Micro-Moments of Truth: How Servant Leaders Influence Follower Wellbeing

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Abstract

Leaders in for-profit organizations (FPOs) have the dual responsibility to drive organizational performance and follower wellbeing, yet leaders will often sacrifice one for the other. This study uses a concurrent mixed methods approach to explore the relationship between servant leadership and follower wellbeing in an FPO. Findings suggest that leader-follower relationships are positively influenced by leader wisdom and persuasive mapping. This study shows how leaders influence positive emotions in followers on an interactional basis. It presents a model describing the role of micro-moments of truth in generating positive emotions.
Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to Nina, whose love, support, and patience through every step of the process made it all possible.
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Chapter 1: Introduction

Introduction

Far too often, for-profit organizations (FPOs) cultivate workplace environments that drive financial success through cut-throat, high-pressure, take-no-prisoners cultures (Seppala & Cameron, 2015). Environments like this can breed leaders who are forced to make decisions that favor one or two sets of organizational stakeholders to the detriment of others. Employee stakeholders who work in these stressful environments often suffer from a lack of wellbeing and meaning in their work (Begat, Ellefsen, & Severinsson, 2005; Elovasino et al., 2015). Furthermore, empirical evidence suggests that meaning in work is one of the most important factors for Millennials, the current generation entering the workforce, (Harter, Schmidt, & Keyes, 2002; Smith, 2017).

Creating a positive workplace environment where all stakeholders have an opportunity to flourish relies heavily on the dyadic relationship between leader and follower.

This chapter describes the background of the study, introduces the research problem, discusses why this is a worthy exploration, identifies the audience that will profit, and establishes philosophical assumptions. This chapter also outlines the purpose of this mixed methods research using a) quantitative methods to examine the relationship between servant leadership and individual flourishing and b) qualitative methods to explore more deeply how leaders influence wellbeing in their employees.
**Background**

The challenges faced by organizations today have driven executives to rethink their own leadership approaches—more specifically, how they interact with each organizational stakeholder group. It is not hard to imagine clichéd notions of the heartless corporation concerned only with bottom-line performance at all costs or the notion of a worker tirelessly performing unsatisfying tasks to simply pay their bills. Often these tasks are performed to the detriment of their own happiness and psychological wellbeing. Emerging research suggests that employee wellbeing is inexorably linked to sustainable organizational performance (Baptiste, 2008). This evidence is converging from multiple fields, such as leadership theory and positive psychology.

Grant (2013) have noted that “we spend the majority of our waking hours at work. This means that what we do at work becomes a fundamental part of who we are” (p. 259). As much as a quarter to a third of a person’s life is spent working (Harter et al., 2002). Further supporting this argument, a 2015 United States Bureau of Labor Statistics report (2016) stated that, on average, Americans spend approximately 8.8 hours a day working at job related tasks while averaging 7.8 hours of sleep per day. Further unpaid hours answering emails and dealing with work demands at home takes away the average person’s ability to pursue other things in life. Therefore, the day-to-day interactions an individual experiences over the course of their career will
have a significant impact on their identities, on their happiness, and on the meaningfulness of their lives.

Servant leadership is increasingly being recognized as a holistic approach to influencing others by focusing on the needs of all stakeholders (Doh & Quigley, 2014; Maak & Pless, 2006). The practice of servant leadership principles provides leaders an opportunity to engage followers and empower interdependence, respect, trust, and individual growth through interpersonal influence rather than institutional power and authority (Northouse, 2009). Kellerman (2012) suggested that the study and application of servant leadership theory offers intrinsic potential in the process of creating social change towards a more inclusive brand of leadership. Extant literature also suggests that servant leadership serves as an antecedent to positive cultures necessary for sustainable organizational success (Collins, 2001; de Waal & Sivro, 2012; Hunter et al., 2013). While organizational success is undoubtedly an important factor, this study focuses on the leader-follower relationship.

**Research Problem**

Through the nineteenth and into the twentieth century, a crisis of leadership has persisted throughout our global society. This crisis manifests itself in the misuse of power and authority by leaders in ways that does harm to others (Kellerman, 2004) which consequently results in an overall lack of trust in leadership (Campbell, Strawser, & Sellnow, 2017). Servant leadership is a promising theory that holds
potential to address this crisis through the study and application of ethical actions and through the building of trust between leaders and followers (Kellerman, 2012; Northouse, 2009). There is a breadth of research that exists which examines servant leadership as an ethical approach to leading organizations (Hunter et al., 2013; Jaramillo, Grisaffe, Chonko, & Roberts, 2009; Wong & Page, 2003). Research continues to emerge that demonstrates trust as a mediating factor between leader-follower relationships and positive organizational outcomes (Farling, Stone, & Winston, 1999; Joseph & Winston, 2005; Liden, Wayne, Zhao, & Henderson, 2008; Russell & Stone, 2002; Sendjaya & Pekerti, 2010). By focusing on the needs of the follower, the leader builds caring relationships with his or her followers. It is this relationship that gives individuals the opportunity to flourish at work.

Flourishing is an emerging concept that encompasses subjective wellbeing. The terms flourishing and wellbeing are often used interchangeably and will be used synonymously throughout this study. In its most fundamental form, wellbeing refers to the ability to feel good and function effectively (Huppert & So, 2013). There are numerous theories on what constitutes wellbeing. More than 18,000 peer-reviewed articles on wellbeing have been published over the last 20 years (McQuaid & Kern, 2017).

Despite research that suggests perceptions of servant leadership are linked to follower wellbeing (Chen, Chen, & Li, 2013), much of the correlation lacks a consistent
stream of empirical evidence (Northouse, 2009). In other words, servant leadership literature has been linked to a variety of outcomes. Every time a new study is published, a new stream of research seems to present itself. This study uses valid and reliable instruments to measure the convergence of servant leadership and wellbeing dimensions with the goal of advancing existing streams of research.

**A Worthy Exploration**

This study is important because a leadership approach that relies on the use of power and authority to control others is often fleeting and ignores the needs of individuals who make up an organization. This type of work environment creates a negative organizational culture with consequences that spill into society. Evidence has been emerging that suggests long-term, sustainable organizations achieve success by facilitating the growth, development, and wellbeing of individuals who comprise the organization (Stone, Russell, & Patterson, 2004). Greenleaf’s (1998) observation regarding the importance of the leader-follower relationship is as true today as it was when he wrote it: “The urgent problems of our day exist because of human failures, individual failures, one-person-at-a-time, and one-action-at-a-time failures” (p. 19). The goal of this study is to contribute to a stream of thought aimed at changing an outdated social paradigm that says fiscal success must come at the expense of others’ wellbeing.

