the specific departments were extended permission to participate in survey and the results of the study were shared with each team and HR department. Each response was coded so that the respondent remains anonymous, but could easily be matched at time-II.

DATA COLLECTION AND MEASURES

All the variables were operationalized with already well-established, widely used and accepted scales. Servant leadership was operationalized with 35 items scale of Sendjaya et al., (2008). This scale was considered useful as it has widely been used in both Western and Eastern cultures (Pekerti & Sendjaya, 2010; Sendjaya & Cooper, 2010; Sendjaya & Pekerti, 2010). Its exemplary items included: “My leader considers others' needs and interests above his/her own” and “My leader helps me to generate a sense of meaning out of everyday life at work”. Identification with leader was operationalized with six items scale of Mael and Ashforth's (1992) with sample items like “When someone criticizes my leader, it feels like a personal insult”. While team creativity was operationalized from Baer and Oldham's (2006) four items scale with representative items like “This employee suggests new ways of performing work tasks”. All these scales were operationalized with five-
point scale ranging from one (strongly disagree) – five (strongly agree). Scandura and Graen’s (1984) seven items scale was used to operationalize LMX, covering items like “I usually know where I stand with my supervisor”.

CONTROL VARIABLES

Previous studies found that various other factors may also influence creativity, e.g. Tierney & Farmer, (2002); De Dreu (2006) found that education, gender and tenure have direct bearing on employee creativity and innovation. Therefore, all these variables were controlled in the process of inquiry.

DATA AGGREGATION

As the servant leadership and identification with leader refer to shared perceptions of group members that is reported on individual bases, the responses were aggregated to form the measures of group servant leadership and group identification with leader following the guidelines of Edmondson (1999). In order to examine the aggregation justifications, within – group agreement (rwg), interclass correlation (ICC1) and reliability of the means was calculated (ICC2) (James et al., 1984). The rwg score for this study were well above the standard value of .70 (0.723 for servant leadership and 0.781 for identification with leader), suggesting good agreement within group (James et al., 1984). The servant leadership score for servant leadership were 0.301 and and 0.886 for ICC1 and ICC2 respectively (p<0.001), while identification with leader had values of 0.199 and 0.793 respectively (p<0.01), thus highlighting that group effects were significant (p<0.01). Thus it was conceptually and analytically vibrant to measure servant leadership and identification with leader at group level.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table-1 covers the mean scores, standard deviation, reliability analysis and bivariate correlation results. The values in parentheses show results of reliability analysis, which is well above the desired value (∞>.70, Nunnally, 1978). The bivariate correlation tells that team creativity is significantly predicted by servant leadership of organizational head (r=0.22, p>.001), servant leadership of team leader (r=0.32, p>.001), LMX with organizational head (r=0.33, p>.05), LMX with team leader
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(r=0.11, p>.001) and identification with leader (r=0.53, p>.001). A look at the table-1 also shows that identification with leader is predicted by both servant leadership of organizational head (r=0.31, p>.05) & team leaders (r=0.42, p>.001) and LMX with organizational head (r=0.27, p>.05) and team leaders (r=0.21, p>.05). The table shows that majority of the relation are moderate to conventional standards (Cohen, 1992).

TABLE 1
Correlation and Descriptive Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.10</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>(0.91)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.98</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>0.10**</td>
<td>(0.89)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.02</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>0.09**</td>
<td>0.16**</td>
<td>(0.79)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.21</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>0.14*</td>
<td>0.12*</td>
<td>(0.81)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.05</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.31**</td>
<td>0.42*</td>
<td>0.27**</td>
<td>0.21**</td>
<td>(0.88)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>3.65</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>0.22*</td>
<td>0.32*</td>
<td>0.33**</td>
<td>0.11*</td>
<td>0.53*</td>
<td>(0.92)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>32.56</td>
<td>5.95</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.01*</td>
<td>0.04*</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>--</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.04*</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.21*</td>
<td>--</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>4.38</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td>0.02*</td>
<td>0.10**</td>
<td>0.06**</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.07**</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.45*</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<.001, **p<.05

