

Top Management Team Members' Perception of Executive Servant-leadership and their  
Work Engagement: Impact of Gender and Ethnicity

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## Attestation of Authorship

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

Daniel de Villiers

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The Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee approved this research on 13 May 2013. AUTECH Reference Number 14/58.



## Abstract

The purpose of this thesis project is to test whether executive servant-leadership behaviour predicts the work engagement of top management team members at publicly listed companies in New Zealand. It further tests the effects of gender and ethnicity as moderating variables on the relationship between top management team members' perception of executive servant-leadership behaviours and their work engagement. The Executive Servant-leadership Scale and the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale were used as measures in this project. These were administered in the format of a structured questionnaire to identified top management team members of organisations listed on the New Zealand Stock Exchange, more specifically the NZX All Index that comprises only domestic securities listed and does not include foreign listed or dual listed securities. The results confirm that executive servant-leadership behaviour by Chief Executive Officers of publicly listed companies in New Zealand significantly predicts the work engagement of top management team members. It further confirms that neither gender nor ethnicity demonstrate a moderating effect on this relationship, for the sample used in the research.

**Keywords:** Executive servant-leadership; work engagement; top management teams; gender; ethnicity; New Zealand.

## Chapter 1 - Introduction

The research project reported and interpreted in this thesis explores the relationship between leadership dimensions operationalized by the Executive Servant-leadership Scale and a self-perceived level of work engagement measured by the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale. The Executive Servant-leadership Scale demonstrates key servant-leadership attributes through five first-order factors of *Interpersonal Support*, *Building Community*, *Altruism*, *Egalitarianism*, and *Moral Integrity*, and a second-order factor of *Executive Servant-leadership*. Work engagement as a construct consists of three components, *Vigour*, *Dedication* and *Absorption*. The project further explores and reports on the moderating effect gender and ethnicity have on the relationship between executive servant-leadership and work engagement.

The concept of servant-leadership is sometimes viewed with considerable scepticism as an applicable or appropriate leadership style to benefit profit driven businesses that have to survive in an ever increasing competitive globalised economy. Detractors of servant-leadership generally raise six common criticisms: in the competitive business environment kindness may be viewed as a weakness and advantage will therefore be taken of the servant-leader, it will not work in situations where “tough mindedness” is required from the leader, it is too restrictive in terms of its breadth, it is too closely linked to Christian religion, many claim to be servant-leaders but act like dictators, and people experience it as foreign to their own leadership style (Wong & Davey, 2007). It is generally perceived as a worthy leadership style/approach/philosophy in religious, education, health care, and not-for-profit organisations. Individuals desiring to truly understand servant-leadership have to experience a journey of self-discovery and personal transformation. It must however, not be viewed as a leadership model for weak leaders (Page & Wong, 2000).

Core to servant-leadership is the leader's genuine care for the wellbeing of followers, serving the needs of others first, acting as custodian of the wider system, and the absence of venal self-interest. Servant-leaders tend to align true altruistic behaviour and ethical principles with business strategy thereby transforming the followers and the organisation to act as agents for doing-good (Van Dierendonck, 2011). The development of organisational capacity to serve rests with the top executives who should be motivated towards ethical leadership and a desire to build and strengthen community within and outside the organisation (Reed, Vidaver-Cohen, & Colwell, 2011). This topic is of particular significance based on the ethical issues highlighted by investigations into the recent global financial crisis. These identified a need for an ethically oriented alternative leadership development model to the dominant view of charismatic and transformational leadership because of the absence of moral safeguards (Graham, 1991). Servant-leadership may be such an alternative model in that it specifically incorporates the leadership aspects of moral integrity, egalitarianism, and truly caring relationships in a positive way.

My literature review indicates that a higher level of work engagement leads to reduced staff turnover, improved productivity, increased profitability, and enhanced levels of innovation (Serrano & Reichard, 2011). Work engagement is understood to be more than employee motivation, job satisfaction, organisational commitment, or displaying organisational citizenship behaviour, and it is increasingly considered as a contributing factor in creating a competitive advantage. Work engagement occurs when employees are prepared to invest higher levels of discretionary energy into their work because they have clarity on what is expected of them and they are equipped to succeed, they experience opportunities for growth and receive feedback, and they feel that they contribute to something meaningful in the organisation and the organisation is an agent for doing good (Batista-Taran, Shuck, Gutierrez, & Baralt, 2013). Leaders therefore

need to create an organisational climate that develops and supports increasing work engagement levels and in that process the executive leader of the organisation sets the tone and the top management team fulfils an integral supporting role. Effective leadership in this environment is exemplified by leaders who take a longer-term view rather than a short term view, lead by example and inspire followers, and foster followers' commitment and ability to contribute creatively to the organisation through coaching and development and not through authoritative instructions (Bass, 2000; Eagly, 2007; Eagly & Chin, 2010). The work engagement levels of the top management team members should thus be of particular importance to the overall success of the organisation.

An extensive review of servant-leadership literature shows that researchers have not yet thoroughly explored the relationship between executive servant-leader behaviour and the engagement of top management team members in publicly listed organisations. Empirical research on servant-leadership is mostly concerned with the educational sector, religious institutions, and nursing profession, and with the purpose of measurement development. A view was expressed by Gordon and Yukl (2004) that one of the contributing reasons for the lack of understanding why certain leaders are more effective than others is because leadership is generally examined at lower-levels of the organisation instead of examining leadership by top executives. It is consequently relevant to explore the relationship between executive servant-leadership behaviour and work engagement levels of top management team members.

To assist in filling this gap, this study investigates the self-reported perceptions on executive servant-leader behaviour and work engagement by top management team members of publicly listed companies in New Zealand. Members of top management teams of various publicly listed companies were invited to provide self-report responses to a Likert-type structured questionnaire on their perception of their leaders' servant-

leadership behaviour and on their own work engagement. Companies listed on the New Zealand Stock Exchange, NZX, from the *All Index* that comprises only domestic listed securities and does not include foreign listed or dual listed securities, employ all the participants.

This introductory chapter will provide an overarching context and structure as to the reason for this study, and an overall understanding and perspective to the research topic.

### **My personal research journey**

Throughout my career I have had the privilege of interacting with leaders and followers at various levels in different organisations, and within broader civil society. My observations of diverse organisational dynamics, the impact organisational success or failures have on employees and wider society, and the perception followers have of leaders and vice versa have always interested me.

My interest in international business and its political, economic, and social impact has been stimulated by an increased personal involvement and participation in policy development and dialogues at national, regional, and international levels over the last ten years. In my professional capacity I have represented a range of stakeholders in policy development processes within South Africa, the Southern Africa Development Community, and at the International Labour Organisation. Surrendering a successful career in favour of full time studies in pursuit of achieving a particular understanding of leadership and international business theory was a decision not taken lightly, and one I pondered with much trepidation. It was, however a special journey of reflection during which I experienced boundless growth, some level of weariness, but an incalculable degree of satisfaction.

My interest in servant-leadership has been influenced by a number of life experiences of which three can be categorised as the most significant. The first major

experience is without a doubt the leadership example my father set without the two of us ever specifically talking about the concept. As part of my own personal journey I have come to realize that my father was my earliest example of being a servant-leader. He has a truly unselfish concern for the wellbeing of others, inspires trust, promotes integrity, and views all people as equals regardless of shortcomings.

The second experience was the way President Nelson Mandela, after his own personal journey, became a well-respected and beloved leader uniting a highly divided country. Developed by his own journey of self-discovery and personal transformation he became the paragon of servant-leadership by truly serving the people of South Africa through humility and the absence of vanity. He was not a perfect man but servant-leadership is about “acceptance of the person which requires a tolerance of imperfection” (Greenleaf, 1970, p. 10).

His personal thinking on the concept of servant as leader as expressed by Greenleaf (1970) is articulated in a letter to his wife dated 1 February 1975 (Mandela, 2010) in which he said:

But internal factors may be even more crucial in assessing one’s development as a human being. Honesty, sincerity, simplicity, humility, pure generosity, absence of vanity, readiness to serve others – qualities that are within easy reach of every soul – are the foundation of one’s spiritual life. Development in matters of this nature is inconceivable without serious introspection, without knowing yourself, your weaknesses and mistakes. (p. 211)

However, when he retired the humility, the servant nature towards people, and truly caring behaviour slowly faded from the fabric of leadership in the country in spite of appeals to preserve his legacy. One way to preserve his legacy is not by talking and reminiscing about it but to strive to be the servant-leader that he was.

The third experience was direct and indirect interaction with a long serving leader in the South African motor industry who led the marketing division of Toyota South Africa for many years after which he headed up McCarthy Motor Holdings, at the

time the biggest retail motor group in the country. During his outstanding career he demonstrated all the qualities of a servant-leader. He was an example in business leadership integrating the emotional, relational, and moral dimensions of servant-leadership with the financial success of companies.

Having experienced servant-leadership at personal level, political level, and business level I felt a need to test the anecdotal evidence through empirical research methods to find support for the concept.

### **Research background**

The twenty-first century is fraught with unprecedented organisational management and leadership challenges characterized by increasing global integration in the areas of economic, political, legal, social, and cultural activities, yet still with significant local differences. This increased level of global business activities and resultant consequences require from business leaders to consider different perspectives and approaches in regard to the emotional, relational, and moral dimensions of leadership relative to developing and maintaining successful organisations. The faster evolving socio-economic process is driven by rapid advancements in digital technology, always-on communication connectivity, the need for continuous economic growth, and increased competition from foreign businesses heating up competition amongst local businesses. The consequences are a pursuit of cost reducing innovations, developing more complex supply chains, the need for different skills in the workplace, a perceived increase in power to multi-national corporations and less to those governing and administering sovereign states, and often negative environmental impacts, to name but a few. These aspects require from organisations to navigate a complex environment with gaps in regulations and cloudy rules around business conduct (Hemphill & Lillevik, 2011).

## **Institutions and Business Leadership**

One of the core perspectives explaining the success of organisations in the global economy is based on the context set by the institutional framework within which organisations need to function. The institutional structures set up through formal and informal rules create an environment providing stability and meaning to social behaviour thereby governing transactions in the area of politics, law, and of society. Business leaders are held to act rationally within the limitations and rules set by these institutional frameworks (Peng, Wang, & Jiang, 2008).

Dunning (2001) argued that the efficient functioning of the main institutions in the economic system, namely markets, governments, civil society, and super-national organisations, is dependent on social and moral order. He further ascribed a combination of market failure, institutional failure, and moral virtues failure as risks and threats impacting on these four institutions and on the long-term sustainability of an integrated global economy. Market failure includes adopting inappropriate macro-economic policies by those who govern and administer sovereign states, excessive property and stock market speculation, and moral hazard where risk is taken with the knowledge that the risk taker is protected and another will incur the cost. Institutional failure includes ineffective functioning of the regulatory system, inadequate legal and financial structures, and lack of accountability and/or transparency. He argued that at the heart of the market and institutional failures is moral virtues failure, which includes excessive greed by investors and institutions, the lack of trust in the market and institutions, and an indifference to the needs of others resulting in a failure to understand and engage in moral duty and social responsibility. Küng (2003) concluded from this analysis that ethics imply moral action, which ought to exert influence over difficult decisions in the reality of everyday business. In spite of this view not all leaders are working for the benefit of the organisation that employs them (Scandura &



Dorfman, 2004) and Boddy (2011) expressed the view that the 2008 global financial crisis has placed additional emphasis on this because leaders are not always acting in the best interest of wider society.

The cause of the recent global financial crisis can be put down to a combination of the risks identified by Dunning (2001). This in turn advanced the argument for the need of a universal ethic and a leadership framework incorporating such an ethic (Esikot, 2012; Parris & Peachey, 2013). In response to this argument a self-regulatory moral framework was unveiled in an attempt to provide a global economic ethic (Hemphill & Lillevik, 2011). The framework sets out a global perspective of what would constitute legitimate, just, and fair behaviour economic activities. It embraces a comprehensive approach inclusive of all the main institutions in the economic system: markets, governments, civil society, and super-national organizations. It was developed to explicitly support executive management and boards of directors of multinational enterprises to address the condemnations of moral failures associated with the expansion of globalization.

The dilemma with the implementation of such an ethical framework is that the success is dependent on the extent to which executive management and the various boards of directors are prepared to embrace the framework principles, and in conjunction with other role players, implement those principles (Arjoon, 2000; Hemphill & Lillevik, 2011). Andreoli and Lefkowitz (2009) argued that the promotion of a moral organisation is best achieved through a combination of formal mechanisms and the modelling of ethical behaviour, and that ethical role modelling is more beneficial than formal mechanisms. In essence leaders, by the nature of their relationship with followers, do not require a document promoting moral values and ethical behaviour if they naturally act in a moral, trusting, and caring way. The foundation of ethical/moral leadership is cast in trust, and trustworthy leaders create an

organisational climate that promotes group cohesion, which in turn assists in the formation of mutual trust (Reed et al., 2011).

Given this expressed need to incorporate moral virtues in leadership, what may be required by organisations and society are the qualities of a more moral, relational, and people centred leadership as affirmed by the concept of servant-leadership (Parris & Peachey, 2013; Van Dierendonck, 2011). The concept of servant-leadership as conceptualized by Robert K Greenleaf in 1970 is based on the principles of ethical leadership, genuine care for the wellbeing of the followers, the development of followers eventually becoming servant leaders themselves, foregoing the self-interest of the leader, and creating a positive impact on society.

### **Significance of the study**

This research contributes to the academic discussions whether servant-leadership is a value adding, worthy and legitimate leadership theory, or not. It further assists in developing an understanding of unique servant-leadership attributes and whether these can be identified and developed to positively impact on employee work engagement. Empirical studies on servant-leadership further contribute to the understanding of the real value of the construct within contemporary organisations. This research reports on the measurement of servant-leadership at executive level in profit driven organisations and the impact it has on top management team members' work engagement as an organisational outcome.

The Executive Servant-leadership Scale operationalizing the servant-leadership behaviours of *Interpersonal Support*, *Building Community*, *Egalitarianism*, *Moral Integrity*, and *Altruism* is used to measure top management team members' perception of their executives' servant-leadership behaviour.

The employee version of the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale consisting of three sub-dimensions of *Vigour*, *Absorption*, and *Dedication* is used to determine the self reported perception of top management team members' level of work engagement.

The demographic traits of gender and ethnicity are investigated as moderating variables between executive servant-leadership and work engagement. This contributes to the academic discussion on the leadership differences and similarities across different genders and different ethnicities respectively.

### **Research questions**

The research attempts to address the following research questions:

- Does executive servant-leadership significantly predict top management team members' work engagement, using a sample from public companies listed on the New Zealand Stock Exchange?
- How does the gender-match between the executive leader and the top management team member moderate the relationship between executive servant-leadership and top management team member work engagement?
- How does ethnicity-match between the executive leader and the top management team member moderate the relationship between executive servant-leadership and top management team member work engagement?

### **Overview of the methodology**

This section provides a brief overview of the research methodology and methods used for this thesis. A detailed explanation of this is provided under the research design section in Chapter 3.

As the underlying philosophical base, this thesis employs a positivist epistemological belief structure. Positivists believe in an objective reality that is measurable. This allows them to focus on the effect of data and measurement to explain "true knowledge" given the presence of "error" (Goertz & Mahoney, 2012). An

opportunity is created to apply deductive logic to the observed facts to test hypotheses and ultimately generalise the knowledge obtained. To this end the primary design of this study is centred on a quantitative field survey research questionnaire, and analysed through the use of standard inferential statistical methods.

### **Limitations of the study**

The major limitation of this research is the small sample size. Given the limited response by top management team members of publicly listed companies in New Zealand only 70 responses were analysed for this study.

A further limitation is that the data was obtained through self-reported questionnaires with top management team members reporting on their perceptions of both variables at the same time creating possible common method variance.

### **Structure of the thesis**

The introductory chapter establishes the premise of the thesis by providing an outline of the research background, creating the overarching context and structure as to the reason for this study, highlighting the research questions to be explored, and providing an overview of the research methodology, the significance of the research, and the limitations of the study. Chapter 2 firstly provides a broad review of leadership theory development followed by a review of the current literature on servant-leadership, and work engagement. Gender issues related to leadership are then discussed and gender based theories on leadership and studies are reviewed and summarised. The chapter is concluded with a brief discussion and review of the impact of ethnicity on leadership. Chapter 3 discusses the research design including the sample, invitations, and the questionnaire. At the end of the chapter, an integrated research framework, with hypotheses, is presented. Chapter 4 presents the data collected, assesses the reliability of the measurements, and tests hypotheses with SPSS Version 22. A summary of key

findings and the implications for researchers as well as practitioners is discussed in Chapter 5. Recommendations for future research are also provided.

## **Chapter 2 - Literature review**

This chapter is organised by setting out the literature review into four sections. The first section deals with a broad and general overview of the literature on leadership. The next section deals with an analysis of the research streams of servant-leadership, covering the *conceptual stream*, the *model development stream*, and the *measurement stream*. It also includes a comparative analysis between servant-leadership theory and other related leadership theories. This is followed by an analysis of the components underpinning work engagement and the impact of leadership on work engagement. The fourth section deals with various perspectives on gender and leadership, with the last section covering a review of ethnicity and leadership.

The studies and relevant works used in this chapter were acquired by database and web-searches using the extensive AUT University online library and databases, and books retrieved electronically from the library. Search terms and key words were used individually and combined: *leadership*, *servant-leadership*, *employee engagement*, *gender*, *culture*, *ethnicity*, *ethical leadership*, and *transformational leadership*. The researcher identified suitable publications by assessing the abstract, date of publication, study method, instruments, purpose, and results sections.

### **General overview of leadership theory development**

The development of leadership theory is well known and widely documented. It is however, relevant to briefly provide a general overview of leadership theory development to effectively place servant-leadership within the broader context of the leadership typology.

The construct of leadership and its impact on individual followers, organisations, and society has incessantly fascinated man to the extent that leadership is considered one of the most talked about and studied topics in social sciences (Yammarino, 2013).

The conceptualization, theory development, research, and application of leadership as discussed in academic studies, business decision-making models, consultant's verbiage, and recipe-style leadership books have been on-going for more than a century. There seems to be no shortage of experts dispensing bullet-point advice on what constitutes effective leadership practice (Derue, Nahrgang, Wellman, & Humphrey, 2011; Latham, 2014; Van Seters & Field, 1990; Yammarino, 2013; Yukl, Gordon, & Taber, 2002).

The business perspective of leadership is associated with creating a vision, providing strategic direction, anticipating and adapting to change, and acting as catalyst to get a diverse group of people to willingly and voluntarily work towards achieving specific goals. Effective leadership is considered as fundamental to the continued success of businesses in an ever-increasing competitive economic environment. In essence leaders are the individuals who set the direction, tone, and ethos in an organisation, with the result that the impact of leadership is felt throughout organisations and their business activities. However, leaders influence organisational success through followers, and leadership research on these interactions and the outcomes provide value to business (Batista-Taran et al., 2013).

The study and research of leadership theory from a scholarly perspective contributes to an understanding of the leadership construct, the interactive process, and the outcomes. It focuses on the leader, follower, context, levels of analysis, and dynamic interaction in the process. The purpose is to understand and explain, within a specific context, the extent to which specific leader attributes, behaviours, and characteristics contribute to group performance, follower satisfaction, and change. In essence leadership is about human interaction, behaviour, and process within a specific situation. The definition of leadership as provided by Northouse (2012) identifies four components as central to the phenomenon: it is a process, it necessitates influence, it

transpires in groups, and it involves the pursuit of common goals.

At face value it seems as if the evolution of leadership theories follows an integrated and progressive linear process. In reality for most of its development it has been fragmented and based on a number of opposing conclusions and claims. Notwithstanding the various theories developed by scholars and the extent of research there is still no non-trivial universally accepted definition of leadership.