This study is a worthy research project as it will expand the understanding of a leadership theory that seeks to contribute to a caring and healthy society. While the
popularity of servant leadership continues to grow in all sectors of society, there is still much to learn about how to operationalize servant leadership in the for-profit sector and what type of outcomes can be expected from such an approach (Coetzer, Bussin, & Geldenhuys, 2017). This study seeks to contribute to academic literature, which shows that organizational culture and individual wellbeing are linked by positive leadership practices.

**Audience Who Will Profit from the Study**

This study will benefit multiple stakeholders, including leaders and managers as well as individuals within an organization. All stakeholders have a vested interest in the success of an organization. This includes the individuals who work within the organization and have a responsibility to conduct themselves in accordance with the needs of the business. It is a fundamental assumption of this study that leaders play a pivotal role in leading organizations to achieve fiscal success based on complex cultures made up of a diverse array of people-centric challenges.

Leaders are the ones in the organization who hold the legitimate power and authority. With this power and authority, the leaders have a choice whether to conduct themselves in a manner that positively influences the wellbeing of all stakeholders as well as meet the overall goals of an organization. The results of this study contribute to the general knowledge of servant leadership theory and workplace wellbeing, as well as the role of positive leader-follower relationships.
This study differs from other studies in that it provides valuable information regarding whether FPO leaders who exhibit servant leadership dimensions positively influence the wellbeing of their direct reports. A deeper understanding of those dimensions will address gaps currently existing in the literature today. This research can provide a more informed link between theory and practice and is a relevant topic in today’s fast-paced, cut-throat business environment.

**Statement of Purpose**

The current study uses a mixed methods approach to explore the relationship between servant leadership and flourishing in individuals working in an FPO. Mixed methods research (MMR) involves collecting and integrating both quantitative and qualitative forms of data into a single project, which may result in a more comprehensive understanding of a phenomenon (Leavy, 2017). A concurrent mixed method design allows for the collection and analysis of both quantitative and qualitative datasets, then integrating the two sets of analyses in order to cross-validate findings (Creswell, 2014). This study employs a quantitative data collection method and analysis to identify high levels of subjective wellbeing coinciding with perceptions of servant leadership characteristics. To gain a deeper understanding of the quantitative data, this study also utilizes qualitative, semi-structured questions to explore a few of the more statistically significant relationships.
Drawing from the literature that servant leaders positively influence followers by focusing on their needs, a mixed methods approach provides several benefits to this study. First, quantitative data will identify specific traits and behaviors of servant leadership as well as dimensions of wellbeing. Second, the topics of servant leadership and individual flourishing in research studies are not fully understood, especially in an FPO context. Therefore, the collection and analysis of qualitative data will provide a deeper understanding of the characteristics that link these two variables.

In summary, a concurrent mixed methods approach can help to develop context for the positive relationship that can exist between leaders and the individuals that work for them as well as explore the conditions that enable people to achieve high degrees of wellbeing in an FPO.

**Organization**

Of the five remaining chapters, Chapter 2 reviews the literature on servant leadership theory and individual flourishing. Chapter 3 describes, in detail, the research design and methodology for this study. Chapter 4 lays out and explains the results of the study. Chapter 5 is a discussion of the findings from Chapter 4. Finally, Chapter 6 discusses the limitations, implications, and recommendations for future research.
Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction
The purpose of this study is to understand how leaders positively influence individual flourishing in followers working in for-profit organizations (FPOs). Servant leadership is an approach to leadership that aims to serve and develop followers to realize their potential. Flourishing is a relatively new concept from the field of positive psychology that describes subjective feelings of psychological potential. It is a realistic goal of leadership that followers should flourish under their direction. This chapter presents an overview of existing research pertaining to servant leadership theory and a psychometric perspective on wellbeing theory, which will provide a broad theoretical context for the study. The chapter is divided into six sections.

Leadership Theory
Leadership is a highly valued and sought-after ability in FPOs. Leadership is so sought after that the education and development of leaders has become a $50 billion industry in of itself (Kellerman, 2010). As James MacGregor Burns (1978) wrote, “leadership is one of the most observed and least understood phenomena on earth” (p. 3). One of the challenges of understanding leadership theory is the ability to comprehend the diverse array of theoretical approaches as well as the role of social context. So what is leadership?
Bass and Bass (2008) defined leadership in the following context:

An interaction between two or more members of a group that often involves the structuring or restructuring of the situation and of the perceptions and expectations of the members. Leaders are agents of change, whose acts affect other people more than other people’s acts affect them. (p. 25)

Leadership is a sophisticated and complex process where individuals assume the roles of leader or follower through various interactions. These interactions involve the use of power, authority, or influence to get others to achieve goals (Northouse, 2016). Leadership theory has historically been viewed from a leader-centric perspective (Kellerman, 2012). Although this research study will add to the tradition of a leader-centric approach, the researcher recognizes the importance of embracing follower perspectives. An exploration of servant leadership theory allows scholars and practitioners to examine the needs of followers through a leadership lens. Building on Bass and Bass’s (2008) definition of leaders as agents of social change, this research study will explore how leaders influence others by embracing follower perspectives.

Greenleaf (1970) wrote that leadership can be viewed from different contexts, such as individual, organizational, or a societal context. Bass and Bass (2008) surmised that the most commonly used definitions concentrate on the leader as a person, on the behavior of the leader, on the effects of the leader, and on the interaction process between the leader and the led. The study of leadership is important because the success of organizations and institutions, whether they are political, for-profit, non-
profit, or religious in nature, depends on the effective and efficient guidance of leaders (Barrow, 1977; Parris & Peachey, 2013). Page and Wong (2000) suggested that it is the people and processes that will always be more important than tasks and organizational structure in accomplishing goals and productivity. It is this fundamental relationship between people at an individual level that dictate the climate at the organizational and societal levels.