1=SL-OH, 2=SL-TL, 3=LMX-OH, 4=LMX-TL, 5=IL, 6=TC, 7=Age, 8=Gender, 9=Tenure

Hypothesis 1 (H1) was aimed at assessing the cross-level mediation of servant leadership (of occupational head) and identification with leader, with lower level mediation of servant leadership of team leaders (Mathieu & Taylor, 2007). For this analysis, hierarchical linear modeling (HLM 6.08) was applied. For justification of use of HLM, we first tested the presence of variation in employee creativity. The chi-square test revealed that the team variance was significant ($\chi^2 = 215.79$, p<.001), with null model having 25% variance in teams. In order to test H1, asymmetric confidence limits were used as it provides balance in terms of type-I error and power of the indirect effect. Unlike, other conventional tests of mediation analysis (e.g. Sobel test), this test does not assume normality and thus provides powerful and accurate results (MacKinnon et al., 2007). Table-2 covers the results of hypotheses testing.
### TABLE 2
Cross-Level Moderated Mediation Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>$r^2$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Step-1 $\rightarrow$ DV= Servant Leadership (TL)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 1 variables</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Gender</td>
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<td>.08</td>
<td>0.71</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>-0.23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tenure</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2 variables</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Servant leadership (organizational head)</td>
<td>.54**</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 2 $\rightarrow$ DV = Team creativity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 1 variables</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>1.41</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>-0.61</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Servant leadership (TL)</td>
<td>.31*</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Level 2 variables</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Servant leadership</td>
<td>.32*</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>1.97</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 3 $\rightarrow$ DV = Team Creativity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 1 variables</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>.06</td>
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<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Leader identification</td>
<td>.23*</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>1.65</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2 variables</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Servant leadership (TL)</td>
<td>.31*</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>1.44</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LMX</td>
<td>.39**</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>3.46</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Cross-level interaction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader identification $\times$ LMX</td>
<td>.21*</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>2.21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<.001, **p<.05

Results of H1 for cross mediation analysis are presented in Table-2, where step-1 and 2 are explanation of mediation analysis. As the test covers the between groups and within groups effects, the servant leadership of team leaders was centered on the sample mean (Mathieu &
Taylor, 2007). It was evident that servant leadership of organizational heads was significantly related to servant leadership of team leaders ($\gamma = .54, t = 3.73, p<.05$). Servant leadership of team leaders was also noticed to be directly related with leader identification, while controlling of servant leadership of organizational heads ($\gamma = .32, t = 1.97, p<.001$). The indirect effects $\beta$ (.54*.31) at 95% confidence level was between limits of .07 and .23, thus supported our assumptions of mediation. Moreover, since the zero was not included in lower and upper limit the mediation was further supported. Moreover, the direct path of servant leadership of organizational head and identification with leader was also significant, indicating the presence of partial mediation. In order to see the within group and between group confounding effects of servant leadership of team leader, Zhand et al., (2009) technique of entering group mean of servant leadership into equation at level 2 and found that it did not make any difference to our cross level mediation. Thus, the model was retained and it was concluded that servant leadership of team leaders partially mediates the relationship of servant leadership of organizational head and identification with leader.

Our next hypotheses (H2) states that LMX moderates the mediated relationship of servant leadership and identification with leader and this relation is stronger when the LMX association has been strong in the past. Thus the hypothesis was cross level moderated mediation, where LMX operated as the moderator in the relationship of servant leadership of team leader and identification with leader (Preacher et al., 2007). In order to test the hypotheses, the procedure described by Aiken and West (1991) and Tein et al. (2004) was used. This approached centers the moderator at values (-1 SD below mean and +1 above mean), and then tests the indirect effects through slopes. There was a statistically significant interaction between moderator and independent variable, and this interaction was used to predict dependent variable using “slope-as-outcome” model (Raudenbush & Bryk, 2002). It was noticed that there was an interaction between servant leadership of team leader and LMX ($\gamma = .21, t = 2.21, p< .05$). The conditional indirect effect was further tested through asymmetric confidence limit method, in the manner as prescribed earlier. The results showed that there was significant random variation in level-1 slope ($U_1$ variance = .14, p<.05). In order to understand the nature of interaction, the information was plotted at HLM-
interaction macros of Shacham (2009), the results of the interaction diagram are presented in Figure-2.