In a study attempting to develop an integrated definition of leadership Winston and Patterson (2006) analysed 160 articles and books containing reference to either a definition, a scale, or a construct of leadership. Although acknowledging that they did not cover all documents written they stopped only when they judged they achieved saturation and redundancy in the literature. The result was more than 1000 constructs/statements on leadership, which they categorized into 91 dimensions. This is a clear indication as to the diverse explanations of leadership and the dilemma it causes. There also seems to be a never-ending search for the one single leadership theory that could be held as the holy grail of effective leadership. For the purpose of this thesis I only deal with a broad general overview of leadership theory development.

Earlier thinking on leadership was based on the idea that it was an exclusive realm reserved for those endowed with *natural gifts* derived from inheritance. Understandably this view created the slant that leaders are born and not made (Yammarino, 2013). This consequently resulted in scholars attempting to identify a combination of traits to differentiate leaders from non-leaders and then applying those to explain leadership effectiveness (Derue et al., 2011). This leader centric trait approach focused exclusively on the requirement of having a leader with a certain combination of personal characteristics, and nothing else was considered as contributing factors to being an effective leader.

In an effort to create conceptual clarity Stogdill (1948) conducted a meta-



analysis of only studies that attempted to identify the traits and characteristics of leaders. He arranged the identified factors associated with effective leadership into the categories of *capacity*, *achievement*, *responsibility*, *participation*, *status*, and *situation*. On the basis of this analysis he concluded that leadership is not only dependent on the possession of a combination of traits, but it is a relationship between people in a specific collective situation, and a person who is a leader in one situation may therefore not necessarily be a leader in a different situation.

The criticism by Stogdill (1948) of the trait approach and his conclusion led to research linking leader characteristics with other factors, directing the development of leadership style/behaviour theories. The focus of these theories is on identifying how leaders act towards followers to influence them to accomplish goals (Northouse, 2012). The two separate leadership behaviour factors of *initiating structure* and *consideration* were identified and described the major differences in leader behaviour (Judge, Piccolo, & Ilies, 2004).

The primary objective of *initiating structure* is achieving high efficiency in utilising resources by placing a strong emphasis on a directive approach, the tasks, and operating procedures required to ensure organisational success. The primary objective of *consideration* is creating a strong commitment to the mission of the organisation by placing a strong emphasis on developing supporting relationships with group members, advancing a high level of mutual trust, and fostering group morale.

These two types of behaviours were both associated with leadership effectiveness however, *initiating structure* was found to be more related to group performance and profit, whilst *consideration* was more associated with follower satisfaction and organisational commitment, making it unclear whether one of these behaviours is a better indicator of effective leadership than the other (Chemers, 2000; Derue et al., 2011; Yukl et al., 2002). This was affirmed in a further meta analysis by

Judge et al. (2004).

The leadership construct continued to develop with Katz (1955) promoting the idea that leadership abilities and skills can be developed through learning. This approach implied that significant organisational benefits were to be gained by developing appropriate leadership capabilities. The three basic skills identified are *technical* (to accomplish the job specific requirements), *human* (to build cooperation and group cohesion), and *conceptual* (to understand the interrelatedness of various organisational factors). The argument was advanced that people on different levels in the organisational hierarchy require varying degrees of basic skills. The higher in the organisational hierarchy the more important conceptual skills become and the less important technical skills are, and vice versa.

Leadership thinking was expanded through theories predicating that the interaction between leader behaviour and situational factors make it impossible for a single leadership style to be effective given different situations. The situational factors are ascribed as internal and external influences, type and clarity of task, leaders' skills, and competency and commitment of followers (Chemers, 2000; Northouse, 2012; Van Seters & Field, 1990). The situational approach is based on the premise that leadership style is relatively flexible and consists of a *directive* and a *supportive* dimension. The directive dimension is focused on task performance and the supportive dimension is focused on providing job related emotional support. The leadership style is influenced by the followers' level of competence and commitment requiring the leader to be flexible. Depending on the level of competence and commitment of the follower the leader adapts the degree to which directive or supportive behaviour is adopted.

The contingency approach, most notably Fiedler's Contingency Theory of Leadership Effectiveness, is based on the premise that leadership style is relatively inflexible in that effectiveness will depend whether the leaders' style matches the

situation, or whether the situation can be adapted to match the leaders' style. Fiedler recognised *task-oriented* and *relationship-oriented* leadership styles, which are more or less effective in situations given the degree to which the leader has predictability and control over group processes. He found that task-oriented leaders are more effective in situations requiring either high or low control and predictability, whilst relationship-oriented leaders are more effective in situations requiring moderate control and predictability (Van Seters & Field, 1990).

The transactional centred approach to leadership was developed based on the notion that leadership has less to do with specific leader behaviour or the situation, and more to do with the interaction between leader and follower. This interaction may be influenced by the type of relationship, the level of clarity about the task structure, the degree of power exerted in the relationship, and the extent to which contingent reinforcement is used (Bass, 1990, 1995; Breevaart et al., 2014; Chemers, 2000; Van Seters & Field, 1990). In highly structured tasks the leader will have more power than in highly unstructured tasks. This provides the leader an opportunity to specifically explain what is required from the follower and what the reward will be for fulfilling these requirements; at the same time, it may be explicitly stated what the penalty for not fulfilling the requirement will be, or the consequences may be implicit. These relationships develop over time and are influenced and strengthened by the behaviour of the leader and the follower. The leader may have different social interactions with different followers, and the interactions may be mutually beneficial, or they may hold no benefit at all to the follower. For example, the leader provides tasks that the follower enjoys and at the same time loyalty towards the leader is expected and created. High quality interactions allow the leader and follower to develop high levels of trust and mutual liking which in turn create expectations of a mutually beneficial relationship. The leader is prompted to develop high quality interactions with as many followers as

possible as therein lie several beneficial outcomes for the leader (Yukl, O'Donnell, & Taber, 2009).

The most notable model grouped in the transactional leadership approach is the Leader-Member Exchange theory (LMX) centred on the dyadic relationship between the leader and the follower; it is aimed at developing the relationship into a mature partnership situation (Van Seters & Field, 1990). Initial research identified dyadic relationships with followers based on extra-role responsibilities creating an in-group, and relationships based on defined roles only creating an out-group. The out-group members do not want to do more than what the formal contract requires of them and they therefore do not receive special attention from the leader, but they are treated fairly and in terms of the formal contract. The in-group members are willing to do more and this leads them receiving more responsibilities, more opportunities, and more time and support from the leader (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995; Northouse, 2012; Van Seters & Field, 1990).

Early research was dominated by the two behaviours of *initiating structure* and *consideration* with limited attention given to the way leaders introduce and implement change in an organisation. Further leadership studies found that *change-oriented* behaviour is also relevant to leadership effectiveness (Yukl et al., 2002). The primary purpose of change-oriented behaviour is to inspire followers and transform organisations to achieve more than initially expected (Breevaart et al., 2014).

The first distinction between transactional and transformational leadership, although in a political context, was constructed in 1978 by James McGregor Burns (Burns, 2010) where he expressed the view that transformational leaders have the ability to inspire followers to collectively work towards achieving a higher purpose (Bass, 1995; Chemers, 2000). The concept in an organisational context was further explored and developed by Bass (1995) conceptualising his theory by drawing on a distinction

between attempted, successful, and effective leadership and arguing that transactional leaders create an environment that fosters mediocrity. He argues that transformational leadership creates superior performance by raising the awareness of followers, generating understanding and belief of the group's purpose, and convincing followers to sacrifice their own self-interest for the benefit of the group. The leader achieves this through one or more of the characteristics of *idealised influence (charisma)*, *inspirational motivation*, *intellectual stimulation*, and *individualised consideration* (Bass, 1990). He reasons that central to the success of a transformational leader is the ability to captivate and influence followers through charisma.

At a similar time to the writings by Burns a theoretical analysis on charismatic leadership was published by House (1977, as cited in Chemers 2000) based on an analysis of historical leaders who created astonishing levels of dedication and devotion from followers. He found the basis of their ability was grounded in typical characteristics such as high levels of self-belief and a strong need to induce and direct others, displaying desired role behaviour and inciting followers in adopting the desired behaviour, and the ability to express collective goals stemming from deeply held personal values to transcend individual objectives.

Transformational leadership as concept created a challenge in that it was expressed as a leadership style that will be effective for all leaders in all circumstances, in other words effective leadership is a universal phenomenon, which ran contrary to the results shown by some contingency theories on the suitable fit between certain behaviours and certain situations (Chemers, 2000; Scandura & Dorfman, 2004).

One of the leading situational factors impacting on leadership and organisational effectiveness was found to be national culture in the seminal work by Hofstede (1984). This view prompted researching leadership effectiveness in an international context and the necessity to understand and act on the cultural differences to successfully enter

foreign markets and embark on cross-cultural mergers and acquisitions (Javidan, Dorfman, De Luque, & House, 2006).

The Global Leadership and Organisational Behaviour Effectiveness (GLOBE) study was initiated to explore the interrelationship among societal culture, societal effectiveness, and societal leadership expectations (Javidan et al., 2006). There are views that leadership is a universal phenomenon irrespective of culture, and any impact that cultural differences may have on leadership effectiveness may diminish over time because of cultural convergence due to globalisation (Scandura & Dorfman, 2004). The GLOBE study found some universal and some cultural specific aspects impacting on leadership effectiveness. The cultural specific similarities and differences are attributed to the implicit leadership theory positing that people have implicit assumptions on what constitute effective leadership behaviours (House, Dorfman, Javidan, Hanges, & Sully de Luque, 2014; Javidan et al., 2006) whereby the follower accepts the leader if the leader is perceived to be behaving as expected (Littrell, 2013).

In the third phase the GLOBE studies also examined the impact of societal cultural values and leadership expectations on how chief executives behave as leaders and the impact on the top management teams in terms of dedication and firm competitive performance (House et al., 2014). Their findings suggested that societal cultural values do not directly predict executive leadership behaviour however; societal leadership expectations predict the executive leadership behaviour. In other words leaders behave not because of their cultural values but because what they believe would be effective in their society. They further found that charismatic leadership behaviour, team-oriented behaviour, and humane-oriented leadership were the three most important global leadership behaviours with a positive correlation to top management team dedication. The positive predictors of firm competitive performance were charismatic leadership behaviour, team-orientated behaviour, and humane-oriented leadership with

a significant but smaller impact. Although these characteristics were universally endorsed they were not necessarily enacted in the same manner across different cultures (House et al., 2014).

In conclusion it can be reasoned that the evolution in leadership studies have been influenced by the zeitgeist in psychology, management studies, and related disciplines with limited success in identifying the aspects of leadership that contribute to organisational success (Gordon & Yukl, 2004). Avolio, Walumba and Weber (2009) concluded that the study of leadership theory and research for the 10 years after their publication will be a period of unprecedented interest and opportunity to examine more positive forms of leadership development and how those will impact and contribute to organisations especially given an increasingly competitive global market. Positive forms of leadership ensure followers become integral to the leadership dynamic and focus on a positive moral perspective, develop people, lead by example, create greater value congruence, and promote strong positive organisational cultures.

In view of the fact that servant-leadership transcends individual self-interest of the leader and primarily focuses on serving the needs of others, and on the development of the followers thereby helping them to realise their full potential whilst at the same time impacting positively on broader society, it represents a positive form of leadership and approach to organisational behaviour (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006; Ebener & O'Connell, 2010; Graham, 1991; Liden, Wayne, Chenwei, & Meuser, 2014).

## Servant leadership theory

The practice of servant-leadership dates back to the earliest teachings of pronounced religions and philosophies, as well as actions and statements by many eminent leaders and thinkers (Mittal & Dorfman, 2012; Sendjaya & Sarros, 2002).

The concept of servant leadership in an organizational context was first framed by Robert K. Greenleaf in his seminal work *The Servant as Leader* (Greenleaf, 1970). He contemplated the question whether the role of servant and that of leader could be united in a single person, and if such a person can then contribute productively to society (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006; Greenleaf, 1970; Mittal & Dorfman, 2012; Parris & Peachey, 2013; Van Dierendonck, 2011). Questioning this paradox is an indication that Greenleaf was well aware of the contradistinction between the concepts of leader and servant, yet he was confident the two could coexist. Notwithstanding the introduction of the concept in an organizational context more than 40 years ago, scholars still have not reached consensus and clarity on a definition and theoretical framework of servant-leadership. The disparity in the theoretical dimensions or characteristics is one of the biggest challenges faced by scholars and practitioners alike. Despite research in servant-leadership increasing and emerging in three main streams, a *conceptual stream*, a *model development stream*, and a *measurement stream*, the theory is still under-defined rendering the measurement of servant-leadership problematic (Avolio et al., 2009; Parris & Peachey, 2013).

In order for servant-leadership to be acknowledged as a legitimate leadership style and worthy of scholarly research and practical application it has to be uniquely operationalized relative to other leadership theories with which it shares the domain. In the preface to the inaugural issue of *Servant Leadership: Theory and Practice*, Feldman (2014) addresses the question as to what servant-leadership theory building would look like if it was taken seriously. He distinguishes three major tasks as part of this process:



Identifying the key elements of the construct and drawing the boundaries around the construct itself, identifying the dependent variables it is likely to influence as it is critical to understand where servant-leadership has the most and least impact on followers, and identifying the processes through which servant-leadership influence others.

The rest of this chapter discusses servant-leadership literature in terms of the conceptual stream, model development stream, and the measurement stream relative to the three tasks identified above.

### **Conceptual stream**

Greenleaf conceptualized servant leadership following his retirement as an executive from AT&T. He acknowledged the novel *Journey to the East* by Herman Hesse as source for the idea (Greenleaf, 1970; Parris & Peachey, 2013).

In the novel the narrator tells the story of a group of men embarking on a mythical journey and of Leo, a servant who takes care of the group. Leo covers all the basic tasks for the group, but his important contribution was nurturing them through his caring character and song. One night Leo disappears and in the absence of his nurturing nature the group falls in disarray. Realising that they cannot continue without Leo they abandon the journey. Many years later the narrator finds Leo, whom he first knew as a servant, being the great and dignified leader of the order that sponsored the initial journey. Leo was a servant first who ensured that the needs of others are attended to and only later did he become a leader.

Greenleaf himself did not advance an applied and validated definition of servant-leadership (Van Dierendonck, 2011), he rather defined it in a descriptive manner (Parris & Peachey, 2013). He also admitted that the concept did not come to him through deliberate logic but through intuitive insight as he pondered Leo and

furthermore that there may be a contradiction in the concept of servant as leader (Greenleaf, 1970).

Greenleaf's (1970, 1977) contention is that leadership originates between two extremes, the one based on an innate sense to serve others first and then purposeful decision brings one an aspiration to lead, and on the other based on one who wants to be leader first in order to satisfy a desire for power or to attain material possessions, and then serve once power is obtained. In between these two extremes human nature is scattered. His formulation of the concept was highly contextual given the societal challenges faced at the time resulting in the intense scrutiny of power and authority. People realized that it would be best to relate to one another in a more creatively supportive manner rather than through coercion. It was further based on his view of an evolving ethical belief that leaders are only entitled to dedication which is spontaneously and consciously afforded by the followers in reaction and relative to the servant disposition of the leader (Greenleaf, 1970, 1977). He held the view that a groundswell of this belief will lead to the creation of a better society and that people will spontaneously and consciously follow only servant leaders. Leadership is either conferred or taken upon oneself and is dependent on the support of the followers, with the result that it can be taken away when the support fades. The innate nature of a servant is to take care of other people's needs above their own, and this nature creates trust and finds support from others.

At the same time he indicated that there was no dependable way to determine the servant-leader other than to "know, both about oneself and about others, whether the net effect of one's influence on others enriches, is neutral, or diminishes and depletes" (Greenleaf, 1970, p. 24). In other words leaders need to be self-aware and also understand the impact of their actions and attitudes on others, whether those be positive or negative. It would therefore seem as if servant-leadership is not only to do with

leadership techniques but it is based on the individual leader's personal values and virtues. Page and Wong (2000) expressed the view that servant-leadership is as much a belief in the responsibilities attached to leadership as it is an approach to leadership. Servant-leadership is therefore not only a unique leadership style in the sense that it starts with a natural feeling to serve first, but it is also a personal philosophy and develops from an enduring inward personal journey (Greenleaf, 1970, 1977; Parris & Peachey, 2013).

In an attempt to explain the concept of servant-leadership Greenleaf proposed to share a number of essays reflecting the collections of his experience. He suggested that those be read and contemplated on separately as a solution to understand and further develop the concept. His collections and thinking influenced others to the idea but the absence of a validated definition resulted in people composing their own interpretations of the concept and identifying a wide range of characteristics and behaviours, inhibiting the ability to effectively define and operationalize the concept (Mittal & Dorfman, 2012; Parris & Peachey, 2013; Reed et al., 2011; Reinke, 2004; Van Dierendonck, 2011).

Greenleaf (1977) described servant-leadership as:

The Servant-Leader is servant first...It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead... The best test, and difficult to administer is this: Do those served grow as persons? Do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, and more likely themselves to become servants? And, what is the effect on the least privileged in society: will they benefit, or, at least, not be further deprived? (p. 7)

This description frames the elusive concept of servant-leadership but it does not offer a conclusive definition. Based on reviews of servant-leadership research (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006; Parris & Peachey, 2013; Van Dierendonck, 2011) it would seem the most influential definitions and conceptual frameworks were developed by Spears (1995), Laub (1999), and Patterson (2003).

Larry C. Spears fulfilled the roles of President & Chief Executive Officer at the Robert K. Greenleaf Centre for Servant-leadership from 1990 until 2007. In 2008 he established the Larry C. Spears Centre for Servant-leadership. Spears (1995) is seen as the leading person to translate the ideas of Greenleaf into a conceptual framework gleaned 10 characteristics of servant-leadership, which in his own view is not necessarily exhaustive. The characteristics of servant-leadership identified are *listening*, *empathy*, *healing*, *awareness*, *persuasion*, *conceptualization*, *foresight*, *stewardship*, *commitment to the growth of people*, and *building community* (see Table 1).

Table 1: Spear's Servant-leadership Characteristics

Characteristic	Description
Listening	Listening intently to others, coupled with regular periods of reflection, is important for the development of the servant-leader.
Empathy	The servant-leader strives to understand and empathize with others.
Healing	Learning to heal is a powerful force for transformation and integration.
Awareness	General awareness, and specifically self-awareness, helps one in understanding issues ethics, power, and values.
Persuasion	The servant-leader seeks to persuade others rather than to coerce compliance.
Conceptualization	The ability to look at a problem, or an organization, from a conceptualizing perspective means one has to provide the visionary concept.
Foresight	Foresight is the characteristic that enables the servant-leader to understand the lessons from the past, the realities of the current, and the likely consequences of a decision for the future.
Stewardship	Servant-leadership, like stewardship, assumes first and foremost a commitment to serving the needs of others.
Commitment to the growth of people	Servant-leaders believe that people have an intrinsic value beyond their tangible contributions as workers.
Building community	Servant-leaders believe that true community can be created among those who work in business and other institutions.

Source: Spears (2010, p. 27)

These characteristics are in essence the topics of the various essays Greenleaf proposed to be read and contemplated in understanding his experience in developing the idea of servant-leadership. This conceptual framework is based on knowledge gained through reading Greenleaf's essays, self-practice, and mostly non-empirical based thoughts on servant-leadership (Parris & Peachey, 2013; Sendjaya & Sarros, 2002; Van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2011). The biggest negative about his conceptual framework is that he did not follow through to operationalize the characteristics (Van Dierendonck, 2011).

A need for a leadership model rooted in ethical and moral teachings informed by how people need to be treated, motivated, and led was identified by Laub (1999). He was the first to conduct empirical research into servant-leadership (Mittal & Dorfman, 2012). The purpose of his research was to develop a definition of servant-leadership, identify the unique characteristics of the construct, and determine if those characteristics can be measured in an organisational setting. Through an extensive literature review combined with a Delphi study among leadership experts followed by a field test, he offered a functional definition of:

Servant-leadership is an understanding and practice of leadership that places the good of those led above the self-interest of the leader. Servant-leadership promotes the valuing and development of people, the building of community, the practice of authenticity, the providing of leadership for the good of those led and the sharing of power and status for the common good of each individual, the total organisation and those served by the organisation (Laub, 1999, p. 23).