**Foundations of Servant Leadership**

A contemporary review of servant leadership literature begins with the story of Robert K. Greenleaf. Born in Terre Haute, Indiana, in 1904, Greenleaf graduated with a degree in math from Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota, in 1926 (Frick, n.d.). Greenleaf went on to have a 38-year career with the American Telephone and Telegraph Company (AT&T), achieving the title of Director of Management Development (Greenleaf, 1995). While this was not a high-ranking position in terms of leadership hierarchy, it did mean that Greenleaf had a direct and personal line to the CEO. Playing the role of trusted advisor, Greenleaf was afforded the opportunity to observe and reflect upon his experiences working with the top business leaders at one of the most powerful corporations in the world. In this role, Greenleaf was responsible for implementing a revolutionary approach to executive development that included liberal arts classes like English literature, European history, Greek classics, and even theology (Brooks, 1975). Greenleaf saw liberal arts training as an important platform to broaden the conceptual ability of leaders that even included open discussions with theology experts. Conversations with theologians exposed business
leaders to concerns of modern-day ethics. A relatively new concept for the time, development conceptual skills and ethical awareness would end up being two key components that would influence Greenleaf’s later writings.

Greenleaf retired from AT&T in 1964 and embarked on a second career that would last 25 years. This second career would see Greenleaf writing about his experiences consulting for organizations such as Ohio University, MIT, the Ford Foundation, the R.K. Mellon Foundation, the Mead Corporation, the American Foundation for Management Research, and Lilly Endowment Inc. (Spears, 2002). Fascinated by what he saw as a social revolution being led by college students of the time, Greenleaf made it a point visit university bookstores to see what types of avocational reading students were doing (Greenleaf, 1995). For Greenleaf, this served as a form of listening to the next generation. Central to Greenleaf’s narrative was his observation of a societal trend in which university students had a severe mistrust of society (Page & Wong, 2000, p. 83). In order to educate the future generation of leaders, Greenleaf founded the Center for Applied Ethics in Indianapolis, Indiana, later renamed the Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership (Laub, 1999).

Greenleaf was inspired to write his seminal work, *The Servant as Leader*, after reading Hermann Hesse’s short novel *Journey to the East*. Hesse’s novel is commonly believed to be a metaphorical autobiography of Hesse’s own tortured life
where a band of travelers are on a mythical journey sponsored by a secret Order. The story goes that the members of the Order were accompanied by a servant, Leo, who sustains their spirit by doing menial tasks and regaling the band of travelers with stories. One morning, Leo disappears from the group and the journey is ultimately abandoned. The narrator reverts back to his day-to-day life but is continually haunted by the failure of the expedition until one day he coincidentally stumbles upon Leo. In the fictional interaction that follows, the narrator is humbled by the knowledge that Leo is, in fact, the titular head and much revered leader of the Order. The narrator is then allowed to join the Order only through acknowledgement of his failures and newfound awareness of humility and forgiveness demonstrated by the head of the Order, Leo (Hesse, 1956).

Greenleaf (1970) interpreted the meaning of Hesse’s message as the key to being a great leader is having a natural desire to serve. In the pamphlet *The Servant as Leader*, Greenleaf lays out 13 unconnected guiding principles for which a servant leader continuously strives: *initiative; goal setting; listening and understanding; language and imagination; withdrawing; acceptance and empathy; know the unknowable; foresight; awareness and perception; persuasion; one action at a time; conceptualizing; and healing and serving*. The servant leader was an intuitive construct developed from Greenleaf’s reflections of his own extensive experiences and continues to inspire and influence scholars and practitioners.
The notion of a leader gaining influence through service to others is not new. Examples of this service-oriented style of leadership can be seen throughout history. From Judeo-Christian literature (Akuchie, 1993; Blanchard & Hodges, 2003; Laub, 1999) to classical literature (Sendjaya, Sarros, & Santora, 2008), service to others is a visible theme. Greenleaf’s writings have inspired a movement that addresses leadership challenges applicable to diverse audiences. The later part of the twentieth century saw an influx of authors in the popular press who were inspired by Greenleaf’s seminal work. Authors such as Max DePree (Leadership is an Art, 1989), Stephen Covey (Principle-Centered Leadership, 1990), Peter Senge (The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Styles of the Learning Organization, 1990), and Peter Block (Stewardship: Choosing Service over Self Interest, 1993), to name a few, have advanced management and organizational literature as it relates to positive effects on profits and individual satisfaction (Parris & Peachey, 2013). These authors, and others, have helped scholars and practitioners advance the intrigue of servant leadership theory, but have also contributed to a principle challenge of servant leadership—the development of a consistent operational definition.

Greenleaf’s lack of clarity in terms of definition has left the theory open to many different interpretations (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006; van Dierendonck, 2011). This led to a body of scholarly literature that, while intuitively insightful, has been mostly antidotal and lacked the academic rigor of scientific operationalization, thus hindering empirical studies (Northhouse, 2016; Page & Wong, 2000; Sendjaya & Sarros, 2002).
As discussed later in this chapter, the last two decades have shown a greater focus on empirical research. This review will distinguish servant leadership from other leadership theories and explore four streams of research: the theoretical stream, measurement stream, model development stream, and empirical stream.

**Towards a Definition of Servant Leadership**

Greenleaf (1970) originally described a servant leader in this way:

> It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings on to aspire to lead. The difference manifests itself in the care taken by the servant-first to make sure the other people’s highest priority needs are being served. (p. 15)

Page and Wong (2000) noted that servant leadership appears to be so complex as to defy simple definition by being multidimensional, rich in hues, and wide-ranging in its meaning. Page and Wong (2000) have extended the definition of a servant leader as one whose primary purpose for leading is to serve others by investing in their development and wellbeing. Liden et al. (2008) believed that the key to unlocking high degrees of development and wellbeing is an understanding of the leader-follower relationship.

**Servant Leadership and Other Theories of Leadership**

One of the primary challenges for advancing servant leadership research was distinguishing it from other leadership theories and capturing its distinct significance. Servant leadership theory shows significant overlap with other leadership theories, like transformational, authentic, ethical, Level 5, empowering, spiritual, and self-
sacrificing leadership (van Dierendonck, 2011). Though many leadership approaches have similar tasks associated with the leader, the difference lies in the way in which a leader frames and executes those tasks (Page & Wong, 2000). The key similarities and differences between servant leadership and the seven other theories laid out by van Dierendonck (2011) will now be discussed.