FIGURE 2
Moderated Effect of LMX

The diagram shows that servant leadership of team leaders enhances employee’s identification with leader when the LMX has been strong in the past (simple slope: $\gamma = .15$, $t = 1.25$, $p<.05$; conditional indirect effect $= .12$ at 95% confidence limits that is between .03 and .18). Similarly, in addition, the relation becomes insignificant when the effects of LMX are removed (simple slope: $\gamma = .04$, $t = .53$, $p>.05$; conditional indirect effect $= -.04$ at 95% confidence limits that is between .03 and .11). Application of Zhang et al.’s (2009) technique of re-introducing group means for mediator at level-2 equation with a group mean-centered solution of servant leadership of team leaders and present in Table 2.

TABLE 3
Results of Team Level Mediation Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>$\beta$</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>$t$</th>
<th>$r^2$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Step-1 $\rightarrow$ DV: Identification with Leader</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controls</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender $^b$</td>
<td>.04**</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education $^b$</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure $^b$</td>
<td>.02*</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3 shows the mediation hypotheses of identification with leader in the relationship of servant leadership and team creativity. This hypothesis was tested by using OLS (ordinary least square regression), and it was noticed that servant leadership is positively associated with identification with leader ($\beta = .62$, $t = 8.72$, $p<.001$) and team creativity ($\beta = .39$, $t = 4.86$, $p<.05$). It was also noticed that identification with leader has significant relation with team creativity ($\beta = .42$, $t = 5.02$, $p<.001$). Thus the indirect effect ($0.62 \times 0.42$) was thus $0.26$ (at 95% confident level), while its limit ranging from $0.05$ and $0.35$ hence supporting our mediation hypothesis. The mediation was partial mediation as both direct and indirect relation were significant. These inferences supported our H3, where it was proposed that team leaders’ servant leadership will influence team creativity both directly and indirectly (through identification with leader).

V. IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

Servant leadership is widely accepted concept across the cultures (Pekerti & Sendjaya, 2010; Yong, Kakabadse, & Kakabadse, 2010) and is valued for many organizational outcomes including creativity (Neubert et al., 2008; Yoshida et al., 2014). Same results are evident from our study where it has been noticed that servant leadership of organizational heads and team leaders foster team creativity. Unlike previous studies on servant leadership and team creativity, this study focuses on the mechanism of creating new leaders (i.e. creation of servant leadership of
team leaders) emerging from the vampire effects of servant leaders at top of the organization. Our results provide the first evidence of the importance of servant leadership in promoting follower trust and representing the collective, which in turn foster employee creativity and team innovation. This is probably our most significant contribution to the literature. In past studies, a considerable amount of research has focused on leaders’ self-concept and theorization has stimulated the effects in shape of charisma and transformation (Kark et al., 2003), but how servant leaders create servant leaders has been ignored in past. The focus on different levels is itself one of the contributions of this study. Moreover, it covers the moderating roles of LMX on the relationship of servant leadership and its outcomes (i.e. identification with leader). Up to our knowledge, there is no study that has considered moderated mediation model in the variables highlighted above. This is definitely a new dimension in creativity literature. These findings further answer the question raised by Yoshida et al., (2014) about the role of social relations in the process of support and team innovation, thus our study proves that the creativity and support relation is stronger when the identification with leader is high, and employees have good perceptions of LMX association with leader in past.

Furthermore, our study emphasized on fostering strong relation with leaders and followers in order to nourish an environment of creativity. Here it is proved that creativity can be enhanced through the positive association between leaders and followers, and when followers feel and perceive positive about their leader they imitate the leadership style and offer better returns at work. By focusing on the theoretical contribution, this study leaves a valuable message for managers, where they can create a chain of leadership by just showing their leadership style of service to their followers. The followers will imitate that style and will cascade at bottom level. Thus a culture of service will arise, which will benefit all. Thus both leadership and display of leadership should be a basic premise for each organization and it should be ensured through rituals, norms, polices, procedures and visible through practice.

VI. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS
This study is prone to many limitation and the foremost of all is the not controlling the effects of other leadership styles like (transformational or
charismatic). The construct of servant leadership has been believed to be very much same like transformation, though has distinctive identification. It is therefore believed that developing leadership traits is actually the transformation of employees from followership to leadership domain. Further researchers should focus, on this dimension. Moreover, future studies should focus on the other levels as well, e.g. employee level (Yoshida et al., 2014) and see how servant leadership cascades from organizational level to employees’ levels. Another direction could be to investigate the impact on customers, where customers should report about the service behavior of front line employees. Such reporting will further confer the flow of leadership and its reality. Other styles (e.g. transformational, transactional) may also be placed to see the development process of leadership and its outcomes.
REFERENCES