The reference to understanding and practice of leadership in itself is problematic from a scholarly perspective as there is no universally agreed definition of "leadership" (Northouse, 2012).

Laub (1999) identified six servant-leadership development characteristics as *value people, develop people, build community, display authenticity, provide leadership, and share leadership* (see Table 2). He also developed a measurement scale

called the *Organizational Leadership Assessment*, which assesses servant-minded organizations against a framework of six characteristics, but it does not assess individual servant-leaders. His argument was that a servant-minded organization flows from the application of servant-leadership as leaders function within an integrated system and they influence the organizational culture through their actions. The measurement instrument will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

Table 2: Laub's Clusters of Servant-leadership

Characteristic	Description
Values people	By believing in people, serving other's needs before their own, and receptive, non-judgmental listening.
Develops people	By providing opportunities for learning and growth, modelling appropriate behaviour, and building others up through encouragement and affirmation.
Builds community	By building strong personal relationships, working collaboratively with others, and valuing the differences of others.
Displays authenticity	By being open and accountable to others, willingness to learn from others, and maintaining integrity and trust.
Provides leadership	By envisioning the future, taking initiative, and clarifying goals.
Shares leadership	By facilitating a shared vision, sharing power and releasing control, and sharing status and promoting others.

Source: Laub (1999, p. 25)

A servant-leadership theory building dissertation was put forward by Patterson (2003). Her purpose was to present servant-leadership theory as flowing from transformational leadership theory, and to identify the unique dimensions forming the basis of servant-leadership theory.

Kuhn (1996, as cited in Patterson, 2003) observes that whenever a theory does not explain all the phenomena it originally sets out to clarify a new theory develops and Patterson (2003) postulates that transformational leadership does not explain the

phenomenon of a leader's purely altruistic behaviour towards the follower. Patterson (2003) argues that servant-leadership contributes a new perspective on leadership through the primary focus being on the wellbeing of followers. In contrast to a transformational leader the servant-leader focuses on the individual needs and development of followers because it is believed to be the right thing to do. The primary focus of transformational leadership is on achieving the organisational objectives through inspiring followers to do more than what is expected from them and thereby creating commitment to achieve those objectives (Bass, 1990). Consequently the leader and follower form a connection raising the level at which both leader and follower function and the follower does more than was originally expected by foregoing their own interests for that of the group. The leader addresses the higher-order needs of the follower merely as a means to an end and not because it is seen as the right thing to do. The interest of the transformational leader in developing the follower is therefore merely predicated on the need to achieve the organisational goals and not because the interest of the follower is the primary aim, and some transformational leaders act in a way that ultimately benefits only the organisation at the expense of the followers (Bass, 1990).

She provided an operational definition of servant-leaders as "those leaders who lead an organization by focusing on their followers, such that the followers are the primary concern and the organizational concerns are peripheral" Patterson (2003, p. 5).

The style of the servant-leader is therefore also aligned to a people-oriented (consideration) approach rather than a task-oriented (initiating structure) approach. This does not mean that the servant-leader and the organisation will be unsuccessful; as discussed earlier, the people-oriented approach has been found to be a predictor of leadership effectiveness.

Patterson (2003) promotes the view that “the servant-leader is guided by virtues within” (p. 8) and because the personal virtue of the servant-leader ensures focus on the common good of society, instead of purely profit maximizing, servant-leadership is linked to virtue theory. Her servant-leadership theory is conceptualized and defined by seven virtuous constructs. These constructs were developed based on an analysis of servant-leadership literature, interviews with servant-leaders, anecdotal evidence and evidence in service-led organizations. These seven virtuous constructs are *agape love*, *humility*, *altruism*, *vision*, *trust*, *empowerment*, and *service* (Patterson, 2003) (see Table 3).

Table 3: Patterson’s Constructs of Servant-leadership

Construct	Description
Agape love	It stems from Greek and is often translated as ‘unconditional love’. A love in the moral or social sense of the word, implying that leaders view followers not only as a disposable resource but as holistic beings with their own needs, wants, and desires.
Humility	A virtue that de-glorifies the leader and removes self interest, focusing instead on respecting the significance of all people. It is consistent with a healthy ego resulting in leaders being both confident and unassuming.
Altruism	Genuine concern for the welfare of others and the helping involves personal sacrifice without expecting anything in return.
Vision	Understanding the vision for the organization but also has the vision to see each individual as a valuable person, and believes in the future condition of each person and actively seeks to assist each individual to achieve that future condition.
Trust	An essential component in the leader/follower relationship. It is based on the virtues of integrity and honesty, and on goodwill towards others creating confidence and predictability.
Empowerment	Empowering people are at the heart of servant leadership through teaching and developing people, and letting people do their jobs by enabling them to learn, grow, and progress.
Service	At the core of servant leadership. The leader sees life as a mission of service placing the focus on the interests of others rather than on self-interest.

Source: Patterson (2003)



Servant-leadership has been linked to ethics, virtue, and morality in various leadership research initiatives (Parris & Peachey, 2013). Virtue is an unquestionable human characteristic indicating a moral quality and where emphasis is placed on individual and collective responsibility (Arjoon, 2000).

In conclusion, it appears that since the initial development of the concept and descriptive definition by Greenleaf further conceptual development has limited convergence. Different interpretations of Greenleaf's concept result in a phenomenon that is explained through numerous key elements with no clear boundary around the construct.

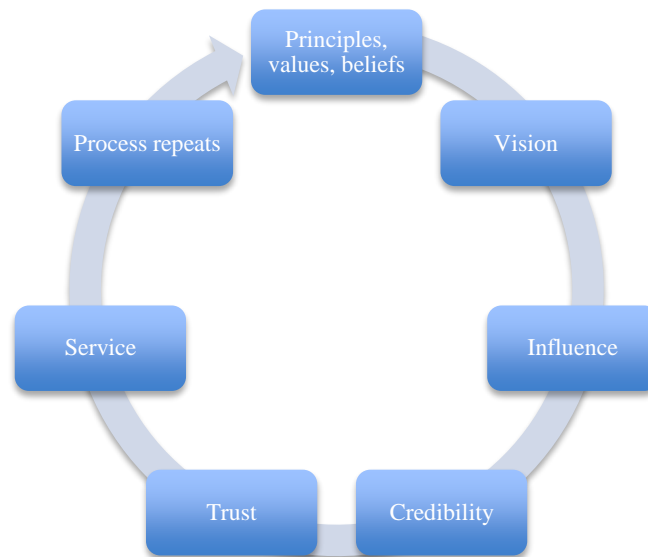
### **Model development stream**

The lack of empirical research supporting the concept of servant-leadership was acknowledged by Farling, Stone, and Winston (1999), prompting them to propose a definition and a theoretical servant-leadership model as basis for future research and development. They evaluated the concept of servant-leadership against that of transformational leadership and concluded that the two concepts are very similar in that the leader-follower process in both constructs aims to bring about change in the followers. The followers are therefore willing to do more than what was initially expected of them and in the process they also increase the performance of the leader. They consequently posited that servant-leadership is a form of transformational leadership and should therefore possess the same variables. Through a review of academic literature and popular press they identified five servant-leadership variables and the resulting model reflects how these relate to one another. They further argue that although servant leadership manifests in the behaviour of the leader, the basic driving force of the servant leader is rooted in personal principles, values, and beliefs.

The variables of *vision*, *influence*, *credibility*, *trust*, and *service* are organized in a process of growing progression and are grounded in the principles, values, and beliefs of the leader. Each of the variables has a progressive influence on the next variable,

driving the leader and the follower in a continuous process of achieving higher levels of performance (see Figure 1). They conclude that servant-leaders act on their personal principles, values, and beliefs through the empowerment of followers.

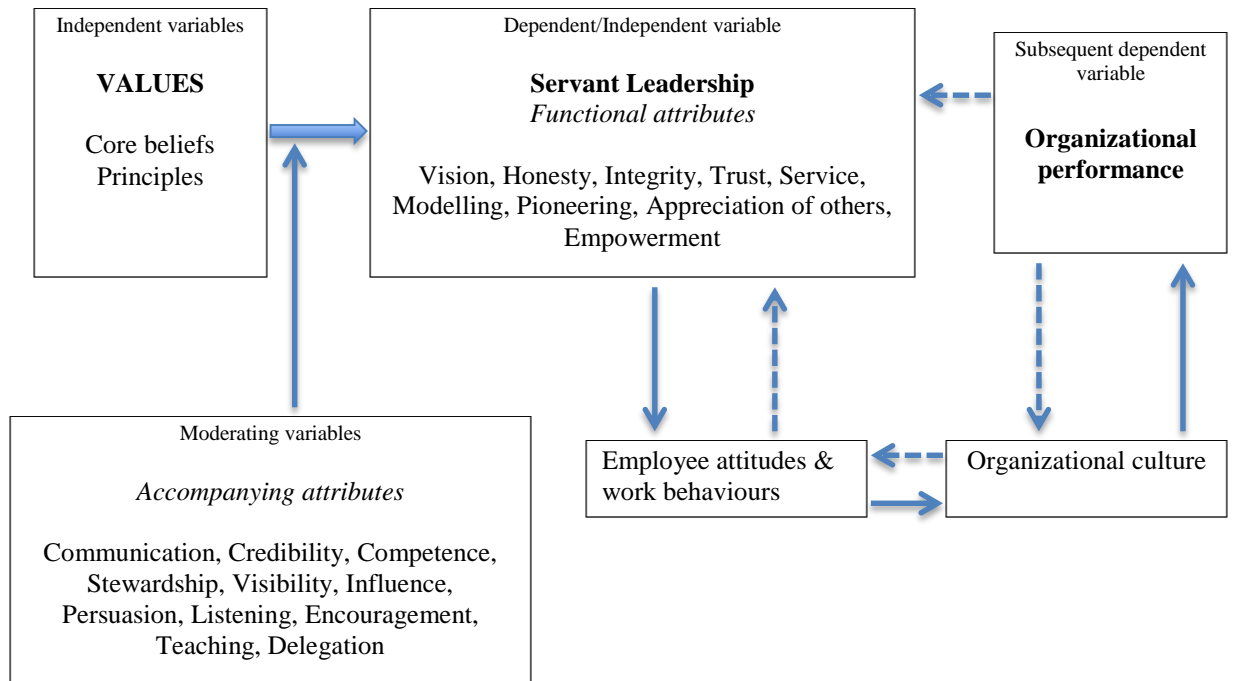
*Figure 1: Farling et al - Model of Servant-leadership*



Source: Adapted from Farling et al. (1999)

Based on an analysis and synthesis of servant-leadership literature Russell and Stone (2002) developed a hypothetical model to serve as basis for future research and development of the servant-leadership concept (see Figure 2). They did however not provide an operational definition of servant-leadership.

Figure 2: Servant-leadership Model developed by Russell and Stone



Source: Adapted from Russell and Stone (2002, p. 154)

The starting point of their servant-leadership model is grounded in the proposition that leaders' cognitive characteristics result from the values, core beliefs, and principles of the leader. Similar to the view expressed by Farling et al. (1999) the values, beliefs, and principles come to life through specific characteristics. These characteristics are distinctive but interrelated and act as catalyst to activate the responsibilities of servant-leadership. The nine specific characteristics based on their recurrent mention in the literature were identified as *vision, honesty, integrity, trust, service, modelling, pioneering, appreciation of others, and empowerment*. An additional group of eleven accompanying characteristics was also identified as moderating variables impacting on the level and intensity of the specific servant-leadership characteristics. The model further suggests that employee attitudes and behaviours as well as organisational culture may influence the effectiveness of servant-leadership thereby impacting on organizational performance.

As mentioned earlier the transformational leadership theory was once again used as the basic premise to explain servant-leadership by Patterson (2003). She argues that the purely altruistic behaviour of the leader towards followers is a phenomenon unaccounted for by transformational leadership theory.

The definition of servant-leadership according to Patterson (2003, p. 5) “signifies those leaders who lead an organization by focusing on their followers, such that the followers are the primary concern and the organizational concerns are peripheral”.

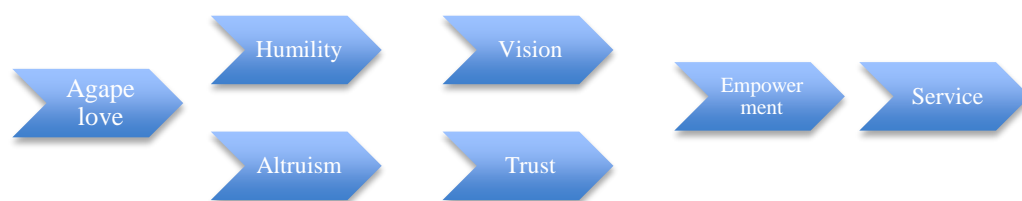
She expresses the view that the focus of servant-leadership stands in marked contrast to that of transformational leadership. This contrast manifests in the servant-leaders’ focus on relationships with people through serving the followers individually, whilst the transformational leaders’ focus is on task structure through aligning the follower interests with that of the group. The behaviour of transformational leaders towards the followers is focused on getting them to work harder to achieve the group goals, whilst the behaviour of servant-leaders towards followers is out of a sense that it is the right thing to do. Servant-leadership therefore provides a new understanding of leadership in that the primary focus is on the wellbeing of followers. She argues that the behaviour of servant-leaders would not change even if the performance of the organization were slipping.

She also confirmed the view expressed by Farling et al. (1999) that the motivational sources for a servant-leaders’ behaviour stem from personal principles, values, and beliefs. These are in essence qualitative characteristics that are internal to a person and are known as virtues. Patterson’s model reflects how specific constructs interlink and posits that servant-leaders are guided by internal virtues of which the cornerstone is agape love and ends up with service (see Figure 3). These constructs work in unison to assist in creating a climate where service is developed through a

leader modelling servant-based behaviour. Leading with love in an organisational context refers to an unconditional moral love with focus on the talents of the follower, and leader actions are executed for the right reasons and at the right time. Humility is important to prevent the leader falling to the temptation of thoughts of superiority relative to followers and rejects the notion of self-glorification. This supports the view expressed by Greenleaf that the servant-leader is first among equals (Van Dierendonck, 2011).

She argues that altruism, whereby self-sacrifice to the benefit of another takes place, cannot exist in the absence of moral love. Vision refers to the leader's ability to foresee the capabilities each follower may achieve, and not the normal organisational vision. Integral to the servant-leadership construct is the ability to create mutual trust between the leader and the follower because the servant-leader is a naturally trustworthy person. Followers are empowered by a leader who can create a vision on their abilities and that engenders trust. Empowered followers tend to become servants themselves as expressed by Greenleaf (1970).

*Figure 3: Patterson's Model of Constructs*



Source: Adapted from Patterson (2003)

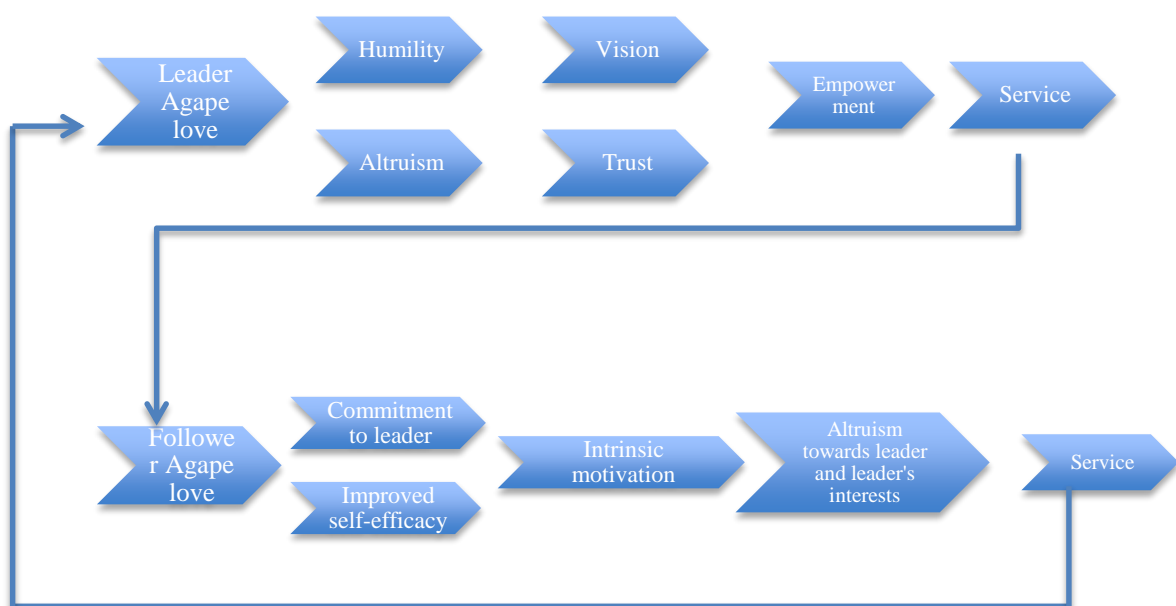
The major tenet of servant-leadership is followers who are growing healthier, wiser, freer, and more autonomous and become servants themselves, however it is also the most difficult part of servant-leadership to determine (Greenleaf, 1970). In other

words do followers experience increased self-efficacy, and do they ultimately follow the leader's example in terms of servant-leadership behaviour?

In an attempt to capture this notion in a conceptual model Winston (2003) extended the one directional model developed by Patterson (2003), and proposed a multi-directional interaction between leader and follower (see Figure 4). This model endeavours to explain how the leader's servant nature affects the follower's agape love, and why the follower will show commitment to the servant-leader to achieve organizational goals and in the process also become a servant.

The premise is the servant nature of the leader impacts positively on the follower's moral love. This in return improves the self-efficacy of the follower and strengthens the follower's commitment to the leader, resulting in increased levels of intrinsic motivation. The increased levels of intrinsic motivation positively impact altruistic behaviour towards the leader and the leader's interests, awakening the need for higher service to the leader and others.

*Figure 4: Circular Model of Servant-leadership developed by Winston*



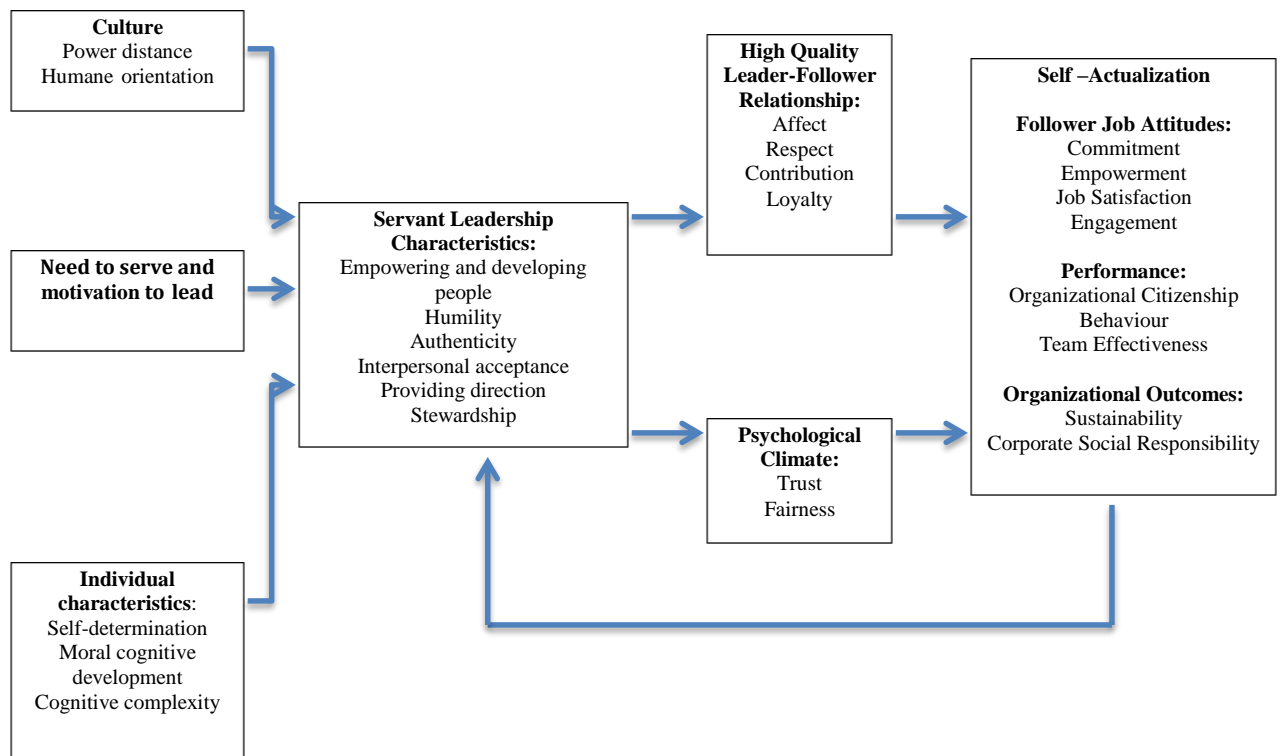
Source: Adapted from Winston (2003)

It would seem the most comprehensive model to date providing insight into the fundamental process of servant leadership was proposed by Van Dierendonck (2011). This conceptual model was developed based on the writings and thinking of Greenleaf, understandings already available in the literature, new theoretical viewpoints, and support from related fields.