**Transformational leadership**
Since the early 1980s, the study of transformational leadership theory has dominated the academic literature (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Northouse, 2016). In the seminal work on transformational leadership, Burns (1978) defined a transforming leader as one who (a) increases the followers’ awareness and motivation to achieve desired outcomes, (b) transcends followers’ own self-interests for the team or organization, and (c) raises the followers’ level of self-worth. Transformational leaders achieve results through intellectual stimulation, idealized influence, and inspirational motivation (Bass, 1985; Bass & Riggio, 2006). Transformative leaders move followers to accomplish more than what is usually expected of them. Inspiring followers to achieve more than they would otherwise is a theme that coincides with follower growth and development, which is a primary goal of servant leadership. While a transformational leader may utilize the growth of subordinates as a means to an end, a servant leader sees the success of their followers as the end in and of itself (Ehrhart, 2004).
Both servant and transformational leaders build on the idea of transactional leadership which emphasizes the leader-follower exchange. In this exchange, effective leaders become visionaries who influence others to achieve goals (Graham, 1991) as well as empower and elevate followers (Farling et al., 1999; Sendjaya et al., 2008). In contrast, transformational leaders “help followers grow and develop into leaders by responding to individual followers’ needs by empowering them and by aligning the objectives and goals of the individual followers, the leader, the group, and the larger organization” (Bass & Riggio, 2006, p. 9).

It is important to note the moral distinction between servant and transformational leaders (Parolini, Patterson, & Winston, 2009). Burns (1978) believed the leader was morally obliged through a relationship built on mutual needs, aspirations, and values. However, many scholars have rebutted the moral role of transformational leaders through historical examples where despotic leaders are able to influence followers to do harm unto others (Bass, 1985; Graham, 1991; Whetstone, 2002; Whittington, 2004). Graham (1991) was among the first to conduct a literary analysis of transformational leadership and servant leadership theories, which suggested that servant leadership distinguishes itself from transformational leadership through a moral component.
This moral component includes two key points. First, a servant leader has an orientation towards ensuring all organizational stakeholders are served, or at least not further deprived (Liden et al., 2008). A servant leader’s desire to serve followers does not come at the expense of other stakeholders. Second, they are self-reflective leaders who balance the need for accountability with the intellectual and moral development of followers (Ehrhart, 2004). Servant leaders acknowledge the responsibility of the leader to fulfill the organization’s goals while at the same time the personal and professional development of followers.

The overall difference between servant leaders and transformational leaders lies in the orientation of the leaders’ underlying motivation. A transformational leader’s primary objective is to motivate followers to meet organizational goals (Patterson, 2003). Transformative leaders accomplish this by aligning their own interests and the interests of their followers in order to transcend self-interests for the betterment of the organization (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006; Bass, 2000). To the contrary, servant leaders view the ability to meet the needs of followers as a primary objective and not simply as a means to an end (Bass, 2000; Ehrhart, 2004; Patterson, 2003). Furthermore, servant leaders are more likely to demonstrate a natural inclination to serve marginalized people (Sendjaya et al., 2008).

**Leader-member exchange theory (LMX)**

Since it first appeared more than 40 year ago under the title “vertical dyad linkage” (VDL) theory (Dansereau, Graen, & Haga, 1975), leader-member exchange theory
(LMX) is an approach that focuses on the dyadic relationship that exists between the leader and follower (Northouse, 2016). LMX is defined by Dansereau et al. (1975) as an organizational make-up which includes in-groups and out-groups based on how well a leader and follower work together. LMX makes this dyadic relationship the key concept in the leadership process as well as the organizational performance. As research advanced, LMX became a way of looking at leadership development that produces mature leader relationships and positively influences organizational outcomes (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995).

Both LMX and servant-leadership theory place significant focus on high-quality leader-follower relationships. Both theories emphasize and rely on high-quality interpersonal exchanges (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995) and prioritize the development of their followers (Ehrhart, 2004). While there are identifiable overlaps in both theories, there are key distinctions as well.

Servant leadership theory differentiates itself from LMX in two ways. First, the servant leader is sensitive to the needs of numerous stakeholders and aims to avoid out-groups. LMX literature is silent on provisions of personal healing, development of followers, and encouragement for service within the organization or community (Liden et al., 2008). On the other side, servant leaders recognize the responsibility of the leader to other organizational stakeholders, not just an in-group, as well as the responsibility to act in an ethical manner. Like transformational leadership theory,
LMX literature has mostly remained silent on the moral component of leadership (Ehrhart, 2004) while servant leaders encourage followers to engage in moral reasoning with a focus on building quality relationships (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006; Spears, 2002).

**Authentic leadership**
The third leadership theory that is reviewed in this chapter is authentic leadership. Avolio, Gardner, Walumbwa, Luthans, and May (2004) defined authentic leaders in the following way:

[T]hose who are deeply aware of how they think and behave and are perceived by others as being aware of their own and others’ values/moral perspectives, knowledge, and strengths; aware of the context in which they operate; and who are confident, hopeful, optimistic, resilient, and of high moral character. (p. 4)

The lineage of authenticity can be traced back to ancient Greek philosophy with aphorisms such as “Know thyself” (Parke & Wormell, 1956, as cited in Gardner Cogliser, Davis, & Dickens, 2011) and “To thine ownself be true” (Avolio & Gardner, 2005). Attempts to define authenticity within the context of leadership literature began in the 1960s (Halpin & Croft, 1966; Rome & Rome, 1967; Seeman, 1966) and went up into the 1980s (Henderson & Hoy, 1983). Fourteen years elapsed before authentic leadership reemerged as a focal point within the social sciences (Gardner et al., 2011).
Northouse (2016) cited three catalysts for the reemergence of authenticity within the leadership literature. First, in June 2004, Gallup sponsored a leadership summit at the University of Nebraska in order to discuss the development and renewal of "authentic leadership" as an emerging area of business study. Second, from this summit, two works were published that help advance scholarship in authentic leadership theory: a 2005 special issue of The Leadership Quarterly and a Monographs in Leadership and Management publication titled Authentic Leadership Theory and Process: Origins, Effects and Development (Gardner, Avolio, & Walumbwa, 2005). Finally, works by authors such as former Medtronic CEO Bill George (2003; George & Sims, 2007) and leadership consultant Kevin Cashman (1998, 2003) have advanced the intrigue of authentic leadership theory.

There are two arguments that speak to the overlap between servant leadership and authentic leadership. First, empirical studies are demonstrating a link between authentic leadership and work engagement as well as authentic leadership and organizational citizenship behaviors (OCBs) (Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, Wernsing, & Peterson, 2008). Discussed later in this chapter, empirical evidence suggests similar links between servant leadership and authentic leadership. Second, Cooper, Scandura, and Schriesheim (2005) noted that authentic leadership theory is a complex process, like servant leadership, made up of traits, states, and behaviors that have challenged researchers to consistently clarify constructs.
Avolio and Gardner (2005) noted that authentic leadership involves being true to oneself, whereas servant leaders focus on the needs of the follower regardless of the leader’s own perspective. Authentic leadership is an intrapersonal approach (Shamir & Eilam, 2005), whereas servant leadership is an interpersonal approach focused on relationships. A servant leader’s approach could potentially sacrifice authenticity in attempts to address the needs of a follower, whereas an authentic leader values an expression of their perspective regardless of what that might mean for others.

**Spiritual leadership theory**

Fry and Slocum (2008) defined spiritual leadership theory as a leader who comprises the values, attitudes, and behaviors that are necessary to intrinsically motivate oneself and others for spiritual survival through calling, meaning, and social connection. Fry’s (2003) seminal construct of spiritual leaders includes dimensions of vision, altruistic love, and hope, and it describes an approach to leadership that seeks to inspire individuals to love oneself and others.

Both theories are similar in that they appeal to virtuous leadership practices and intrinsic motivating factors that facilitate a sense of meaning, purpose, and interconnectedness (Sendjaya et al., 2008). Servant leaders view themselves as stewards who are entrusted to develop and empower followers to reach their fullest potential (Sendjaya & Sorros, 2002). Sendjaya et al. (2008) noted that spirituality may very well be one of the dimensions of servant leadership, but they noted that there are other equally important dimensions, like servanthood and moral values,
missing from Fry’s (2003) model. Thus, servant leadership could be viewed as a broader and more complex theory than spiritual leadership.

**Level 5 leadership**
The fifth leadership theory being compared to servant leadership is Level 5 Leadership. Collins (2001) identified Level 5 leaders as those who transcend self-interest through humility and intense professional will. Level 5 leaders manage the paradox between fanatical drive for excellence and stewardship on one side with a modest, self-effacing demeanor toward relationships with others (van Dierendonck, 2011). In the book *Good to Great*, Collins (2001) presented cases where individuals demonstrating intense professional will and humility lead their companies to a higher sphere of organizational success.

Initially, the perception of Level 5 leaders among business leaders was that Level 5 was just another term for servant leadership (Lichtenwalner, 2010). Reid, West, Winston, and Wood (2014) validated an instrument that demonstrates the overlapping feature of humility in both servant leaders and Level 5 leaders. However, a review of the servant leadership literature does not account for the professional will aspect of the Level 5 construct.

**Ethical leadership**
Rooted in classical philosophy, ethical leadership is a complex concept that has been given more attention in business schools in recent years due to a myriad of scandals and ethical violations (Brown & Treviño, 2006; Brown, Treviño, & Harrison, 2005;
Treviño, den Nieuwenboer, & Kish-Gephart, 2014; Zhu, Zheng, Riggio, & Zhang, 2015). Brown et al. (2005) defined ethical leadership as (a) the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships and (b) the promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement, and decision-making. Brown et al.’s (2005) construct consists of a leader as both a moral person as well as a moral manager (Brown & Treviño, 2006). A moral person demonstrates traits and behaviors that meet ethical standards defined by common values, whereas a moral manager is described as role modeling the desired behavior in order to influence followers to behave similarly.

Influenced by Bandura’s (1977) definition of social learning theory, ethical leadership theory suggests that follower perceptions are influenced on a situational basis by the actions of a leader. Another way to describe social learning theory is that individuals are influenced by observing role models and learn about appropriate behavior vicariously through witnessing what is rewarded and what is punished or which actions attract attention and which do not (Bandura, 1986). Role-modeling behavior is a key component of both ethical and servant leadership theories.

Empirical overlap from both theories shows that a leader’s behavior influences follower behavior and, ultimately, organizational performance. First, Zhu et al. (2015) posited that servant and ethical leaders are committed to a common set of behaviors demonstrated through their concern for others and treating others right. While the
notion of treating others right is subjective and lacks clarity across different groups, both ethical and servant leaders will develop relationships based on a set of common values. The leader’s actions and behaviors are the key component in this relationship because whatever the leader is demonstrating through his or her actions will often be mirrored by the follower.

Empirical evidence for ethical behavior supports a few outcomes associated with servant leadership. For instance, Liden et al. (2008) suggested that leaders who demonstrate the quality of behaving ethically lead teams to higher in-role performance. Higher in-role performance is influenced by factors such as perceived effectiveness of leaders, followers’ job satisfaction and dedication, and their willingness to report problems to management (Brown et al., 2005), as well as organizational commitment (Neubert, Carlson, Kacmar, Roberts, & Chonko, 2009). As will be demonstrated later in the chapter, these outcomes are also associated with empirical studies of servant leadership. The common denominators between both theories are (a) a focus on leader-follower relationship and (b) the influence of role-modeling behavior.

While there is significant overlap between ethical leadership and other leadership theories, like transformational, authentic, and spiritual leadership, no one theory can fully explain the other (Brown & Treviño, 2006). Van Dierendonck (2011) noted that ethical leadership research has emphasized more directive and normative behavior
while servant leadership demonstrates a strong representation of developmental aspects of followers.

**Empowering leadership**

Empowering leadership theory was developed from a growing trend where leaders embraced follower autonomy in order to develop more agile and effective individuals and teams (Arnold, Kelloway, McKee, Turner, & Barling, 2007; Srivastava, Bartol, & Locke, 2006). This trend of empowering individuals and groups arose out of a need for more organizational flexibility and agility in a fast-paced, global landscape. Empowering leadership is defined as behaviors whereby power is shared with subordinates and that raise their level of intrinsic motivation (Srivastava et al., 2006). Arnold, Arad, Rhoades, and Drasgow (2000) suggested that specific behaviors of empowering leaders include coaching, informing, leading by example, showing concern/interacting with the team, and participative decision-making. Empowering leadership has been positively related to organizational performance mediated by knowledge sharing and team efficacy (Srivastava et al., 2006). The advantage of studying empowerment as a theory unto itself is that it offers a perspective that addresses a need for organizations of all sizes to be able to compete in a fast-paced, global environment.

Empowering leadership is similar to servant leadership in that both theories speak to delegation of authority as a means to increase intrinsic motivation, accentuate accountability through goal-setting, and develop others through knowledge sharing
(van Dierendonck, 2011). Servant leadership theory can be seen as encompassing empowerment within many of its own constructs, but it extends to other dimensions of leadership. Russell and Stone (2002) described empowerment as one of eleven accompanying attributes of servant leadership, a complementary attribute that is often a prerequisite for successful servant leadership. Empowering leadership theory helps advance knowledge of how servant leaders may operate, but servant leadership theory can be seen as a more elaborate view of leadership.