The main underpinning of this model, unlike any of the other models, is the inherent natural feeling to serve and the conscious choice to aspire to lead expressed by Greenleaf (1970) as the motivation for being a servant-leader (see Figure 5). The individual characteristics of self-determination, moral cognitive development, and cognitive complexity are held to be associated with the motivation for being a servant-leader and the servant-leadership characteristics.

As discussed earlier in this thesis one of the leading situational factors impacting on leadership and organisational effectiveness was found to be national culture. The national cultural dimensions of power distance and humane orientation as identified by the GLOBE study of leadership model are identified as variables that may impact on the motivation and servant-leadership characteristics. Different interpretations and perspectives of servant-leadership based on cultural differences have been examined and some differences have been found (Han, Zhu, Zeng, & Huang, 2011; Mittal & Dorfman, 2012).

Figure 5: Van Dierendonck's Conceptual Model of Servant-leadership



Source: Adapted from Van Dierendonck (2011, p. 1233)

Followers will perceive and experience six servant-leadership characteristics, which will impact on the relationship climate consisting of the dyadic leader-follower relationship and the general emotional environment of the group. This relationship climate influences followers at an individual level, a group level, and at an organisational level. The individual level is characterized by an achievement of self-actualization, exhibiting positive job attitudes that are reflected through commitment, empowerment, job satisfaction, and engagement. The group level is characterized by increased team effectiveness, and at an organisational level it leads to organisational sustainability and corporate social responsibility. The model recognizes the give-and-take nature of the leader-follower relationship by including a feedback loop from the followers to the servant-leader.



In summary it is valuable to note that all the models incorporate the core values, beliefs, and principles of the servant-leader as fundamental to the concept and the leadership process. However, Greenleaf (1970) explained that servant-leadership begins with an innate feeling to serve then only a conscious choice gets one to aspire to lead. The only model to incorporate this very important and distinctive notion of servant-leadership is the one developed by Van Dierendonck (2011). The other models focus mainly on the interaction between the leader and the follower based on the core values, beliefs, and principles of the leader and possible outcomes without referring to the genesis of being a servant-leader.

The literature review reveals different interpretations, by scholars and practitioners alike, of the original ideas as developed by Greenleaf, leading to different conceptual thinking, and models reflecting the interaction process of servant-leadership. There seems to be different understandings, and some level of duplication on what the key elements of the construct is. In order to find clarity on this, and to identify the variables it will likely influence, it is necessary to effectively and comprehensively operationalize the construct with an appropriate measurement instrument.

### **Measurement stream**

The operationalization of servant-leadership is dependent on the development of a clear definition, and developing a designated measurement instrument, or instruments, to represent the construct. Notwithstanding empirical research on servant-leadership mainly focusing on the development of measurement scales, the study and understanding of antecedents, the processes, and outcomes of servant-leadership has been impeded by the lack of a coherent theoretical framework and no agreed measure through which to operationalize the concept (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006; Parris & Peachey, 2013; Van Dierendonck, 2011). A reliable and validated measurement

instrument that focuses on the core dimensions of servant-leadership is essential to study and understand the impact thereof on leaders, followers, organisations, and society as a whole (Van Dierendonck, 2011).

The next section will provide an overview of eight of the most prominent servant-leadership measurement instruments. These instruments have been developed based on different interpretations of the servant-leadership construct, and in some cases building on previous work of other researchers.

As discussed earlier Laub (1999) conducted the first empirical research on servant-leadership intending to uncover the definition, identify the characteristics, and determine whether the presence of these characteristics in an organisation could be measured by a structured instrument. The research resulted in the development of the 60-item *Organisational Leadership Assessment* instrument designed to assess organisational climate and leadership in general against a framework of six clusters.

The items are divided into three different sections measuring the perspective of the respondent in terms of the entire organisation, the leadership of the organisation (inclusive of managers/supervisors and top leadership), and the personal role of the respondent in the organisation. The items were developed following a literature review, a three-part Delphi survey, and a panel of experts to review each of the items for construct validity. The six identified clusters are *value people*, *develop people*, *build community*, *display authenticity*, *provide leadership*, and *share leadership*. No reference is made to servant or servant-leadership in the questionnaire.

The instrument was applied in a field study and 828 responses from 41 organizations operating in various states in the USA and one from the Netherlands were used. The organisations were representative of religious non-profit, secular non-profit, commercial, and public agency sectors. The results indicate a high reliability score but also a high correlation between the six clusters and separate sub-scores can therefore not

be used, losing the multi-dimensionality of the instrument. The items loaded on the organisational assessment and leadership assessment sections also report a high correlation between the scales and the conclusion is that only a single organisational leadership assessment score should be used for research purposes.

This instrument does not assess individual servant-leaders and only provides a perspective on the organisational culture and the leadership in general. The reason for this is centred on the notion that leaders function within an integrated system and their actions in turn influence the organisational culture. The behaviour of a servant-leader impacts on the followers and the organisation, and leads to the development of a servant-minded organisation (Laub, 1999).

The *Servant-leadership Profile* instrument was developed by Page and Wong (2000) to measure the characteristics and the process of servant-leadership. The instrument was developed based purely on previous conceptual analysis and the notion that servant-leadership is predicated on the absence of authoritarian hierarchy and egotistical pride however, they stopped short of conducting factor analysis and scale reliability tests. The instrument consists of 99 items classified in 12 categories and covers the leadership domains of personality, relationship-orientation, task-orientation, and process-orientation (Dennis & Winston, 2003; Van Dierendonck, 2011).

In an attempt to replicate the factor structure, Dennis and Winston (2003) found that only three factors could be measured and suggested a review of the items developed for the instrument. Based on empirical research a revised *Servant Leadership Profile* consisting of seven characteristics was developed, and the instrument was later revised yet again (Wong & Davey, 2007), reflecting five meaningful and stable characteristics: *a servant's heart* (humility and selflessness), *serving and developing others*, *consulting and involving others*, *inspiring and influencing others*, and *modelling integrity and authenticity*. The most important contribution made by the Servant Leadership Profile

(Revised) is the confirmation that one cannot be a servant-leader when one is motivated by power and pride.

The *Servant-leadership Questionnaire* was developed by Barbuto and Wheeler (2006) by initially combining the ten characteristics identified by Spears (1995) with an additional characteristic of *calling*. Calling in this context refers to the servant-leader's inherent natural need to serve others. Part of the research process by Barbuto and Wheeler (2006) included the development of new, more reliable theoretical definitions for the characteristics, followed by the development of five to seven sample questions for each of the dimensions. The questions were tested for face validity using a panel of experts. The finalised questionnaire was administered to a sample of 80 elected community leaders attending a leadership development workshop, and 388 colleagues or employees who were invited by those leaders to participate. The followers completed the self-report Servant-leadership Questionnaire, along with the self-report version of the Multi-leadership Behaviour Questionnaire (LMQ) and the rater version of the LMX-7 scales. The community leaders completed a self-report version of the Servant-leadership Questionnaire and the LMQ. The follower sample was used to perform a factor analysis given the sample size was more appropriate to the thoroughness of the process. This resulted in extracting five factors as opposed to the initial 11 dimensions.

The five factors are *altruistic calling*, *emotional healing*, *wisdom*, *persuasive mapping*, and *organizational stewardship*. The five factor structure could however not be replicated in a South African sample and a single dimensional fit seemed more appropriate (Dannhauser & Boshoff, 2007).

Dennis and Bocarnea (2005) developed the *Servant Leadership Assessment Instrument* aiming to provide a measurement for the seven dimensional servant-leadership model as advanced by Patterson (2003). The instrument was developed in various stages, commencing with a broad literature review, an expert review of scale

items, statistical analysis of data obtained from three separate samples, and modifications of the instrument.

The outcome of the test with the 42-item instrument confirmed the validity of five dimensions: *agapo love*, *vision*, *humility*, *trust*, and *empowerment*, but failed to measure the dimensions of *altruism* and *service*. Based on conceptual thinking and the literature both of these characteristics are fundamental to the concept of servant-leadership casting doubt whether the instrument actually measures servant-leadership. In an attempt to examine a Spanish translated version of the instrument the findings demonstrated reliability for the three dimensions of love, empowerment, and vision only (McIntosh, Irving, & Seminary, 2008).

The *Servant-leadership Scale* was developed by Liden, Wayne, Zhao, and Henderson (2008) using 85 items to measure nine dimensions identified through an extensive literature review. The instrument was developed using two independent samples, one involving 298 undergraduate students, and one involving 182 employees of a production and distribution company. Through the application of exploratory factor analysis using the first sample the result was a 28-item, seven-factor instrument that was used and verified through confirmatory factor analysis with the second sample.

The dimensions measured by this instrument are: *emotional healing*, *creating value for the community*, *conceptual skills*, *empowering*, *helping subordinates grow and succeed*, *putting subordinates first*, and *behaving ethically*. Van Dierendonck (2011) expressed the view that the dimension of conceptual skills could be considered as an antecedent.

Sendjaya, Sarros, and Santora (2008) developed the *Servant Leadership Behaviour Scale* as a reflective model capturing the underlying factor of servant-leadership through six observable dimensions as servant-leadership is held as the cause of the observable behaviours. This instrument was developed based on a literature

review followed by semi-structured interviews with 15 executives from for-profit and not-for-profit organizations. Items were developed and tested for content validity by a group of experts. The instrument was completed by a sample of 277 graduate students and the data was subjected to confirmatory factor analysis. The dimensions measured are *transforming influence*, *voluntary subordination*, *authentic self*, *transcendental spirituality*, *covenantal relationship*, and *responsible morality*. Sendjaya et al. (2008) contend that their model reflects a more holistic outlook of servant-leadership by extending current models through the incorporation of a moral-spiritual emphasis. At face value the dimensions do not match the descriptions of other instruments however, the literature guided their identification of the dimensions.

Development of the *Servant Leadership Survey* as a multi-dimensional instrument to measure essential elements of servant-leadership was performed by Van Dierendonck and Nuijten (2011). They contended that servant-leadership is a complicated construct and it may be prudent to have a range of instruments to capture and operationalize servant-leadership. They further expressed the view that research should compare the various instruments to enrich the understanding into the fundamental characteristics of servant-leadership.

In developing the *Servant Leadership Survey* an extensive literature review was conducted followed by interviews with servant-leaders to identify the best indicators of servant-leadership. The developed of this instrument followed a process over three phases using eight convenience samples totalling 1571 persons with various working backgrounds in the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. In determining content validity the instrument was compared with two other servant-leadership instruments namely the multi-dimensional measure as developed by Liden et al. (2008), and the one-dimensional scale developed by Ehrhart (2004). Given the conceptual commonality

between the various instruments high correlations were expected and found, providing support for content validity for the new instrument.

The *Servant Leadership Survey* instrument is multi-dimensional, behaviourally orientated, and focuses on the leader-follower relationship from the perspective of the follower. The instrument contains 30 items measuring eight dimensions, which are *empowerment, forgiveness, standing back, humility, authenticity, courage, accountability, and stewardship*. The study further found a positive correlation between servant-leadership and wellbeing at work (Van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2011).

The development of the *Executive Servant Leadership Scale* by Reed et al. (2011) was based on an analysis, synthesis, and review of 13 instruments measuring servant-leadership. They identified a gap in measuring servant-leadership among top executives and found that the focus was mainly on developing instruments measuring servant-leadership at supervisory level. The reason for developing the *Executive Servant Leadership Scale* is based on the premise that the culture and climate of an organization guiding the behaviour of organisational members is shaped by the values, beliefs, and actions of the top executives. It is further held that servant-leadership has possibilities for helping organisations to attain goals exemplified in ethical leadership practices. Leadership orientation in terms of ethical conduct has a meaningful impact on the behaviour of employees and in the absence of an instrument to measure executive servant-leadership behaviours it is not possible to accurately understand the impact of this leadership orientation on followers and the organisation (Reed et al., 2011).

A probability sample of 1522 adult learners at a private college was invited to participate in an online web-based survey. They were requested to respond to the items based on their perceptions of the top executive at their current place of work. A total of 218 useable responses were included in the data analysis. An exploratory and then confirmatory factor analysis yielded five first-order factors of *interpersonal support,*

*building community, altruism, egalitarianism, and moral integrity*, and revealed Executive Servant-leadership as a second-order factor.

The first-order factors are defined as follows:

*Interpersonal support* – creating interpersonal support goes wider than merely assisting followers to develop to their full potential but it also contributes to creating an organisational culture encouraging growth and service leading to followers becoming servants themselves. One of the central ideas to servant-leadership is whether “those served grow as persons? ...more likely themselves to become servants” (Greenleaf, 1970, p. 6). Examples of items operationalizing this factor are: “My top executive looks for ways to make others successful”, and “My top executive recognises when employee morale is low without asking”.

*Building community* – the servant-leader focuses on building a supporting community internal to the organisation however, a distinguishing factor of the construct is also building support to community external to the organisation. The actions of the servant-leader are measured against “what is the effect on the least privileged in society” (Greenleaf, 1970, p. 6). Examples of items operationalizing this factor are: “My top executive values diversity and individual differences in the organisation”, “My top executive encourages a spirit of cooperation among employees”, and “My top executive considers the effects of organisational decisions on the community”.

*Altruism* – this is core to the concept of servant-leadership in that the servant-leader has a genuine concern for others and consigns the interests of others as a priority without expecting anything in return. The servant-leader makes sure that “other people’s highest priority needs are being served” (Greenleaf, 1970, p. 6). Examples of items operationalizing this factor are: “My top executive serves others willingly with no expectation of reward” and “My top executive places the interests of others before self-interests”.



*Egalitarianism* – the de-glorification of the leaders as superior to the followers is an important feature of servant-leadership. The leader can learn from the followers and the servant-leader “automatically responds to any problem by listening first” (Greenleaf, 1970, p. 8). Examples of items operationalizing this factor are: “My top executive displays interest in learning from employees, regardless of their level in the organisation” and “My top executive invites constructive criticism”.

*Moral integrity* – this is fundamental to servant-leadership where the leader models the expected behaviour and followers become wiser, freer, and more autonomous. Examples of items operationalizing this factor are: “My top executive refuses to use manipulation or deceit to achieve his/her goals”, “My top executive values integrity more than profit or personal gain”, and “My top executive models the behaviour he/she expects from others in the organisation”.

In conclusion notwithstanding research in servant-leadership mainly focused on measurement development (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006; Van Dierendonck, 2011) we are neither nearer a universally accepted definition of servant-leadership, nor a measurement instrument that effectively operationalize the construct. In the absence of a common understanding of the key elements of the construct it will be difficult to develop a universally accepted reliable and validated measurement instrument.

This thesis provides an overview of only eight of the most prominent servant-leadership measurement instruments, yet these reflect a total of 299 items used to measure 43 dimensions to explain the construct of servant-leadership. The instruments use different terminology to explain the same or similar concepts and there seems to be a high level of duplication among the dimensions (see Table 4).

As mentioned earlier in this project, leaders’ are increasingly required to navigate a complex environment with gaps in regulations and cloudy rules around business conduct. Leadership actions in response to these challenges permeate an

organisation and its business activities and the promotion of a moral organisation is best achieved inter alia, through the modelling of ethical behaviour. Greenleaf (1970) asserted that the top executives carry the ultimate responsibility for developing a serving culture, and that the moral conduct of the top executives are especially critical in this process. I have chosen to focus on servant-leadership as operationalized by the Executive Servant-leadership Scale as developed by Reed et al. (2011) to measure the relationship between executive servant-leadership and work engagement both as perceived by top management team members. Although other instruments have merit in their application, the Executive Servant-leadership Scale was specifically developed to target the top executive and to explore the effects of servant-leadership at the highest level of an organisation (Reed et al., 2011).

Table 4: The Measurement of Servant-leadership

	Laub (1999)	Wong and Davey (2007)	Barbuto and Wheeler (2006)	Dennis and Bocarnea (2005)	Liden et al. (2008)	Sendjaya et al. (2008)	Van Dierendonck and Nuijten (2011)	Reed et al. (2011)
Instrument	Organizational Leadership Assessment – OLA	Revised Servant Leadership Profile – RSLP	Servant Leadership Questionnaire – SLQ	Servant Leadership Assessment Instrument	Servant Leadership Scale	Servant Leadership Behaviour Scale	Servant Leadership Survey - SLS	Executive Servant Leadership Scale - ESLS
Development samples	828 useable responses from 41 organizations	24 leaders, self-rating; 1 157 people from diverse backgrounds	388 people rating elected community leaders participating in leadership training seminar	250, 406, and 300 people from diverse occupational backgrounds	298 undergraduate students; 182 people in production and distribution company	277 graduate students	1 571 people in eight samples from two countries and diverse occupational backgrounds	218 adult learners and alumni from private college
Methodology	Literature review; Delphi study of experts; field test; exploratory factor analysis	Literature review; exploratory factor analysis	Literature review; panel of judges for face validity; exploratory factor analysis; confirmatory factor analysis	Literature and expert review; exploratory factor analysis	Literature review; exploratory factor analysis; confirmatory factor analysis	Literature review; qualitative semi-structured interviews; content expert validation; confirmatory factor analysis	Literature review; interviews with experts; exploratory factor analysis; confirmatory factor analysis	Literature review; jury for construct validity; exploratory factor analysis; confirmatory factor analysis
Number of items	54 plus 6 measuring job satisfaction	62	23	42	28	35	30	25
Internal consistency	.90 to .93	Not reported	.82 to .92	.89 to .94; not reported for less than 3-item scales	.76 to .86	.72 to .93	.69 to .91	.90 to .95
Limitations	High correlations between mean score of 6 clusters	Seems to be the factorial validity	Could not be replicated; indicated single dimension	Measures only 5 of the 7 dimensions	Dimensions contain possible antecedent		Unable to obtain sufficient multilevel data in the validation process	Generalizability due to limited sampling frame
Dimensions	6 clusters; only 2 dimensions	5	5	5	7	6	8	5
Key characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Values people</li> <li>▪ Develops people</li> <li>▪ Builds community</li> <li>▪ Displays authenticity</li> <li>▪ Providing leadership</li> <li>▪ Shares leadership</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Serving and developing others</li> <li>▪ Consulting and involving others</li> <li>▪ Humility and selflessness</li> <li>▪ Modelling integrity and authenticity</li> <li>▪ Inspiring and influencing others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Altruistic calling</li> <li>▪ Emotional healing</li> <li>▪ Wisdom</li> <li>▪ Persuasive mapping</li> <li>▪ Organizational stewardship</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Agapao love</li> <li>▪ Vision</li> <li>▪ Trust</li> <li>▪ Humility</li> <li>▪ Empowerment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Emotional healing</li> <li>▪ Creating value for the community</li> <li>▪ Conceptual skills</li> <li>▪ Empowering</li> <li>▪ Helping subordinates grow and succeed</li> <li>▪ Putting subordinates first</li> <li>▪ Behaving ethically</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Voluntary subordination</li> <li>▪ Authentic self</li> <li>▪ Covenantal relationship</li> <li>▪ Responsible morality</li> <li>▪ Transcendental spirituality</li> <li>▪ Transforming influence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Empowerment</li> <li>▪ Humility</li> <li>▪ Standing back</li> <li>▪ Authenticity</li> <li>▪ Forgiveness</li> <li>▪ Courage</li> <li>▪ Accountability</li> <li>▪ Stewardship</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Interpersonal support</li> <li>▪ Building community</li> <li>▪ Altruism</li> <li>▪ Egalitarianism</li> <li>▪ Moral integrity</li> </ul>

Source: Adapted from (Van Dierendonck, 2011, p. 1241)

## **Comparing servant-leadership with other leadership styles**

Leaders are characterised through the behaviour of individuals, which is centred on relatively consistent, but not rigid, forms of social interaction that are varied within the boundaries of the predominant behaviour, and influenced by the situation (Eagly, 2007). These leadership behaviours are depicted as a complex social dynamic in various leadership models (Avolio et al., 2009). The concept of servant-leadership needs to be significantly distinguished conceptually from other leadership approaches to establish legitimacy as a valuable leadership theory that can contribute meaningfully to leadership effectiveness through group performance, follower satisfaction, and effecting change.