**Self-sacrificing leadership**

With roots in transformational leadership theory, Choi and Mai-Dalton (1999) defined self-sacrificing leadership theory as a leader forfeiting one or more professional or personal advantages for the sake of followers, the organization, or a mission. Empirical studies associated with self-sacrificial leadership have focused on outcomes associated with follower perceptions of leader behavior (Matteson & Irving, 2006). Outcomes that include things like organizational commitment (Choi & Mai-Dalton, 1999; De Cremer & van Knippenberg, 2004), high performance (van Knippenberg & van Knippenberg, 2005), prosocial and teaming behavior (De Cremer, 2006; De Cremer, Mayer, Schouten, & Bardes, 2009).

It is suggested that the key objectives of self-sacrificing behavior is to increase charisma, legitimacy, and reciprocity (Matteson & Irving, 2006; van Dierendonck, 2011). This enables the leader to gain more influence and move followers towards achieving organizational goals. In a review of both servant and self-sacrificing
leadership literature, Matteson and Irving (2006) found overlapping behavioral characteristics of having empathy, developing people, building community, providing leadership, empowering followers, and serving followers—all dimensions associated with servant leadership.

However, like other leadership theories reviewed in this chapter, the inherent motivation of the self-sacrificing leader towards organizational goals as well as the conceptual complexity of servant leadership creates a noticeable theoretical divergence. Like transformational leadership theory, and unlike servant leadership theory, a self-sacrificing leader’s primary focus is on the organization rather than the individual (van Dierendonck, 2011). Like empowering leadership theory, there are key dimensions of servant leadership that are not discussed in the literature on self-sacrificing leadership (Matteson & Irving, 2006). Therefore, servant leadership can be seen as a more robust theory than self-sacrificing leadership, as it focuses on serving followers as the primary goal rather than means to an end.

**Theoretical Streams of Research**

After Greenleaf’s death in 1990, Larry Spears uncovered some of Greenleaf’s previously unknown and unpublished writings (Spears Center for Servant-Leadership, n.d.). Spears surveyed Greenleaf’s writings in an attempt to further understand his insight into the concept of servant leadership. In the first of six edited anthologies on servant leadership, Spears (1995) unveiled the ten most influential characteristics of an effective servant leader: *listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion,*
conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people, and building community. While Greenleaf wrote his seminal essay with the intention that the characteristics, behaviors, and traits be read as separate but related concepts, Spears’s effort was the first to put forth a conceptual framework that served to inspire future research of servant leadership theory. The framework proposed by Spears (1995) has been the most influential to date, which is demonstrated by the noticeable overlap of characteristics among the different theoretical constructs.

Another popular stream of theoretical work stems from servant leadership as a virtuous construct rooted in religion and classical literature. Building on Arjoon’s (2000) definition of virtue theory, which states that leaders focus on the common good rather than simply maximizing profits, Patterson (2003) conceptualized a model for which the fundamental values of servant leadership are based on seven virtuous constructs: agapao love, humility, altruism, vision, trust, empowerment, and service. This theoretical model proposes that servant leadership theory addresses phenomena such as altruism and humility which are not explained by other leadership theories (Dennis & Bocarnea, 2005).

**Measurement Stream**

The measurement stream of theory development relies on credible and reliable instruments to advance a given theory. By developing a reliable and valid instrument for measuring servant leadership, researchers can facilitate the development of the theory by offering evaluative benchmarks that serve to advance empirical evidence
(Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006; Dennis & Bocarnea, 2005; Ehrhart, 2004; Liden et al., 2008; Page & Wong, 2000; Sendjaya et al., 2008; van Dierendonck & Nuijtenm, 2011; Wong & Page, 2003). This section is devoted to exploring the work that has been done regarding attempts to operationalize servant leadership (see Table 1).

Laub’s (1999) dissertation is credited as being the first study to develop and validate an instrument designed to measure servant leadership (van Dierendonck, 2011). Laub’s (1999) Organizational Leadership Assessment (OLA) consists of six dimensions—values people, develops people, builds community, displays authenticity, provides leadership, and shares leadership—and 60 total items. The OLA was designed to measure servant leadership from three perspectives: the organization as a whole, its senior leadership, and individual perceptions. The goal of the OLA is to aid organizations in aligning their internal structures with servant leadership characteristics. The OLA is a strong measure for those researching the relationship between servant leadership behaviors and organizational culture (van Dierendonck, 2011) and is widely recognized as stimulating empirical research into servant leadership (van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2011).

Building on Adjibolosoo’s (1994) Human Factor (HF) model that refers to a spectrum of personality characteristics, Page and Wong (2000) developed a conceptual framework of servant leadership to address the characteristics associated with ethical
and competent leaders. The Servant Leadership Profile (SLP) is an instrument defined by 12 subscales consisting of 99 items. The 12 subscales are leading, servanthood, visioning, humility, caring for others, goal setting, modeling, developing others, team-building, empowering others, shared decision making, and integrity. The SLP is a self-assessment designed to measure a leader in respects to their orientation toward four functional dimensions of leadership: character-orientation, people-orientation, task-orientation, and process-orientation. The driving motivation that is fundamental to the SLP is the belief that a leader’s character is what distinguishes itself from a command-and-control leadership approach. Ultimately, it is a leader’s character that influences how a leader works with his or her followers.

Observing that servant leadership was often hindered by a pessimistic perspective of human nature, Wong and Page (2003) set out to address what the authors called the Opponent-Processes (OP). These opposing factors were motivated by the authors’ personal experiences and a review of literature regarding authoritarian hierarchy and egotistic pride. The result of this research was the Revised Servant Leadership Profile (RSLP). Additional factor analysis reduced the number of subscales in the original SLP from 12 to 8. Humility, caring for others, goal setting, and modeling were found to be redundant with other factors and were eliminated in the RSLP. Two subscales, abuse of power and egotistic prides, were added to address the OP model. The current RSLP has a total of 10 subscales. Unlike the SLP, the items in the RSLP are presented in a randomized order to avoid classification bias by participants. The
greatest issue with this measure appears to be a lack of factor validity across multiple tests (Dennis & Winston, 2003; van Dierendonck, 2011).

Building on Spears’s (1995) conceptual framework, Barbuto and Wheeler (2006) set out to advance servant leadership literature by contributing a testable model for future empirical research. The authors developed operational definitions and scales to measure 11 potential characteristics. These characteristics included all 10 components of Spears’s (1995) construct as well as the added dimension of calling—the natural desire to serve others. The authors argued that calling was embedded in previous conceptualizations (Akuchie, 1993; Farling et al., 1999; Greenleaf, 1970; Polleys, 2002; Sendjaya & Sorros, 2002) of servant leadership theory. A factor analysis validated five factors consisting of 23 items. Barbuto and Wheeler’s (2006) five dimensions of servant leadership are the following:

- **Altruistic calling** describes a leader’s internal desire to make a positive difference in the lives of followers.
- **Emotional healing** describes a leader’s desire and skill to foster a follower’s spiritual recovery from a hardship or trauma.
- **Wisdom** describes an awareness of surroundings and potential consequences. A wise leader is observant and practical.
- **Persuasive mapping** describes a skill whereby a leader maps issues, conceptualizes greater possibilities, and is compelling when articulating these opportunities.
Organizational stewardship describes the extent a leader prepares an organization to make a positive impact in society as well as fosters a community environment within the workplace.

The authors found that some of the original subscales were not exclusive to servant leadership. While listening, empathy, community building, and growth were important skills for servant leaders, they can be found in other leadership theories as well (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006). The Servant Leader Questionnaire (SLQ) has been used throughout empirical research as either a self-assessment or a rater-assessed measurement of servant leader behaviors.

Building on Patterson’s (2003) theoretical constructs of servant leadership, Dennis and Bocarnea (2005) developed Servant Leader Assessment (SL-A) with the intent to measure the presence of the seven-dimensions listed in Patterson’s (2003) servant leadership model. Dennis and Bocarnea’s (2005) statistical results suggest five of the seven dimensions to be valid. The study failed to measure factors of altruism and service. The SL-A consists of 42 items. Empirical support for the SL-A in its original form needs to be strengthened. Even though the SL-A has been applied in a Latin American (McIntosh & Irving, 2008) and a Filipino context (Bud West, Bocarnea, & Maranon, 2009), only 3 dimensions—love, empowerment, and vision—have been validated (van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2011).
Citing a lack of consensus from previous research (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006; Page & Wong, 2002; Spears & Lawrence, 2002) regarding the dimensional makeup of servant leadership, Liden et al. (2008) put forth a multi-dimensional measure that tests for servant leadership dimensions at an individual level as well as an organizational level. The dimensions for Servant Leadership Survey (SLS) were developed from a review of extant literature (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006; Greenleaf, 1970; Page & Wong, 2000; Spears & Lawrence, 2002; Ehrhart, 2004). The scale tested the dimensions of emotional healing, creating value for the community, conceptualizing, empowering, helping subordinates grow and succeed, putting subordinates first, behaving ethically, relationships, and servanthood. The final results provide support for seven of the nine dimensions consisting of 28 items. Relationships and servanthood were removed.

In terms of a multidimensional measure, the Liden et al. (2008) assessment addresses both the individual and organizational levels. The authors suggest that servant leadership at the individual level supports increased levels of organizational commitment, community citizenship behavior, and in-role performance, which provide further empirical evidence of the distinction between servant leadership and transformational leadership. At the organizational level, servant leadership was shown to predict higher group performance mediated by a factor of trust. While this study will focus on the leader-follower dyad, Liden et al.’s (2008) model offers a compelling conceptualization of servant leadership and its complexities.
Sendjaya, Sarros, and Santora (2008) developed the Servant Leadership Behavioral Scale (SLBS) based on an extensive review and analysis of servant leadership literature and an expert panel validation. The SLBS is made up of six dimensions—voluntary subordination, authentic self, covenantal relationship, responsible morality, transcendental spirituality, and transforming influence—as well as 35 supporting items. Building on what the authors argued is theoretical convergence of previous instruments, including the OLA, RSLP, and the SLQ, the SLBS offers a strong sample of construct validation; however, much work remains pertaining to factorial validity (van Dierendonck, 2011).

Building on the work of Liden et al. (2008), which views servant leadership as a multilevel concept, Hunter et al. (2013) found that leaders who role-modeled servant behaviors influence a cycle of service at both an individual and group level. Hunter et al. (2013) found that leader agreeableness, or empathic concern for others, at a dyadic level positively influenced follower turnover intentions and engagement. In turn, these relationships demonstrated an environment where followers were more likely to serve teammates and customers. Interestingly, servant leadership was not found to directly influence sales performance at an individual level, but group sales performance was shown to be positively influenced by the cycle of service culture created through servant leadership behaviors.
Recognizing the need for consensus and clarity among servant leadership instruments, van Dierendonck and Nuijten (2011) developed and validated a 30-item assessment tool aimed at measuring the following eight dimensions: 

- empowerment,
- accountability,
- standing back,
- humility,
- authenticity,
- courage,
- interpersonal acceptance,
- and stewardship.

The SLS is a follower-assessed measurement of servant leader behaviors that extends the work of Liden et al. (2008). Table 1. Measurement Streams of Research is organized to offer a side-by-side representation of the important scholarly works presented in this section.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Name of Measure</th>
<th># of Dimensions</th>
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<th>Theoretical Foundation</th>
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<td>28</td>
<td>Comprehensive Literature Review</td>
<td>Emotional healing Creating value Conceptualizing Empowerment Help subordinates grow Putting subordinates first Behaving ethically Relationships Servanthood</td>
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<td>Sendjaya et al. (2008)</td>
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Model Development Stream

Model development provides the structural foundation for research as well as direction for practical application. Arising from the need to advance the literature from intuitive theory towards a testable definition of servant leadership, some scholars (Russell & Stone, 2002; van Dierendonck, 2011) have taken the approach of theoretical model development. While, both of these studies are based on literature reviews, there are fundamental differences in the methodological approach taken by these authors.

For instance, Russell and Stone (2002) developed a theoretical model that consisted of nine functional and 11 accompanying attributes of servant leadership. This model is based on literature from the popular press. The foundational texts cited in this study serve as a list of significant works from a practitioner perspective, but has not influenced much measurement development to date.

Building on peer-reviewed studies on servant leadership literature, van Dierendonck (2011) recognized the need for a descriptive model of servant leadership that was mindful of the relationship between leader behavior and various outcomes. Often times, outcomes are attributed to certain behaviors without a thorough definition of those behaviors. Therefore, there is a need to understand the relatedness of key characteristics and outcomes. Van Dierendonck’s (2011) model consists of antecedents and consequences of servant leadership mediated by six characteristics:
empowering and developing people, humility, authenticity, interpersonal acceptance, providing direction, and stewardship.

**Empirical Research Stream**

While much of the servant leadership literature has focused on the behaviors of the leader, it is important to note the empirical outcomes of such an approach. Northouse (2016) suggested that empirical support for servant leadership may be divided into three categories: follower performance and growth, organizational performance, and societal impact. Because this study is exploring the leader-follower dyad, the remainder of this section is devoted to a review on follower performance and growth.