The literature review in this project indicates that servant-leadership flows from transformational leadership theory but the transformational effect and process suggest very specific conceptual distinctions (Farling et al., 1999; Patterson, 2003; Smith, Montagno, & Kuzmenko, 2004; van Dierendonck, Stam, Boersma, de Windt, & Alkema, 2013). Parolini (2007) identified five distinct items differentiating transformational leadership from servant-leadership, namely the primary focus to meet the need of the organisation or the individual, inclination to lead or to serve, allegiance and focus towards the organisation or the individual, customary or unconventional approach to influence followers, and an attempt to control or provide freedom through influence and persuasion.

Servant-leadership also shares some overlap with leader-member-exchange theory and ethical leadership theory (Barbuto & Hayden, 2011; Brown & Treviño, 2006; Henderson, Liden, Glibkowski, & Chaudhry, 2009).

The most obvious difference between these leadership theories stems from the individual's inclination to become a leader. The inclination to lead is different for

these four theories in that the servant leader is fuelled by the desire to serve, the transformational leader by the desire to lead, the LMX leader by the desire to relate, and the ethical leader by the desire to influence ethical behaviour (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006; Brown & Treviño, 2006; Henderson et al., 2009; van Dierendonck et al., 2013). Servant-leadership is born from a natural feeling to serve others with the aspiration to lead as an equal following later, which goes beyond the leader's self-interest and the drive for power (Greenleaf, 1970), and it is a dimension unique to servant-leadership. The servant-leader leads through humility based on personal values and beliefs, shifts the primary focus from the organisation to the follower with the aim to develop the health, autonomy and moral outlook of followers (Graham, 1991; Parolini, 2007; Patterson, 2003). The transformational leader is focussed on achieving the organisational objectives and the development of the followers takes place with that ultimate goal in mind and not because it is necessarily the right thing to do or in the best interest of the followers (Patterson, 2003). The leader, according to the LMX theory, is motivated by a desire to relate to others through the development of positive relationships to increase satisfaction, mutual trust, and increased effort (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006). The ethical leader in contrast shows concern for others and emphasises ethical standards and moral management through positive role modelling and uses rewards and punishment in an effort to improve the ethical climate and behaviour in the organisation (Brown & Treviño, 2006; Mayer, Kuenzi, Greenbaum, Bardes, & Salvador, 2009).

Leadership performance structures in general require leaders to focus more on the traditional leadership dimensions of competence and performance than on the moral, emotional, and relational behaviour dimensions (Reed et al., 2011). The transformational leader achieves sustainable change by focusing on the skills of the

leader, creating a vision for the organisation with an emphasis on performance, achieving the goals set out by the leader, and idealised influence (charisma) plays a significant role in influencing followers (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006; Graham, 1991). Servant-leaders transform followers by facilitating their personal development and creating a culture where individuals can grow, and organisations are prepared to serve the community by influencing followers in a non-traditional way through expressing self-sacrificial stewardship and using persuasion rather than coercion (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006; Reinke, 2004). It was found by van Dierendonck et al. (2013) in examining the differentiated influence between transformational leadership and servant-leadership on organisational commitment that transformational leaders are perceived as being more effective and servant-leaders are perceived as better at fulfilling the needs of followers. They further found that both leadership effectiveness and follower need satisfaction are compelling predictors of organisational commitment.

Leadership and power go hand-in-hand as the position of leader provides the individual power over other people and access to benefits and resources not available to followers. The nature of the servant-leader and the focus on de-emphasizing the idealisation of the leader do not imply a manner of submissiveness leaving the leader powerless and power resting with the followers. The servant-leader uses power differently and prudently in the interest of the followers and not to benefit themselves (Sendjaya & Sarros, 2002; Van Dierendonck, 2011). The transformational leader emphasises and relies on the hierarchical power relationship between the leader and the follower to ensure the attainment of the leader's vision and the organisational objectives (Graham, 1991). The ethical leader relies on the power relationship between leader and follower to role model ethical conduct and moral management by

the use of rewards or punishment (Brown, Treviño, & Harrison, 2005), whilst with LMX the leader develops a different relationship with each person and the quality of these relationships is influenced by the clarity of task structure and the level of power they yield in the relationship (Bass, 1990; Chemers, 2000).

The servant-leader has an explicit moral component in that the leader takes on the role as steward taking responsibility for the larger institution and safeguarding the interests and assets of all stakeholders, not only that of the shareholders. They do not serve with a primary focus on organisational outcomes, but rather on the act of service itself, which inspires mutual trust, and the behaviour modelling leads to the development of more servant-leaders (Stone, Russell, & Patterson, 2004; Van Dierendonck, 2011). Transformational leadership does not have an explicit moral component (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006; Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999; Patterson, 2003; Van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2011). The moral component in ethical leadership is explicit with the leader developing followers by performing as a role model in influencing the ethical and unethical behaviour of followers, and using rewards and punishment to ensure standards are followed (Brown & Treviño, 2006). The LMX theory has no explicit moral component and focuses on creating high leader-member-exchanges to increase satisfaction, mutual trust and increased effort (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006).

In conclusion there is general acceptance that servant-leadership shares some overlap with transformational, ethical, and LMX leadership theories yet it also adds conceptual breadth with the distinctive characteristic of the servant-nature of the leader.

## **Summary: Servant-leadership**

I have discussed the theoretical and research progress of the servant-leadership construct following a conceptual, model development, and measurement development stream. Interest in the concept and the potential consequences have increased recently due to a number of high level corporate and economic system failures due to a lack of ethical and moral conduct by organisational leaders.

Notwithstanding the conceptualization of servant-leadership in an organisational context more than 40 years ago by Greenleaf (1970) the theory still lacks a coherent understanding of the key elements composing the construct and a definitive boundary around the construct.

A more collaborative approach between scholars and practitioners may contribute to the development of an integrated and coherent servant-leadership definition, framework model, and measurement instrument to guide future research of the construct.

Greenleaf (1973) contended that the best test of servant-leadership is whether the followers become more healthy, wiser, and more autonomous. In order to explore this notion the next part of the thesis will review the extant literature on the concept of work engagement as a positive contributor to physical health, positive emotions, quick-recovery after effort, extra-role behaviour, and personal initiative and thereby contributing meaningfully to organisational success.



## **Work engagement**

An increasing globalized economy is intensifying the competitive environment within which domestic and international businesses are operating necessitating continuous change to succeed. This challenge is further complicated by rapid advances in information technology and technological complexity requiring employees with a higher level of technical and professional skills (Markos & Sridevi, 2010). The result is anticipating and adapting to continuous change taking place within organisations (i.e. diversity, technology, cost reduction) and in the type of work that people are required to perform (i.e. work intensification, knowledge economy, mental and emotional demands, precarious employment).

The “new deal” in terms of the employment agreement is one where the employer will provide an interesting work environment, and in turn employees are expected to continuously develop and apply their skills that are needed by the employer and in the same time improve their employability, be more flexible, accept ambiguity, and understand that continuous change is the new normal (Cartwright & Holmes, 2006; Frank, Finnegan, & Taylor, 2004; Markos & Sridevi, 2010). These are in stark contrast to the “old deal” where an employee provided loyalty, commitment, and trust in exchange for job security, training and development, and support from the employer.

This change in the relationship is leading to a rise in cynicism from employees resulting in lower levels of engagement (Cartwright & Holmes, 2006). Employers therefore need to find new ways to create meaning for the employee in the workplace leading to increased trust, commitment, and dedication, to the benefit of the individual and the organisation. The environment demands a new look at attracting and retaining the best employees, and increasing effectiveness and efficiency through a workforce

that takes initiative, brings innovation, and provides proactive solutions to organisational challenges. Expectations of the workforce are continuously increasing and this is indicative in leadership theories espousing the ability of leaders to inspire followers toward new heights of success, increased ability to solve problems, and higher performance levels (Bass, 1995; Parolini, 2007; Stone et al., 2004). Leaders who are able to achieve this are seen as effective, yet to succeed in a constantly changing environment the leader should be concerned not only with motivation to increase performance but also with the health and well-being of employees (Schaufeli & Salanova, 2007).

People differ significantly in terms of how they deal with the demands of their work, their involvement and commitment to work, their feeling of belonging, reacting to opportunities for development, and the level of passion and devotion they put forth at work, which manifests in their engagement or disengagement at work (Babcock-Roberson & Strickland, 2010). Engagement in the work context has been receiving more airtime recently as a positive contributor to physical health, positive emotions, quick recovery after effort, extra-role behaviour, and personal initiative thereby contributing meaningfully to organizational success (Bakker, Schaufeli, Leiter, & Taris, 2008; Batista-Taran et al., 2013), and it is held that getting work engagement right may be one of the biggest challenges for organizations in the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Attridge, 2009; Frank et al., 2004).

Work engagement is a two-way process between the employee and the organisation and there is growing support for the claim that an engaged workforce is a powerful tool to increase retention of top talent, improve productivity, and increase customer loyalty (Serrano & Reichard, 2011). It is also held that engaged employees have a sense of vigour and valuable connection with their work actions (Shimazu et

al., 2008). Employees who are not engaged are less committed to their job and the organisation and may seek other job opportunities. In the absence of other opportunities they might “withdraw” emotionally or mentally from the organization thereby impacting negatively on the contribution they make to the organization. Actively disengaged employees live their negativity towards the work and the organisation in a noticeable manner and frustrate the contribution made by those who are engaged.

The concept of work engagement is strongly linked to earlier motivation theorists and researchers (Frank et al., 2004); in addition, it flows from the concepts of job satisfaction, organisational commitment and organizational citizenship behaviour (Markos & Sridevi, 2010), and coincides with the rise of the positive psychology which flows from earlier research on burnout (Schaufeli & Salanova, 2007). Notwithstanding the similarity of these various constructs it is argued that they are distinct and cannot independently act as a replacement for engagement (Hallberg & Schaufeli, 2006; Macey & Schneider, 2008; Markos & Sridevi, 2010; Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001; Saks, 2006). In support of this Markos and Sridevi (2010) advances the argument that job satisfaction reflects a simple satisfaction with the employment arrangement and is in essence merely a transactional process contingent on the allocation of salary increases and bonuses, whilst work engagement is about passion and commitment to devote oneself, and a willingness to increase discretionary effort. Equally, it is argued that organisational commitment reflects a loyalty to the organisation only because it provides employment whilst engagement focuses on the work itself (Maslach et al., 2001).

Academic theories and empirical research on engagement is limited in its depth and extent. There is no consensus on the definition of engagement and the

theoretical conceptualisations also differ from one another. The challenge with the concept of work engagement is the cloudiness between the conceptual frameworks, antecedents, how is it operationalized, and its consequences (Macey & Schneider, 2008; Markos & Sridevi, 2010). The theoretical models and research on engagement in the work environment are characterized by four streams namely personal engagement, burnout/engagement, work engagement, and employee engagement (Simpson, 2009). Much of the current debate and contribution on engagement is driven mainly by consultants' surveys more so than academic theory development and research, and the troubling news is the surveys reflect a big percentage of the global workforce as actively disengaged (Markos & Sridevi, 2010; Saks, 2006).

Initially conceptualizing the construct of engagement in the workplace Kahn (1990) worked from the thesis that people intermittently experience different phases of personal engagement and disengagement during their role fulfilment at work. He examined personal engagement from the perspective of an employee's simultaneous deployment of themselves into their work role and the expression of physical, cognitive, and emotional energy. The reasons for fluctuating engagement and disengagement levels are the result of contrasting emotional experiences of meaningfulness, safety, and availability of work within the work context during task performances. The three conditions are explained as follows: *meaningfulness* refers to a perceived personal gain on the effort being applied and is influenced by tasks, roles, and work interactions; *safety* refers to a perception that applying oneself in the role will not result in negative consequences and is influenced by supportive managers and co-workers; and *availability* refers to perceived possession of personal resources to fulfil the role and is influenced by energy levels, insecurities, and outside-life issues (Kahn, 1990; Saks, 2006). Kahn (1990) found that negative emotional experiences

around meaningfulness, safety, and availability lead to a state of personal disengagement. In a state of personal disengagement people are separating themselves from the work role in an attempt to protect themselves in a cognitive, emotional, and physical way against negative consequences linked to work role performance.

The focus of psychology has traditionally been on negative states prompting researchers to explore negative personal and emotional experiences that arise when the relationship between a person and the job goes out of kilter leading to the development of burnout as a construct. It was initially assumed that burnout occurred only in individuals involved in certain categories of work such as health services, education, and social services however, it was later extended to include other professions. Further research led to the development of a multi dimensional theory on burnout consisting of three core dimensions of emotional exhaustion, cynicism, and inefficacy and assessed by the Maslach-Burnout Inventory (MBI) (Maslach et al., 2001). In the context of the theory, exhaustion in itself does not constitute burnout. The feeling of exhaustion needs to trigger a reaction by the individual that takes the form of emotional and cognitive withdrawal from the work through the development of a cynical attitude. The drop in efficiency is not directly related to exhaustion or cynicism but more related to a lack of resources and it would seem to develop parallel with the other two dimensions (Maslach et al., 2001).

The emergence of positive psychology promoting positive emphasis on aspects of work life resulted in redefining the concept of burnout as the wearing down of engagement with the job (Maslach et al., 2001). Engagement is viewed as the positive opposite of burnout consisting of the three core dimensions of energy, involvement, and efficacy, the direct counterparts of burnout and therefore measured

as opposite scores on the MBI (Maslach et al., 2001; Schaufeli & Salanova, 2007; Schaufeli, Salanova, González-Romá, & Bakker, 2002).

Notwithstanding holding the same conceptual view that engagement is the positive opposite of burnout Schaufeli et al. (2002) follows a different approach by defining and operationalizing engagement as a distinct construct and developed the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) to measure the construct independently (Maslach et al., 2001; Schaufeli et al., 2002). Engagement is defined by Schaufeli et al. (2002, p. 74) “as a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigour, dedication and absorption”. *Vigour* signals high-energy intensities and emotional toughness while working, the eagerness to invest effort in one’s work, and determination even in the face of difficulties. *Dedication* refers to what extent the person identifies with the work activities and experiences a “sense of significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride and challenge” (Schaufeli et al., 2002, p. 74). *Absorption* shows how concentrated and happily captivated a person is with the work activities to the extent that time is perceived to pass quickly.

The term employee engagement is defined as the “individual’s involvement and satisfaction with as well as enthusiasm for work” (Harter, Schmidt, & Hayes, 2002, p. 269). The development of the Gallup Workplace Audit happened over many years with the aim to measure the perception of employees on a number of work characteristics and report on overall job satisfaction, and was the precursor to the current Gallup Q<sup>12</sup> Survey that measures employee engagement (Attridge, 2009; Harter, Schmidt, & Keyes, 2003; O’Boyle & Harter, 2013). The 2013 Gallup survey on worldwide levels of work engagement reported that New Zealand faces barriers to global competitiveness and economic success in that only 23% of the workforce is

engaged, 62% are not engaged and 15% are actively disengaged, whilst only 19% of employees in leadership positions are engaged (O'Boyle & Harter, 2013).

One of the work related predictors of vigour as raised by Shirom (2004) is that of leadership style. Leaders should understand the impact of their actions and attitudes on followers. Energized leaders are likely to also energize their followers and in this vein reference is made to the concept of transformational leadership (Batista-Taran et al., 2013; Serrano & Reichard, 2011). The manner in which leaders can impact work engagement was synthesized by Serrano and Reichard (2011) as four specific categories: designing meaningful and motivating work, supporting and coaching employees, enhancing employee's personal resources, and facilitating rewarding and supportive co-worker relations.

In summary organizational leaders as the individuals who set the direction, climate, and culture in an organisation are ideally placed to influence the engagement levels of their employees by modelling and requiring the drivers of engagement to form part of the structures and systems (Batista-Taran et al., 2013; Markos & Sridevi, 2010).

## **Gender and leadership**

Most of the research in an attempt to explain the differences and similarities between men and women in terms of their leadership behaviour, styles, and effectiveness is based on the biological sex of leaders and followers as a marker. Gender is however a more complex concept involving different dimensions and levels than merely differentiating based on biological sex (Korabik & Ayman, 2007). Reported differences are caused by socialisation patterns, which have a higher contribution to differences than genetics, the sex stereotyping of occupations, or the perception that managerial positions still require masculine traits to ensure effectiveness (Bass, Avolio, & Atwater, 1996).

Leadership scholars moved away from the initial focus of studying only the individual characteristics of a leader, which was mainly typified as a white male employed in a corporate position in the United States, to depicting it through various models as an interdependent and complex social system and process (Avolio et al., 2009). Despite this change women as a group are still viewed as under-represented in formal leadership roles within business and government and one of the contributing factors is held to be a surreptitious bias due to women's non-conformance to the elite leadership role, which is often perceived as being a white male (Ayman, Korabik, & Morris, 2009; Eagly, 2007; Hoyt, Simon, & Innella, 2011). Ayman and Korabik (2010) expressed the view that the numeric dominance of men and the dearth of women in formal leadership positions does not mean that women are ineffectual leaders.

It is claimed by Ayman and Korabik (2010) and Eagly and Chin (2010) that examining the effects of gender on leadership may contribute to a more inclusive understanding and interpretation of what effective leadership is deemed to be, and



failure to do so limits the scope of knowledge restricting effective leadership development for the future. In contrast to this Avolio et al. (2009) make no mention of the standing or role of gender in recent developments in leadership literature and its possible contribution to the development of leadership for the future. This is indicative of the contrasting views held by academic researchers on the differences and similarities in leadership style and effectiveness between men and women (Bass et al., 1996; Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & Van Engen, 2003; Eagly, Karau, & Makhijani, 1995). It was observed by Littrell (2013) that in researching sex differences suspicion may be raised in that academic researchers' analysis most often provides confirmation to that what they set out to prove at the outset.

Research and interpretation of the anticipated impact of gender related dynamics on leadership is influenced by various theoretical perspectives, whilst some studies include it as a demographic characteristic but with no primary theoretical benefit to explain the expected impact (Ayman & Korabik, 2010; Bruckmüller & Branscombe, 2010; Eagly, 2007; van Emmerik, Euwema, & Wendt, 2008). In order to meaningfully interpret observed gender differences and to what extent these differences manifest researchers draw on a number of theories including social role theory, androgyny theory, expectation states theory, and status characteristics theory (Ayman & Korabik, 2010; Eagly et al., 1995).

Korabik and Ayman (2007) developed a multi-perspective gender and leadership model integrating socio-demographic, gender-role orientation, and social interaction-process perspectives to conceptually explain the reasons for gender related dynamics in the leadership interaction process. They view leadership as a process of social interaction between a leader and their superiors and followers, which is influenced by different intra-psychic processes.

The socio-demographic perspective postulates that gender can influence access to leadership roles and the evaluation of leadership behaviour based on how men and women are perceived as leaders given the activation of stereotypes of biological sex and the expected social roles. Men and women have different stereotypic roles to fulfil in society, i.e. the man is the provider and the woman is the caregiver. Due to these different roles they acquire a different skill set and they are expected to act differently, which affects leadership behaviour and outcomes (Eagly & Karau, 2002). The perception that the social role of males is more attuned to the role of leader may result in women being perceived as less favourable to fill leader roles, and receiving less favourable evaluation of leadership behaviour if a woman fulfils the role, impacting on self confidence (Eagly et al., 1995). Men and women therefore tend to emerge as leaders in situations compatible with their expected social roles and that could inhibit women from attaining formal leadership positions (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Yet, once a leadership role is attained women sometimes face the further challenge caused by conflicting demands of their social role to act in a communal way, reflecting the stereotypical female qualities of cooperation, mentoring and collaboration, and the expected male qualities of assertiveness, competitiveness, independence, and courageousness which is stereotypical of leadership roles (Eagly, 2007; Turner, 2014). In an attempt to adapt to the dominant agency style the result may be a less favourable evaluation of women's actual leadership behaviour because agency behaviour is deemed less appropriate in women than men (Kulich, Ryan, & Haslam, 2007).

The gender-role orientation perspective is grounded in the gender-role socialisation process that develops internal personal characteristics and values irrespective of biological sex. The way boys and girls are taught how to socially

behave based on their assigned gender and stereotypical roles have an impact on the psychological characteristics of an individual. These characteristics and values ultimately impact on the leader's preferred style, behaviour, and outcomes. This perspective postulates that individuals displaying more masculine characteristics will express higher initiating structure-agency-instrumental behaviour, whilst individuals displaying more feminine characteristics will express higher consideration-communal-expressive behaviour when leading. However, those leaders who have both instrumental and expressive personality traits have the ability to function in both initiating structure and consideration areas (Appelbaum, Audet, & Miller, 2003; Rosette & Tost, 2010). The behaviour of these androgynous persons will still be impacted by situational variables such as group gender composition and nature of the task. Ayman and Korabik (2010) argue that examining the impact of the leader's gender-role orientation on individual behaviour and outcomes in leadership is important as it may provide women a way to manage the conflicting demands between their expected social role and the leadership role.

The interpersonal relations perspective postulates that men and women have dissimilar types of interaction with their superiors, co-workers and followers and these will influence the outcomes as experienced by each party. In an interaction-based model explaining the social interface process Deaux and Major (1987) accentuate that gender-linked social interactions are caused by more than one factor, are highly flexible and context dependant and as a result proposed no consistent gender differences. Differences are therefore sometimes present but they increase and decrease with shifts in social context.

Eagly and Johnson (1990) conducted a meta-analysis comparing the leadership styles of actual leaders in organisational settings and found no stereotypic

differences for task-oriented style or interpersonal-oriented style. This was however found not valid for men and women in laboratory experiments and assessment studies where stereotypic differences were more pronounced for those who were not selected or trained for leadership roles. They concluded that leader role expectations and organisational socialisation processes constrain men and women to lead in a gender stereotypic manner. Leaders are socialised into the organisational culture and leader role, which clearly define the expected behaviour of the leader within that organisation and role. The absence of a clearly defined organisational socialisation process and leader role expectation therefore allows for more stereotypical behaviour. They interpreted the data to reflect stronger differences in the inclination of women to adopt a more democratic-participative style as opposed to men adopting a more autocratic-directive style and that the organisational setting did not constrain the differences as it did in the task-oriented and relationship-oriented styles. They acknowledged the interpretation of this difference was purely speculative but they based it on the view that women's social skills might enable them to deal with leadership roles differently than men, and the attitudinal bias towards the ability of women to lead. This causes women to be more accommodative of the views and feelings of others in order to facilitate the acceptance of a women's leadership (Eagly & Johnson, 1990). The constraints of leadership roles therefore causes sex differences to decrease in magnitude, but not so with democratic/autocratic behaviour. They argued that the freedom to decide what behaviour to adopt to fulfil those roles is to some extent available to leaders and it is in this area that most of the differences between men and women may manifest (Eagly & Johnson, 1990).

As mentioned earlier in this report leadership research extends beyond considering only task-oriented and interpersonal-oriented styles and various

models/styles of leadership have been developed over time (Bass et al., 1996). Research on the dimensions of transformational and transactional leadership for example report that these have been found to affect group performance and follower satisfaction positively (Bass et al., 1996; Bono & Judge, 2004).

Eagly et al. (2003) conducted a meta-analysis examining the differences between men and women on transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership style and found only a small difference between male and female styles. The data reflect that women exceed men in idealized influence (attribute), inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration, whilst men score higher on the individualised influence (behaviour) dimension. Women also score higher than men on the transactional leadership dimension of contingent reward. They could not confirm their assumption that the less effective leadership styles of management by exception (passive), management by exception (active), and laissez-faire is more prominently observed in men than in women due to a lack of data. They concluded that women tend to adopt a transformational leadership style as a way to manage the role incongruity they may experience between the social role they are expected to fulfil and the leader role requirements of adopting more masculine behaviours. This increases their ability to inspire extra effort from followers, extract higher expressed satisfaction with their leadership, higher overall effectiveness of their leadership, and they tend to reward followers more readily for appropriate performance. A shortcoming of the meta-analysis as expressed by Eagly et al. (2003) was their inability to measure the correlation between the styles and effectiveness overall and separately for men and women due to the absence of necessary data.

The notion of effectiveness is inextricably linked to leadership as an outcome of behaviour rather than of a particular style and is generally seen as the leader's ability to enable a group or organisation to achieve its goals and maintain itself over a period (Avolio et al., 2009; Eagly et al., 1995). A perspective exists that women are less effective leaders than men in certain circumstances (Ayman & Korabik, 2010). Ayman et al. (2009) argued that the gender of the leader, or the gender of the follower, or the gender composition of the leader-follower dyad can influence the relationship between leadership behaviour and outcomes.

Eagly et al. (1995) conducted a meta analysis consisting of a combination of organisational and laboratory experimental based studies measuring the relative effectiveness between men and women who occupy leader roles. They found that men and women measure equally on leadership effectiveness at an aggregate level. However, interpreting the results from the socio-demographic gender perspective the following was found:

- Men measure as more effective in roles stereotypically perceived to be more compatible to men and defined in more masculine terms with reference to requiring a higher level of task ability, such as the military.
- Women measure more effective in roles stereotypically perceived to be more compatible to women and defined in less masculine terms with reference to requiring a higher level of interpersonal ability, such as education, government, and social services.
- Men also measure more effective in cases where the leader role was numerically dominated by men and associated with male followers.

In a different study but yielding similar results Ayman et al. (2009) examined the moderating effect of gender on the relationship between transformational leadership and outcomes. Transformational leadership behaviour was self-rated by the leaders whilst the leader performance was rated by the subordinates. The findings reflect the leadership effectiveness of women leaders who reported more transformational behaviours were likely to be devalued if their subordinates were men as opposed to if they were women, whilst this was not the case when women leaders reported behaving in a less transformational way. Their findings reflect in the overall score and in the scores of the two dimensions of intellectual stimulation and individualised consideration. Intellectual stimulation in this model refers to leaders who encourage subordinates to challenge their own assumptions and consider alternatives. The challenge for women may be the legitimate authority they lack to question the assumptions or solutions of male subordinates due to stereotypes that women may not have higher status than men. Women may face similar stereotype challenges with the dimension of individualised consideration. Individualised consideration refers to leaders showing concern for each of the subordinates, which is stereotypically a feminine characteristic. This behaviour causes gender and leader role incongruity making her look vulnerable in the eyes of the male subordinates and therefore the devaluation of the leader effectiveness.

The differences and similarities of leadership effectiveness between the different genders are currently very topical in the mainstream media with specific reference to the low number of females in high-level corporate leadership positions. According to the 2013 New Zealand Census, females constitute 48% of the total workforce, they represent 57% of the professional job categories, and only 35% of the management positions (Statistics New Zealand, 2014b). The composition of the

response sample for this project reflects 21% females as part of top management teams however, 99% of the Chief Executive Officers are males. The descriptive statistics are discussed in more detail in Chapter 4 of this project.

In conclusion the servant-leader leads through positive role modelling of serving and persuading followers through their own ethical actions instead of using coercive power to get things done (Greenleaf, 1970; Van Dierendonck, 2011) and stereotypically this could be perceived as more feminine behaviour than masculine. The servant-leader never rejects but they do not shy away from refusing to accept the effort or performance as good enough when it is not, yet the truly great leaders reflect acceptance of the people following them and show empathy (Greenleaf, 1970).



## **Ethnicity and leadership**

Although the flow of people between different countries is not something new, the intensity and pace with which it is taking place is having an effect on the ethnic structure of societies to varying degrees (Appadurai, 2011; Heyman & Campbell, 2009; Statistics New Zealand, 2014a), and this change should ultimately reflect in the ethnic diversity in organisations as people enter the labour market. The ethnic demographics in New Zealand have changed significantly over time mainly due to changes to the immigration policies. In New Zealand a quarter of residents were born overseas and the population reflects 300 ethnic groups (Statistics New Zealand, 2014a). Diversity in business and in leadership is seen as an enabler for innovation and provider of economic and social advantages to a country and a new set of leaders need to be enabled to harness this economic benefit (The Office of Ethnic Affairs, 2014).

Some view ethnicity as a constraint leading to marginalisation and disempowerment of minority ethnicities which is supported by the fact that most leadership research and theory development has been conducted in a “Western” context (Avolio et al., 2009; Ayman & Korabik, 2010), and the lack of ethnic diversity at leadership levels in organisations. Leadership is a socially constructed phenomenon that is influenced by the situational context in which leadership is enacted. Culture is seen as a very important creator of context, which impacts on leaders, their followers, and the effectiveness outcomes (Avolio et al., 2009; Carr, 2005; Vroom & Jago, 2007). Culture is however a multidimensional and complex construct and although examining culture is beyond the scope of this study I propose to examine how the ethnicity of leaders and followers moderates top management

team members' perceived work engagement and their perception of executive servant-leadership.

Ethnicity is a subset of culture and is significant to how groups of people define themselves through customs and traditions making it rich with meaning, and people who differ from one another on this may experience life in very different ways (Ayman & Korabik, 2010; Ospina & Foldy, 2009). In a dyad the perceptions will impact on the leadership experience by both parties. The research evidence is mixed in terms of how same group ethnicity has an impact on the leadership process and perceived leadership effectiveness (Ospina & Foldy, 2009).

The difference in perspectives and expectations may impact on the dynamics and the leadership experience and leaders wanting to be more effective are required to be sensitive towards the differences and similarities between themselves and their followers. In conclusion followers hold an implicit mental model of a leader and perceived leader behaviours and outcomes are measured against the profile of that specific model. The mental model is complex and is culturally dependent, and it may also be affected by the ethnicity of the leader (Chong & Thomas, 1997; Liden, 2012; Myloni, Harzing, & Mirza, 2004; Ospina & Foldy, 2009).

The leadership dynamic between CEO and the top management team members is a focal point in the organisational context, as effective leadership is seen as fundamental to the continued success of businesses. The "higher echelon" leaders are the individuals who set the direction, tone, and the ethos in an organisation and that impact is felt throughout their business activities. Leaders' at that level should therefore be sensitive for any potential impact that differences in perspectives and expectations, due to ethnic differences and similarities, may have on their personal dynamics and their leadership experiences, and ultimately on the organisation.

## **Chapter 3 - Research Design**

### **Epistemology and research approach**

As the underlying philosophical base, this thesis employs a positivist epistemological belief structure. Positivists believe in an objective reality that is measurable. This allows them to focus on the effect of data and measurement to explain “true knowledge” given the presence of “error” (Goertz & Mahoney, 2012). An opportunity is created to apply deductive logic to the observed facts to test hypotheses and ultimately generalise the knowledge obtained. To this end the primary design of this study is centred on a quantitative field survey research questionnaire, and analysed through the use of standard inferential statistical methods.

### **Sampling**

The target population was top management team members currently employed in New Zealand by companies publicly listed on the New Zealand stock exchange, more specifically the NZX All Index that comprises only domestic securities listed and does not include foreign listed or dual listed securities. The NZX All index list (NZX, 2013) was used to identify all the companies and each company website was accessed based on the URL address on the NZX list. Names of every company, Chief Executive Officer/Managing Director, and the top/senior management team members as reflected on the respective company websites were captured in an Excel spreadsheet. Along with this information the company physical address, postal address, and contact email were captured.

A total of 112 companies were reflected on the list with a total number of 601 top management team members identified. After excluding duplications of individuals

(there are some individuals listed at more than one company), and those individuals not working in New Zealand a total population of 486 was identified.

Dealing with the sample from an administrative perspective and ensuring anonymity in terms of follow-ups on outstanding questionnaires the researcher decided not to draw a sample for the research but rather send an invitation to each and every individual in the population. A total of 70 responses were received with 10 return-to-sender notices, giving a response rate of 14.40%. Hair, Tatham, Anderson, and Black (2006) note it could be problematic to identify effects, if they actually exist, in sample sizes less than 50. My sample size is above this minimum.

### **Invitation**

An invitation to participate was sent to each of the identified top management team members by way of a personalised addressed envelope to their workplace address as reflected on the company website. This ensured that the invitation was addressed to the specific top management team member for completion. The invitation contained the questionnaire and an addressed postage-paid return envelope (see Appendix 1). Neither the questionnaire nor the return envelope required the participants to reveal their identity. Therefore, although the researcher knew the names, addresses, companies, and executives of the participants, once the completed questionnaires were returned none could be linked to specific participants, ensuring the protection of their anonymity.

### **Questionnaire**

The questionnaire consists of 49 questions divided into three sections (see Appendix 1). The first seven questions are demographic questions on the participant's gender, age, ethnicity, duration of employment with that company, the number of

management levels between the participant and the executive leader, and the gender and ethnicity of the executive leader.

These are followed by the 25 questions of the Executive Servant Leader Scale (Reed et al., 2011). The scale was developed as an instrument to explore servant-leadership behaviour by top executives and reflects a construct consisting of *Executive Servant-leadership* as a second-order factor being the main source for explaining the high correlation between five first-order factors, which in essence reflect servant-leadership attributes identified by Greenleaf (Reed et al., 2011). The scale consists of five sub-scales that measure the extent to which participants perceive their executive leader as possessing executive servant-leadership characteristics or exhibiting executive-servant leadership behaviour. The measure is a 25-item 4-point Likert-type scale with anchors ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 4 (*strongly agree*). The sub-scales are *building community*, *interpersonal support*, *egalitarianism*, *altruism*, and *moral integrity*.

Lastly the 17 questions as contained in the English employee version of the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (Schaufeli et al., 2002) was used to determine the follower's perception of their work engagement. The scale consists of three sub-scales that measure the level of work engagement experienced by participants. The measure is a 17-item 7-point Likert-type scale with anchors ranging from 1 (*never*) to 7 (*always*). The sub-scales are *vigour*, *dedication*, and *absorption*.

## **Research questions and hypotheses**

The research literature strongly suggests that leadership behaviour plays an important part in influencing the work engagement of followers. It further suggests that servant leadership will lead to increased follower satisfaction manifesting through

organisational citizenship behaviour, organisational commitment, and job satisfaction. Although these constructs are seen as different they are related and they cannot act as a replacement for engagement.

Based on the existing literature as discussed in this thesis and a research framework (see Figure 6) the following research questions are to be explored and in support of this hypotheses were formulated for testing through appropriate quantitative inferential statistical analysis:

- Does executive servant-leadership significantly predict top management team members' work engagement using a sample from public companies listed on the New Zealand Stock Exchange?
- How does the gender-match between the executive leader and the top management team member moderate the relationship between executive servant-leadership and top management team member work engagement?
- How does the ethnicity-match between the executive leader and the top management team member moderate the relationship between executive servant-leadership and top management team member work engagement?

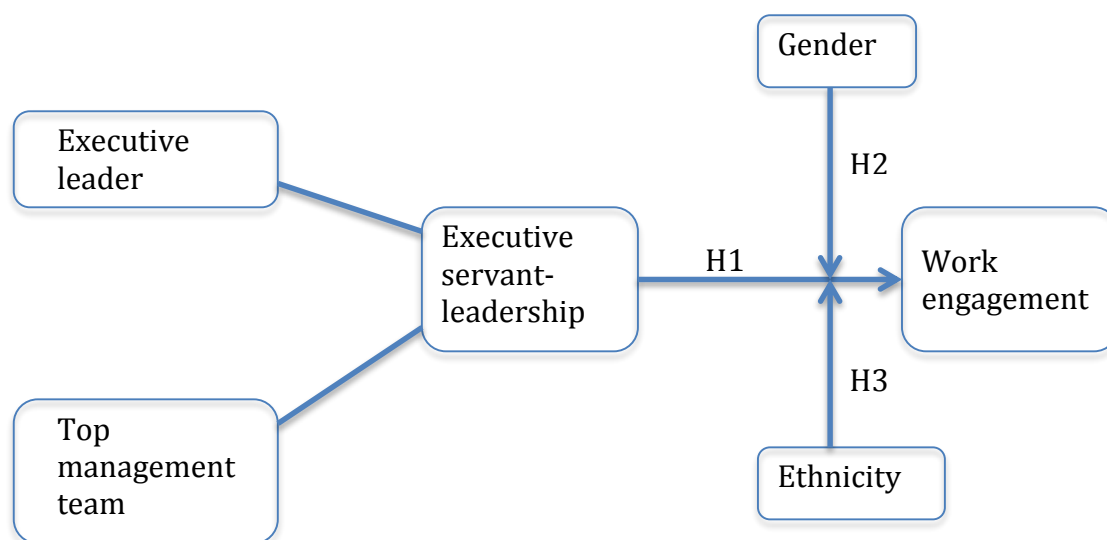
Hypothesis 1: Top management team members' perceived sense of executive servant-leadership in their executive leader significantly predicts their own work engagement.

Hypothesis 2: Gender moderates the relationship between executive servant-leadership and the work engagement of top management team members. The impact of executive servant-leadership on work engagement is higher when there is a gender

match between the executive leader and top management team member and lower when there is a difference in gender.

Hypothesis 3: Ethnicity moderates the relationship between executive servant-leadership and the work engagement of top management team members. The impact of executive servant-leadership on work engagement is higher when there is an ethnicity match between the executive leader and top management team member and lower when there is a difference in ethnicity.

*Figure 6: Research Framework*



## Coding

Initially, all the returned questionnaires were reviewed to ensure that they were completed in full. All questionnaires were completed in full providing 70 useable responses. Each of the returned questionnaires was randomly allocated a number from 1 to 70 as an identifier for data analysis purposes. All the items in the

questionnaire were entered into SPSS with the appropriate value labels. The gender-match and ethnicity-match between the executive leaders and top management team members were coded with 0 for “different” and 1 for “same”. Respondents’ age and tenure were entered as years.

### **Analysis process**

Various statistical tests were conducted using the Statistical Package for Social Science [SPSS version 22.0] to analyse the gathered data. Results that demonstrated a significant [ $p < .05$ ] relationship were used to verify theoretical hypotheses.

Before testing the hypotheses, the demographic data were firstly analysed by running frequency analyses. To test the reliabilities of the instruments they were subjected to reliability tests with Cronbach’s Alpha used for the scale and the scale if item deleted. The means, standard deviations, and inter-correlations of the latent variables including the various factors constituting the Executive Servant-leadership Scale and the Work Engagement Scale were computed.

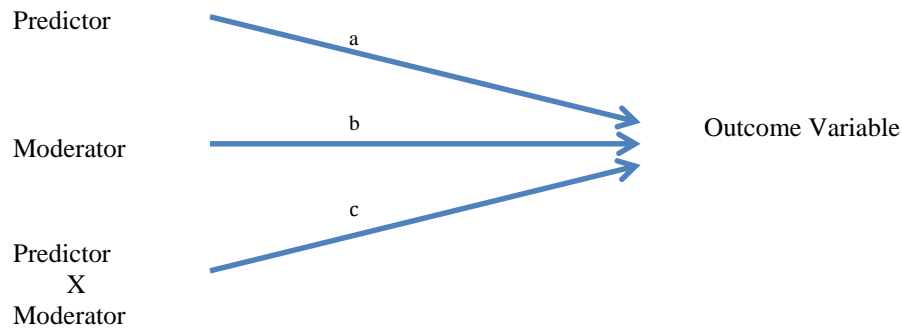
SPSS was used to conduct moderation tests on hypotheses 2 and 3 following the moderation process suggested by Baron and Kenny (1986). This process consists of three paths that feed into the outcome variable as shown in Figure 7 and the “moderator hypothesis is supported if the interaction in path c is significant” (Baron & Kenny, 1986, p. 1174).

To test the moderating effect of gender-match and ethnicity-match between the variables, executive servant-leadership, work engagement, gender-match, and ethnicity-match were firstly mean centred. Then interaction variables were created by mean-centred executive servant-leadership multiplied by mean-centred gender match,



and mean-centred executive servant-leadership multiplied by mean-centred ethnicity-match.

*Figure 7: The Moderator Model of Baron and Kenny*



Source: Baron and Kenny (1986)

A linear regression model was analysed to test for the moderating effect of gender and ethnicity respectively on the relationship between executive servant-leadership and work engagement using SPSS with the following models:

- Model 1: Regression predicting the outcome variable from demographic control variables.
- Model 2: Regression predicting the outcome variable from both the mean-centred predictor and the mean-centred moderator.
- Model 3: Regression predicting the outcome variable from the mean-centred predictor multiplied by the mean-centred moderator.

## Chapter 4 - Analysis

### Descriptive statistics

The usable respondent sample is 70 out of a total population of 486 top management members of publicly listed New Zealand companies. Hair et al. (2006) note it could be problematic to identify effects, if they actually exist, in sample sizes less than 50. My sample size is above this minimum. The respondents' age ranges between 30 and 61 with an average of 47.5 years ( $SD = 7.35$ ). The average tenure at the current organisation is 8.11 years with a minimum of 1 year and a maximum of 42 years ( $SD = 8.43$ ) (see Table 5).

The majority of the top management team respondents are male with only 15 being female (see Table 6). The gender of the executive leaders' top management team members report to are dominated by males with only 1 female executive leader reported in the sample population (see Table 7). Overall 54 of the respondents have the same gender as their executive leader (see Table 8) and only 10 respondents indicate a difference in ethnicity to that of their executive leader (see Table 9).

Table 5  
*Descriptive Statistics – Age and Tenure*

	n	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Age	70	30	61	47.56	7.35
Tenure	70	1	42	8.11	8.43

Table 6  
*Frequency – Gender of Respondents*

	Frequency	Percent
Male	55	78.6
Female	15	21.4
Total	70	100

Table 7  
*Frequency – Gender of Executive Leaders*

	Frequency	Percent
Male	69	98.6
Female	1	1.4
Total	70	100

Table 8  
*Frequency – Gender-match between Executive Leaders and Respondents*

	Frequency	Percent
Same gender	54	77.1
Different gender	16	22.9
Total	70	100

Table 9  
*Frequency – Ethnicity-match between Executive Leaders and Respondents*

	Frequency	Percent
Same ethnicity	60	85.7
Different ethnicity	10	14.3
Total	70	100

### **Scale reliability – Executive Servant-Leadership Scale**

The Executive Servant-leadership Scale was developed as a tool to explore the effect of servant-leadership behaviour by top executives on the processes and performance of organisations. The scale reflects a construct consisting of *Executive Servant-leadership* as a second-order factor being the main source for explaining the high correlation between five first-order factors, which in essence reflect servant-leadership attributes identified by Greenleaf (Reed et al., 2011). Although the instrument showed strong internal consistency (Reed et al., 2011), for the purpose of this study a scale reliability analysis using Cronbach’s alpha for the second-order factor was again conducted revealing a coefficient of .961 (see Table 10) denoting the reliability for internal consistency as “excellent” (George & Mallery, 2003).

A scale reliability analysis using Cronbach’s alpha was also computed to determine the internal consistency of the Executive Servant-leadership scale items. The itemised breakdown of the Executive Servant-leadership scale revealed that alpha could not be improved by removing any of the items. The internal consistency range between .958 and .961 (see Table 11), which is similar to the Cronbach’s alpha ranging from .90 to 0.95 found by Reed et al. (2011).

Table 10

*Mean, Variance, Standard Deviation and Alpha - Executive Servant-leadership Scale*

	N	Mean	Variance	SD	Alpha
Statistics for Scale	25	82.60	205.055	14.320	.961

Table 11

*Scale Reliability – Executive Servant-leadership Scale Items*

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Item 1	79.30	194.300	.536	.961
Item 2	79.36	188.581	.698	.960
Item 3	79.13	191.099	.723	.960
Item 4	79.54	189.150	.665	.960
Item 5	79.29	189.135	.641	.960
Item 6	79.66	187.301	.717	.959
Item 7	79.23	187.889	.752	.959
Item 8	79.37	183.164	.764	.959
Item 9	79.11	188.972	.691	.960
Item 10	79.11	185.407	.757	.959
Item 11	79.00	193.188	.690	.960
Item 12	79.14	192.820	.541	.961
Item 13	79.50	187.819	.721	.959
Item 14	79.11	188.219	.763	.959
Item 15	79.23	187.947	.749	.959
Item 16	79.69	188.306	.705	.960
Item 17	79.36	187.653	.666	.960
Item 18	79.10	189.106	.782	.959
Item 19	79.36	189.305	.680	.960
Item 20	79.37	187.106	.789	.959
Item 21	79.83	186.202	.777	.959
Item 22	79.36	194.030	.500	.961
Item 23	79.17	192.550	.625	.960
Item 24	78.94	195.620	.580	.961
Item 25	79.14	187.226	.835	.958

**Scale reliability – Utrecht Work Engagement Scale**

The Utrecht Work Engagement Scale has been found to provide a positive and relatively stable indicator of occupational wellbeing and consists of three correlated factors – vigour, dedication, and absorption (Seppälä et al., 2009). For the purpose of

this study a scale reliability analysis using Cronbach's alpha was conducted revealing a coefficient of .819 (see Table 12) denoting the reliability for internal consistency as "good" (George & Mallery, 2003). The itemised breakdown of the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale revealed that the alpha could be improved to .837 by removing Item 2 and to .836 by removing Item 15. Factor analysis in previous studies have found low loadings on Item 15 (Seppälä et al., 2009). In their analysis on the construct validity of the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale, Seppälä et al. (2009) recommend the use of the multi-dimensional scale in studies conducting factor analysis or structural equation modelling and when measuring work engagement in general the scale should be used as a one-dimensional construct. The objective of this study is to explore the relationship between executive servant-leadership and top management team members' work engagement in general therefore in favour of keeping the scale intact the items were retained and the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale was considered as a one-dimensional construct. A scale reliability analysis using Cronbach's alpha was computed to determine the internal consistency of the scale items of the Utrecht Work Engagement scale. The internal consistency ranged between .700 and .837 (see Table 13). Analysis of data collected for this study found a positive inter-correlation between the three factors of vigour, dedication, and absorption, but at a weak to moderate level ranging from .376 to .577 (see Table 14).

Table 12

*Mean, Variance, Standard Deviation, and Alpha – Work Engagement Scale*

	N	Mean	Variance	SD	Alpha
Statistics for Scale	17	94.53	70.485	8.396	.819

Table 13

*Scale Reliability – Utrecht Work Engagement Scale Items*

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Item 1	88.67	65.180	.370	.813
Item 2	90.04	67.143	.081	.837
Item 3	88.80	61.872	.576	.802
Item 4	88.93	66.241	.205	.823
Item 5	88.26	63.730	.509	.806
Item 6	89.00	61.826	.523	.804
Item 7	88.63	62.643	.526	.804
Item 8	88.49	67.181	.215	.820
Item 9	88.46	62.194	.603	.801
Item 10	88.67	66.253	.266	.818
Item 11	88.71	60.236	.588	.700
Item 12	89.29	59.743	.654	.795
Item 13	88.67	61.615	.522	.804
Item 14	89.81	58.907	.577	.799
Item 15	89.80	64.713	.156	.836
Item 16	89.27	62.461	.590	.802
Item 17	88.96	61.462	.493	.805

### Initial Correlation Analysis

Following confirmation of the internal reliability of the two scales all the main variables were run through a simple correlation analysis, which revealed that Executive Servant-leadership and Work Engagement are significantly and positively correlated,  $r = .508$ ,  $p < .01$  (see Table 14). The analysis further highlighted the significant correlation between age and tenure, which is understandable; however, neither of these was significantly correlated to any of the latent variables. The means,

standard deviations, inter-correlations, and the reliability coefficients of the latent variables are reflected in Table 14.



Table 14  
*Latent Variables, Means, Standard Deviations, Inter-correlations, and Reliability Coefficients*

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Age	47.56	7.35												
2. Tenure	8.11	8.43	.399											
<i>Executive Servant-Leadership</i>														
<i>Sub-Scales</i>														
3. Building community	3.41	.53	.017	-.001	<b>.801**</b>									
4. Interpersonal support	3.31	.62	.025	.124	.733**	<b>.872**</b>								
5. Altruism	2.97	.73	-.038	.160	.628**	.713**	<b>.881**</b>							
6. Egalitarianism	3.39	.68	-.059	.134	.591**	.789**	.680**	<b>.838**</b>						
7. Moral integrity	3.38	.67	-.093	.016	.706**	.817**	.824**	.785**	<b>.903**</b>					
<i>Work Engagement</i>														
<i>Sub-Scales</i>														
8. Vigour	5.64	.56	.004	.015	.393**	.546**	.386**	.382**	.479**	<b>.658**</b>				
9. Dedication	5.95	.68	-.175	-.141	.456**	.449**	.299*	.392**	.434**	.577	<b>.823**</b>			
10. Absorption	5.16	.63	-.155	-.141	.256*	.238*	.274*	.205	.257*	.376**	.411**	<b>.611**</b>		
<i>Total scores for scales</i>														
11. Executive Servant-leadership Scale	3.30	.57	-.041	.095	.809**	.913**	.872**	.866**	.951**	.497**	.455**	.276*	<b>.961**</b>	
12. Work Engagement Scale	5.58	.50	-.139	-.062	.457**	.508**	.399**	.404**	.483**	.803**	.820**	.768**	.508**	<b>.819**</b>

Note. n = 70.

Correlations significant \*\*  $p < .01$  (2-tail). \*  $p < .05$  (2-tail).  $p$  not significant.

Reliability coefficients are shown in bold on the diagonal.

## Linear regression – Hypothesis 1

Hypothesis 1: Top management team members' perceived sense of executive servant-leadership in their executive leader significantly predicts their own work engagement. To test this hypothesis a bivariate linear regression analysis was conducted.

Work engagement was entered as the outcome variable and executive servant-leadership as the predictor variable controlling for age and tenure. The R Square coefficient indicates that 27.6% of the variance in top management team members' work engagement is explained by executive servant-leadership (see Table 15), and an analysis of variance confirms the goodness of fit of the model as significant  $F(3,66) = 8.406$ ,  $p = .000$  (see Table 16). It was found that executive servant-leadership significantly predicts work engagement ( $\beta = .511$ ,  $p < .000$ ) (see Table 17).

Table 15

*Executive Servant-leadership and Work Engagement – Regression Summary*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.526 <sup>a</sup>	.276	.244	.43013

a. Predictors: (Constant), Executive Servant-leadership, Age, and Tenure.

Table 16

*Executive Servant-leadership and Work Engagement – ANOVA<sup>a</sup>*

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	4.666	3	1.555	8.406	.000 <sup>b</sup>
Residual	12.211	66	.185		
Total	16.876	69			

a. Outcome Variable: Work Engagement.

b. Predictors: (Constant), Executive Servant-leadership, Age, and Tenure.

Table 17

*Executive Servant-leadership and Work Engagement – Regression Coefficients<sup>a</sup>*

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
	Beta	Std. Error	Beta	t	
(Constant)	4.420	.479		9.224	.000
Executive Servant-leadership	.441	.091	.511	4.843	.000
Age	-.006	.008	-.088	-.766	.447
Tenure	-.004	.007	-.076	-.657	.514

a. Outcome Variable: Work Engagement.

### **Linear regression – Hypothesis 2**

Hypothesis 2: Gender moderates the relationship between executive servant-leadership and the work engagement of top management team members. The impact of executive servant-leadership on work engagement is higher when there is a gender match between the executive leader and top management team member and lower when there is a difference in gender.

The gender match variable was dummy coded into 0 for “different” and 1 for “same”. The first step was to compare the means between the two categories of gender match on the latent variables of executive servant-leadership and work engagement (see Table 18). Top management team members with the same gender as their executive leader showed slightly higher mean scores on executive servant-leadership than those with a different gender; however, the same group showed a slightly lower mean score on work engagement than those with a different gender as their executive leader.

Table 18

*Mean Comparisons on the Main Variables between Categories of Gender match*

	Gender match	Mean	SD
Executive Servant-leadership	Same	3.345	.536
	Different	3.165	.684
Work Engagement	Same	5.518	.501
	Different	5.710	.454

The next step was to extract bivariate correlations between executive servant-leadership and work engagement using SPSS with the data file split between the gender-match categories (see Table 19). The moderate correlation strength between executive servant-leadership and work engagement was significant for the group with the same gender but not significant for the group with different gender. From this analysis gender potentially moderates the path between executive servant-leadership and top management team members' work engagement.

Table 19

*Bivariate Correlations by Gender match*

Gender match		1	2
Same	1. Executive Servant-leadership	1.00	.597**
Different	2. Work Engagement	1.00	.395*

\*\*  $p < .01$ , \*  $p =$  not significant.

In order to test whether gender-match potentially moderates the effect of executive servant-leadership on top management team members' work engagement a multiple regression model was analysed. This regression model was based on the moderator testing process suggested by Baron and Kenny (1986). This process consists of three paths that feed into the outcome variable as explained earlier and represented in Figure 7. They further suggested that the moderator variable should preferably not be correlated to the outcome and predictor variables, as this will offer a

clearly interpretable interaction term. A correlation analysis confirmed not significant correlation between gender-match as the moderating variable and executive servant-leadership as the predictor variable ( $r = -.133, p = .136$ ), and work engagement as the outcome variable ( $r = .163, p = .088$ ). Age and tenure were used as demographic control variables but both the coefficients were not significant (Age,  $b = -.018, p = .308$ ; Tenure,  $b = -.001, p = .953$ ).

A summary of the three-model regression analysis is reflected in Table 20. An analysis of variance confirms the goodness of fit of the three models as significant (see Table 21).

In Model 1 executive servant-leadership was included as the predictor variable. The result of this regression indicated the variable explained 27.6% of the variance ( $R^2 = .276, F(3, 66) = 8.406, p = .000$ ) in top management team members' work engagement. It was found that executive servant-leadership significantly predicted top management team members' work engagement ( $\beta = .511, p = .000$ ).

In Model 2 gender-match was included as the moderating variable. The results of this regression explained 32.2% of the variance with an  $R^2$  Change = .046,  $F$  Change (1, 65) = 4.389,  $p < .05$ . It was found that executive servant-leadership significantly predicted top management team members' work engagement ( $\beta = .538, t = 5.184, p = .000$ ), as did gender-match ( $\beta = .219, t(65) = 2.095, p < .05$ ).

In Model 3 the interaction term between executive servant-leadership and gender-match was added to the regression model with an  $R^2$  Change = .022,  $F$  Change (1,64) = 2.123,  $p = .150$ . It was found that the interaction term does not significantly moderate between executive servant-leadership and gender-match on top management team members' work engagement ( $\beta = -.155, t = -1.457, p > .05$ ) (see Table 22). Hypothesis 2 can therefore not be supported.

Table 20

*Regression Analysis - Gender-match between Executive Servant-leadership and Work Engagement*

Model	R	R Square	R Square Change	F Change	Sig. F Change
1	.526	.276	.257	23.456	.000
2	.568	.322	.046	4.389	.040
3	.587	.344	.022	2.123	.150

Table 21

*Gender-match between Executive Servant-leadership and Work Engagement – ANOVA<sup>a</sup>*

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	19.076	3	6.359	8.406	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	49.924	66	.756		
	Total	69.000	69			
2	Regression	22.234	4	5.558	7.726	.000 <sup>c</sup>
	Residual	46.766	65	.719		
	Total	69.000	69			
3	Regression	23.735	5	4.747	6.712	.000 <sup>d</sup>
	Residual	45.265	64	.707		
	Total	69.000	69			

a. Outcome Variable: Work Engagement

b. Predictors: (Constant), ESL

c. Predictors: (Constant), ESL, Gender-match

d. Predictors: (Constant), ESL, Gender-match, Gender Moderator

Table 22

*Gender-match between Executive Servant-leadership and Work Engagement – Regression Coefficients<sup>a</sup>*

Model 3	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	Beta	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
[Constant]	.337	.704		.479	.634
Executive Servant-leadership	.569	.105	.569	5.415	.000
Gender-match	.201	.105	.201	1.921	.059
Gender Moderator	-.138	.095	-.155	-1.457	.150

### Linear regression – Hypothesis 3

Hypothesis 3: Ethnicity moderates the relationship between executive servant-leadership and the work engagement of top management team members. The impact of executive servant-leadership on work engagement is higher when there is an ethnicity match between the executive leader and top management team member and lower when there is a difference in ethnicity.

The ethnicity match variable was dummy coded into 0 for “different” and 1 for “same”. The first step was to compare the means between the two categories of ethnicity-match on the latent variables of executive servant-leadership and work engagement (see Table 23). Top management team members with the same ethnicity as their executive leader showed no difference in mean scores on executive servant-leadership than those with a different ethnicity; however, the same group showed a slightly lower mean score on work engagement than those with a different ethnicity as their executive leader.

Table 23  
*Mean Comparisons on the Main Variables between Categories of Ethnicity-match*

	Ethnicity-match	Mean	<i>SD</i>
Executive Servant-leadership	Same	3.303	.595
	Different	3.308	.444
Work Engagement	Same	5.537	.503
	Different	5.712	.435

The next step was to extract bivariate correlations between executive servant-leadership and work engagement using SPSS with the data file split between the ethnicity-match categories (see Table 24). The correlation strength between executive servant-leadership and work engagement was positive and significant for the group with the same ethnicity, but negative and not significant for the group with different

ethnicity. From this analysis ethnicity potentially moderates the path between executive servant-leadership and top management team members' work engagement.

Table 24  
*Bivariate Correlations by Ethnicity-match*

Ethnicity-match		1	2
Same	1. Executive Servant-leadership	1.00	.564**
Different	2. Work Engagement	1.00	-.020*

\*\*  $p < .01$ , \*  $p$  not significant.

In order to test whether ethnicity-match potentially moderates the effect between executive servant-leadership on top management team members' work engagement a multiple regression model was analysed to investigate whether ethnicity-match plays a moderating role between executive servant-leadership and top management team members' work engagement. This regression model is based on the moderator process suggested by Baron and Kenny (1986). This process consists of three paths that feed into the outcome variable as explained earlier and represented in Figure 7. They further suggested that the moderator variable should preferably not be correlated to the outcome and predictor variables, as this will offer a clearly interpretable interaction term. A correlation analysis confirmed not significant correlation between ethnicity-match as the moderating variable and executive servant-leadership as the predictor variable ( $r = .000$ ,  $p = .500$ ), and work engagement as the outcome variable ( $r = .125$ ,  $p = .152$ ). Age and tenure were used as demographic control variables but both the coefficients were not significant (Age,  $b = -.018$ ,  $p = .308$ ; Tenure,  $b = -.001$ ,  $p = .953$ ).



A summary of the three-model regression analysis is reflected in Table 25. An analysis of variance confirms the goodness of fit of the three models as significant (see Table 26).

In Model 1 executive servant-leadership was included as the predictor variable. The result of this regression indicated the variable explained 27.6% of the variance ( $R^2 = .276$ ,  $F(3, 66) = 8.406$ ,  $p = .000$ ) in top management team members' work engagement. It was found that executive servant-leadership significantly predicted top management team members' work engagement ( $\beta = .511$ ,  $p = .000$ ).

In Model 2 ethnicity-match was included as the moderating variable. The results of this regression explained 28.8% of the variance; however, it was not significant with an  $R^2$  Change = .012,  $F$  Change (1, 65) = 1.060,  $p > .05$ . It was found that executive servant-leadership significantly predicted top management team members' work engagement ( $\beta = .508$ ,  $t(65) = 4.812$ ,  $p = .000$ ) however, ethnicity-match did not ( $\beta = .111$ ,  $t(65) = 1.030$ ,  $p > .05$ ).

In Model 3 the interaction term between executive servant-leadership and ethnicity-match was added to the regression model with an  $R^2$  Change = .023,  $F$  Change (1,64) = 2.156,  $p > .05$ . It was found that the interaction term does not significantly moderate between executive servant-leadership and ethnicity-match on top management team members' work engagement ( $\beta = -.206$ ,  $t(64) = -1.468$ ,  $p > .05$ ). Hypothesis 3 can therefore not be supported.

Table 25

*Regression Analysis - Ethnicity-match between Executive Servant-leadership and Work Engagement*

Model	R	R Square	R Square Change	F Change	Sig. F Change
1	.526	.276	.257	23.456	.000
2	.537	.288	.012	1.060	.307
3	.558	.311	.023	2.156	.147

Table 26

*Ethnicity-match between Executive Servant-leadership and Work Engagement – ANOVA<sup>a</sup>*

	Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	19.076	3	6.359	8.406	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	49.924	66	.756		
	Total	69.000	69			
2	Regression	19.877	4	4.969	6.575	.000 <sup>c</sup>
	Residual	49.123	65	.756		
	Total	69.000	69			
3	Regression	21.478	5	4.296	5.785	.000 <sup>d</sup>
	Residual	47.522	64	.743		
	Total	69.000	69			

a. Outcome Variable: Work Engagement

b. Predictors: (Constant), ESL

c. Predictors: (Constant), ESL, Ethnicity-match

d. Predictors: (Constant), Age, Tenure, ESL, Ethnicity-match, Ethnicity Moderator

Table 27

*Ethnicity-match between Executive Servant-leadership and Work Engagement – Regression Coefficients<sup>a</sup>*

Model 3	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
	Beta	Std. Error	Beta	t	
[Constant]	.476	.718		.662	.510
Executive Servant-leadership	.475	.107	.475	4.442	.000
Ethnicity-match	.105	.107	.105	.983	.329
Ethnicity moderator	-.206	.140	-.162	-1.468	.147

## **Chapter 5 - Discussion**

This chapter integrates the data analysis and outcomes with the literature by drawing on themes to address the research questions presented in Chapter 1:

- How significantly is executive servant-leadership correlated to top management team members' work engagement using a sample from public companies listed on the New Zealand Stock Exchange?
- How does the gender-match between the executive leader and the top management team member moderate the relationship between executive servant-leadership and top management team member work engagement?
- How does ethnicity-match between the executive leader and the top management team member moderate the relationship between executive servant-leadership and top management team member work engagement?

Suggestions are presented for both researchers and leaders in publicly listed organisations. Limitations of the research are discussed with suggestions provided for future research on the topic and, finally, conclusions are drawn.

### **Key findings**

#### **The sample**

A total of 486 questionnaires were sent out to top management team members at 112 companies listed in the New Zealand Stock Exchange and 70 were returned, giving a response rate of 14.40%. Although the respondent sample size was not very big it successfully provided a sample of top management team members employed at publicly listed New Zealand companies. Out of the 70 respondents, 55 were males and 15 females, and unfortunately only one of the executive leaders was a

female. The gender-match between the executive leader and top management team members reported was 54 with the same gender and 16 with a different gender. The ethnicity match between executive leaders and top management members was not any better in that only ten shared the same ethnicity with the executive leader. The age of respondents ranged between 30 and 61 years (Mean = 47.5, *SD* = 7.35), whilst the tenure at the current company ranged between one and 42 years (Mean = 8.11, *SD* = 8.43).

## **Relationship between Executive Servant-leadership and Work**

### **Engagement**

Servant-leadership was conceptualised by Greenleaf (1970) as a leadership model underpinned by the natural desire to serve others first and then a purposeful decision brings one an aspiration to lead. He held that the best test of servant-leadership is in essence the positive impact it has on the followers in terms of their health, autonomy, and whether they are likely to become servants themselves. As discussed in the conceptual model developed by Van Dierendonck (2011), the servant-leadership characteristics as perceived by followers have an impact on the dyadic leader-follower relationship. This impact is characterised at the individual level *inter alia* by increased follower engagement.

The concept of work engagement flows from the research on burnout, which happens as a result of exhaustion and cynicism that leads to individual inefficacy; in short, it has a negative effect on personal health and therefore organisational success. Work engagement as defined by Schaufeli et al. (2002) is seen as a positive, gratifying, work related mental consciousness that is characterised by the dimensions of vigour, dedication, and absorption. It is claimed that engaged employees contribute to the creation of a competitive advantage and therefore organisational success

(Bakker et al., 2008; Serrano & Reichard, 2011). Shirom (2004) argued that leadership style is one of the predictors of work engagement.

The following hypothesis was formulated: Top management team members' perceived sense of executive servant-leadership in their executive leader significantly predicts their own work engagement.

The findings in this project confirm that executive servant-leadership has a significant impact on the work engagement of top management team members. Executive servant-leadership and top management team members' work engagement were positively correlated ( $r = .508, p < .01$ ) and a regression analysis provided a R Square coefficient indicating that 27.6% of the variance in top management team members' work engagement is explained by executive servant-leadership, and an analysis of variance confirms the goodness of fit of the model as significant  $F(3, 66) = 8.406, p = .000$ .

### **The Moderating Role of Gender**

This project adopted gender as a moderator based on the interpersonal relations perspective which postulates that men and women have dissimilar types of interaction with their superiors, co-workers, and followers and these will influence the outcomes as experienced by each party (Korabik & Ayman, 2007). Ayman et al. (2009) argue that the gender of the leader, or the gender of the follower, or the gender composition of the leader-follower dyad can influence the relationship between leadership and outcomes.

The following hypothesis was formulated: Gender moderates the relationship between executive servant-leadership and the work engagement of top management team members. The impact of executive servant-leadership on work engagement is

higher when there is a gender match between the executive leader and top management team member and lower when there is a difference in gender.

The effect on top management team members' work engagement as a result of the interaction between the gender composition in the leader-follower dyad and executive servant-leadership was examined. The gender-match between executive leaders and top management team members revealed 54 with the same gender and 16 with a different gender. The gender profile of executive leaders was totally skew towards males in that only one executive leader in the sample was a woman.

The gender-match variable was dummy coded into 0 for "different" and 1 for "same". A bivariate correlation analysis reported a positive and significant correlation between executive servant-leadership and top management team members' work engagement for the group with the same gender-match; however, the correlation for the group with the different gender-match was not significant. The mean for top management team members' work engagement was slightly higher for the group with different gender-match relative to the group with the same gender-match.

A regression analysis reported that gender-match as a variable significantly predicts top management team members' work engagement. However, a regression analysis reported that the interaction between gender-match as moderator and executive servant-leadership had no significant impact on top management team members' work engagement and the moderating hypothesis could not be supported.

### **The Moderating Role of Ethnicity**

This project examined the impact that a difference in ethnic perspectives and expectations may have on the leadership dynamics and the outcomes. Ethnicity is a subset of culture and is significant to how groups of people define themselves through customs and traditions making it rich with meaning, and people who differ from one

another on this may experience life in very different ways (Ayman & Korabik, 2010; Ospina & Foldy, 2009). Leaders wanting to be more effective are required to be sensitive towards the cultural differences and similarities between themselves and their followers (Hofstede, 1994).

The following hypothesis was formulated: Ethnicity moderates the relationship between executive servant-leadership and the work engagement of top management team members. The impact of executive servant-leadership on work engagement is higher when there is an ethnicity match between the executive leader and top management team member and lower when there is a difference in ethnicity.

The effect on top management team members' work engagement as a result of the interaction between the ethnic composition in the leader-follower dyad and executive servant-leadership was examined. The ethnicity-match between the executive leaders and top management team members revealed 60 with the same ethnicity and 10 with a different ethnicity.

The ethnicity-match variable was dummy coded into 0 for "different" and 1 for "same". A bivariate correlation analysis showed a positive and significant correlation between executive servant-leadership and top management team members' work engagement for the group with the same ethnicity-match; however, the correlation for the group with the different ethnicity-match was negative but not significant. The mean for top management team members' work engagement was slightly higher for the group with different ethnicity-match relative to the group with the same ethnicity-match.

A regression analysis reported that the interaction between ethnicity-match as moderator and executive servant-leadership had no significant impact on top management team members' work engagement and the moderating hypothesis could not be supported.

## **Research Implications**

An extensive review of servant-leadership literature shows that researchers have not yet thoroughly explored the antecedents and outcomes of executive servant-leader behaviour in publicly listed organisations. Empirical research on servant-leadership is mostly related to supervisory levels and in the educational sector, religious institutions, and nursing profession, with the purpose of measurement development. This research project has provided results on executive servant-leadership and top management team members' work engagement based on a sample from publicly listed companies in New Zealand. Although the sample size is not large enough to make a significant contribution to the literature it did confirm the significant effect executive servant-leadership has on the work engagement of top management team members.

Secondly, this research indicates that the interaction between the gender composition of the leader-follower dyad and executive servant-leadership does not significantly impact on the work engagement of top management team members. The gender composition of the executive leaders in the samples made it impossible to examine whether that relationship may be influenced due to the gender of the leader.

Thirdly, this research indicates that the interaction between the ethnic composition of the leader-follower dyad and executive servant-leadership does not significantly impact on the work engagement of top management team members. The result may be influenced by the small sample and the limitation in ethnic diversity between the respondents and the executive leaders.

## **Organisational Implications**

The need highlighted by the global financial crisis for an alternative leadership model to the dominant view of charismatic and transformational leadership creates an



opportunity to explore alternative leadership models. Servant-leadership may be such an alternative model in that it specifically incorporates the leadership aspects of moral integrity, egalitarianism, and truly caring relationships in a positive way.

The concept of servant-leadership is viewed with considerable scepticism as an applicable or appropriate leadership style to benefit profit driven businesses having to survive in an ever increasing competitive globalized economy. It is however perceived as a worthy leadership style/approach/philosophy for religious and not-for-profit organizations.

This project presents some insight into servant-leadership at executive level in publicly listed companies and its impact on organisational outcomes with specific emphasis on top management team members' work engagement. Expanding international business activities require from companies to be adaptable and remain competitive in order to survive in a fast changing global economy and increasing work engagement is one of the ways to ensure companies stay competitive. The expressed need for a leadership development model that is based on moral integrity and ethical conduct within this increased globalised environment provides an opportunity for companies to consider alternative leadership development models to the dominant charismatic and transformational leadership development models.

Executive servant-leadership brings moral integrity, developing followers and stewardship of the wider system together as a possible alternative to the existing dominant models.

### **Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research**

The major limitation of this research is the small sample size. Given the limited response by top management team members of publicly listed companies in New Zealand only 70 responses were analysed for this study. Both the mean

comparisons and the correlations on executive servant-leadership and top management team members' work engagement indicated significant differences between the two gender-match groups and the two ethnicity-match groups. The moderation test (Baron & Kenny, 1986) did not conclude any significant impact of gender or ethnicity. This could have been the result of the small sample size. Future studies could replicate this research design but recruit a bigger sample so that higher statistical significance can be extracted.

A further limitation is the gender and ethnic profile of executive leaders and top management teams in the sample. Men from New Zealand European/Pakeha ethnicity dominate the sample, which makes it difficult to extract significant comparisons between gender and ethnicity differences and similarities.

A further limitation is that the data is based on self-reported questionnaires based on top management team members' perceptions of both variables and was collected at the same time creating possible common method variance.

In line with the best test for servant-leadership as set by Greenleaf (1970) future research could use longitudinal designs to see whether the Executive Servant-leadership Scale is indeed able to measure servant-leadership behaviour and predict follower wellbeing and organisational performance over time. Research with the instrument can also be expanded to determine the level of organisational responsiveness to society given that servant-leaders create "servant organisations".

## **Conclusion**

Servant-leadership may be an alternative leadership model to the dominating charismatic and transformational models given the need expressed following the global financial crisis for a more inclusive and responsive leadership approach. Servant-leadership specifically incorporates the leadership aspects of moral integrity,

egalitarianism, and truly caring relationships in a positive way. The findings of the study provide evidence that executive servant-leadership impact on the work engagement of top management team members.

The Executive Servant-leadership Scale has been shown to be a valid and reliable measure of top management team members' perception of executive servant-leadership, and the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale was once again confirmed as a valid and reliable measure of work engagement. The use of both these measures indicate that executive servant-leadership has a significant impact on the work engagement of top management team members in publicly listed companies in New Zealand.

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## Appendix 1



### INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN A BUSINESS RESEARCH STUDY

**Project title:** The influence of executive servant leadership on the engagement of members of top management teams in medium and large businesses in New Zealand: Impact of gender and ethnicity

#### **An invitation**

My name is Daniel de Villiers and this research will allow me to complete my Masters of Business at the Auckland University of Technology. I cordially invite you to participate in this study.

#### **What is the purpose of the study?**

This corporate leadership study is focused on top management team members and the impact that servant leadership behaviours, by their top executive, may have on their organizational engagement. The aim is to investigate how executive servant leadership impacts on top management team members and if gender and ethnicity impact the leader-follower behaviour at executive level. If meaningful results are obtained the subsequent paper may be published as an article in an academic journal.

#### **How was I identified and why am I being invited to participate in this research?**

All top management team members of organizations listed on the New Zealand Stock Exchange are invited to participate voluntarily. Neither your top executive, nor your colleagues will know whether or not you are participating.

#### **What happens in the study?**

You are provided with a short paper based questionnaire to complete and return via the postage-paid envelope provided. The resulting data will be statistically analysed and any correlations therein will allow us to gain insight into the dynamics of the executive leadership process.

#### **What are the risks?**

Although the focus is on a sensitive topic of gender and ethnicity relating to executive leadership and your perceptions regarding your top executive, there are no risks participating; your data will be kept strictly confidential and your anonymity will be protected.

#### **What are the benefits?**

After completion, the research paper will be publically available via the e-library via AUT University, and will contain findings that may benefit your own professional and leadership development.

#### **How will my privacy be protected?**

The questionnaire is completely anonymous and no company affiliation or individual name data will be disseminated.

#### **What are the costs of participating?**

Approximately 20 minutes of your time.

#### **Opportunity to consider invitation**

Completion of the attached questionnaire will be taken as indication of your consent to participate in the study. Participation is completely voluntary, you may decide to participate or not at any time.

#### **Participation concerns?**

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor, Associate Professor Romie Littrell, [romie.littrell@aut.ac.nz](mailto:romie.littrell@aut.ac.nz), +64 9 921 9999 ext. 5805.

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary of AUTEK, Kate O'Connor, [ethics@aut.ac.nz](mailto:ethics@aut.ac.nz), 921 9999 ext. 6038.

**By completing this questionnaire you are indicating you consent to participate in this research.**

1. I am (Please circle):      Male                      Female
2. My age is (years): \_\_\_\_\_
3. What ethnic group(s) do you consider yourself to be a member of? (Please state): \_\_\_\_\_
4. I have worked with this organization for (years): \_\_\_\_\_
5. My Top Executive is? (Please circle):      Male                      Female
6. What ethnic group(s) do you consider your Top Executive to be a member of? (Please state): \_\_\_\_\_
7. There are \_\_\_\_\_ (number) levels of managers between me, and the organization's Chief Executive Officer / Managing Director.

The following survey items refer to your Top Executive's leadership style, as you perceive it. **Please grade how frequently each statement fits his/her leadership style using the following scale:**

Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4

My Top Executive:

(Please circle)

1. Considers the effects of organizational decisions on the community	1	2	3	4
2. Recognizes when employee morale is low without asking	1	2	3	4
3. Looks for ways to make others successful	1	2	3	4
4. Sacrifices personal benefit to meet employee needs	1	2	3	4
5. Encourages debate of his/her ideas	1	2	3	4
6. Serves others willingly with no expectation of reward	1	2	3	4
7. Inspires employee trust	1	2	3	4
8. Invites constructive criticism	1	2	3	4
9. Nurtures employee leadership potential	1	2	3	4
10. Refuses to use manipulation or deceit to achieve his/her goals	1	2	3	4
11. Encourages a spirit of cooperation among employees	1	2	3	4
12. Inspires organizational commitment	1	2	3	4
13. Places the interests of others before self-interest	1	2	3	4
14. Treats all employees with dignity and respect	1	2	3	4
15. Displays interest in learning from employees, regardless of their level in the organization	1	2	3	4
16. Ensures greatest decision-making control given to employees most affected by decision	1	2	3	4
17. Freely admits his/her mistakes	1	2	3	4
18. Promotes transparency and honesty throughout the organization	1	2	3	4
19. Listens carefully to others	1	2	3	4
20. Values integrity more than profit or personal gain	1	2	3	4
21. Prefers serving others to being served by others	1	2	3	4
22. Believes our organization has a duty to improve the community in which it operates	1	2	3	4
23. Values diversity and individual differences in the organization	1	2	3	4

24. Welcomes ideas and input from employees at all levels of the organization	1	2	3	4
25. Models the behaviour he/she expects from others in the organization	1	2	3	4

The following items refer to how you perceive your work. **Please grade how each statement reflects how you perceive your work using the following scale:**

Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Sometimes	Frequently	Usually	Always
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

(Please circle)

1. I feel happy when I am working intensely	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. When I am working, I forget everything else around me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. My job inspires me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. I can continue working for very long periods at a time	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. I am proud on the work that I do	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. At my job I feel strong and vigorous	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. Time flies when I am working	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. At my work I always persevere, even when things do not go well	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. I am enthusiastic about my job	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. At my job, I am very resilient, mentally	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. I find the work that I do full of meaning and purpose	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. At my work, I feel bursting with energy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. To me, my job is challenging	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. I get carried away when I am working	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15. It is difficult to detach myself from my job	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16. I am immersed in my work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17. When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**Thank you very much for your cooperation and participation**

## Appendix 2



### A U T E C S E C R E T A R I A T

13 May 2014

Romie Littrell  
Faculty of Business and Law

Dear Romie

Re Ethics Application: **14/58 The influence of executive servant leadership behaviours on the engagement of top management team members in medium and large New Zealand businesses: impact of gender and ethnicity.**

Thank you for providing evidence as requested, which satisfies the points raised by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC).

Your ethics application has been approved for three years until 7 May 2017.

As part of the ethics approval process, you are required to submit the following to AUTEC:

- A brief annual progress report using form EA2, which is available online through <http://www.aut.ac.nz/researchethics>. When necessary this form may also be used to request an extension of the approval at least one month prior to its expiry on 7 May 2017;
- A brief report on the status of the project using form EA3, which is available online through <http://www.aut.ac.nz/researchethics>. This report is to be submitted either when the approval expires on 7 May 2017 or on completion of the project.

It is a condition of approval that AUTEC is notified of any adverse events or if the research does not commence.

AUTEC approval needs to be sought for any alteration to the research, including any alteration of or addition to any documents that are provided to participants. You are responsible for ensuring that research undertaken under this approval occurs within the parameters outlined in the approved application.

AUTEC grants ethical approval only. If you require management approval from an institution or organisation for your research, then you will need to obtain this. If your research is undertaken within a jurisdiction outside New Zealand, you will need to make the arrangements necessary to meet the legal and ethical requirements that apply there.

To enable us to provide you with efficient service, please use the application number and study title in all correspondence with us. If you have any enquiries about this application, or anything else, please do contact us at [ethics@aut.ac.nz](mailto:ethics@aut.ac.nz).

All the very best with your research,

Kate O'Connor  
Executive Secretary

**Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee**

Cc: Daniel de Villiers [danadevilliers@yahoo.com](mailto:danadevilliers@yahoo.com)