Follower performance and growth as a result of servant leadership behaviors are often mediated as a result of other factors, such as positive emotions (Ehrhart, 2004), engagement (Hunter et al., 2013; Jaramillo et al., 2009), high quality relationships (Joseph & Winston, 2005; Sendjaya & Pekerti, 2010), increased sense of meaning (Chen et al., 2013), and overall performance (Liden, Wayne, Chenwei, & Meuser, 2014). Given the various outcomes associated with servant leadership, it can be difficult to articulate a unified conceptual relationship to the goal of servant leadership. However, it is the view of the researcher that the common denominator associated with outcomes of follower performance and growth can be found in a review of literature on individual flourishing.
Flourishing
Flourishing, a concept rooted in the field of positive psychology, focuses on understanding and building optimal functioning in individuals, organizations, and communities (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Often times the terms flourishing and wellbeing are used interchangeably. There are multiple conceptions, definitions, and theories of flourishing, but, generally speaking, flourishing refers to the notion of subjective wellbeing—feeling good and functioning well across multiple domains of life (Huppert & So, 2013; McQuaid & Kern, 2017).

Studies suggest that high levels of flourishing are linked to many different positive outcomes:

- Good physical health and life expectancy (Chida & Steptoe, 2008; Dolan, Peasgood, & White, 2008; Huppert, 2009; Sears, Yuyan, Coberley, & Pope, 2013)
- Productivity (Sears et al., 2013; Warr & Nielsen, 2018)
- Creativity (Huppert, 2009; Rasulzada & Dackert, 2009; Cameron, Crane, Ings, & Taylor, 2013)
- Learning (Li, Jacklyn, Carson, Guthridge, & Measey, 2006; Harwood & Froehlich, 2017)
- Retention (Dolan et al., 2008; Sears et al., 2013)
- Good relationships (Reis & Gable, 2003; Dolan et al., 2008)
- Pro-social behavior (Huppert, 2009; Weinstein & Ryan, 2010)
Up until the latter part of the twentieth century, psychology and mental health research focused on the treatment and the prevention of pathologies such as depression, and it was commonly believed that wellbeing arose from the absence of such illnesses (Huppert & So, 2013). In a 15-article special issue of the journal American Psychologist, Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000) called for a new approach to psychology that explored positive human functioning. Since then, a growing body of evidence is demonstrating that negative affect (e.g., loneliness, depression, illness) and positive affect (e.g., happiness, social connection, wellness, trust) are distinct and need to be studied in their own rights (Huppert, 2009; Butler & Kern, 2016). A review of wellbeing literature can be broken down into a few different traditions, which will be discussed next.

**Objective vs. subjective wellbeing**

The literature on wellbeing has branched off into two streams of thought, which can be defined and measured objectively or subjectively. It is assumed that objective wellbeing is the extent to which individual preferences, such as money, are satisfied (Dolan et al., 2008). Objective measures of wellbeing are often used because it is believed that they are observable and can be empirically verified. However, Forgeard, Jayawickreme, Kern, and Seligman (2011) laid out three compelling arguments for the use of subjective rather than objective measures of wellbeing. First, the most fundamental argument for subjective measures of wellbeing is that the specific meaning of objective indicators may vary across societies and cultures, thus creating
confusion to the argument that objective variables are observable. Second, it is not intuitively clear as to what dimensions represent important dimensions of overall wellbeing (Forgeard et al., 2011). Finally, it is evident that wellbeing is rooted in values dictated by social indicators (Forgeard et al., 2011). The purpose of subjective wellbeing is for the individual to measure how they are feeling for themselves (Deci & Ryan, 2008).

**Eudaimonic vs. hedonic wellbeing**

Literature on wellbeing has also been thought of from two different traditions. The hedonic view of wellbeing is associated with the idea of pleasure (Deci & Ryan, 2008). Pleasure can be measured by happiness, the presence of positive affect, and the absence of negative affect. The hedonic view has often been paired with the subjective wellbeing stream of thought (Ryan & Deci, 2001). The eudaimonic view of wellbeing refers to living life in a full and satisfying way (Waterman, 1993). Where hedonic wellbeing has traditionally been associated with subjective wellbeing, the eudaimonic view has traditionally been associated with psychological wellbeing (Deci & Ryan, 2008). Empirical research on wellbeing is beginning to address the need to integrate these different traditions (Forgeard et al., 2011) in order to address the complex nature of measuring wellbeing across groups of people.

**Measuring wellbeing**

Keyes (2002) defined wellbeing as positive symptoms which reflect positive feelings about life. Keyes (2002) argued that flourishing is a more complex idea than subjective emotions of well-being. There is also a component of functioning well in
relation to one’s environment, which includes social challenges and tasks. Keyes’s (2002) idea that feelings and functioning are both needed for positive mental health has become a widely recognized aspect of flourishing and appears throughout other flourishing models. Keyes (2002) developed the Mental Health Continuum Short Form (MHC-SF) as a self-reported questionnaire designed to assess positive mental health (Petrillo, Capone, Caso, & Keyes, 2015). The MHC-SF is a 14-item assessment measuring three components of mental health: emotional, social, and psychological well-being. The MHC-SF assessment is the most internally consistent measure to-date when assessing across cultures (Perugini, de la Iglesias, Solano, & Keyes, 2017).

Huppert and So (2009) concurred with Keyes’s operationalization of flourishing as a feeling of internal wellbeing combined with effective functioning. Building on a converse application of mental health disorders as Keyes (2002) did, Huppert and So (2009) identified three factors comprised of 10 positive “symptoms” of flourishing, which represent positive equivalents to symptoms of anxiety and depression: positive characteristics (comprising emotional stability, vitality, optimism, resilience, and self-esteem), positive functioning (comprising engagement, competence, meaning, and positive relationships), and positive appraisal (comprising life satisfaction and positive emotion). While internal consistency has been found in relatively homogenous groups of people, little validation has occurred outside of Europe.
Diener et al. (2010) developed the eight-item Flourishing Scale (FS) as a brief summary measure of psychological functioning, designed to complement other measures of subjective wellbeing. The eight-item scale combines dimensions of wellbeing (Ryff, 1989; Ryan & Deci, 2001) that are important for positive functioning and that have also been shown to contribute to wellbeing. One of the major pitfalls of the FS is the attempt to tabulate a self-reported functioning into a single psychological well-being (PWB) score. Similar to MHC-SF, important information can be discarded when it is not adequately addressed individually.

Extending the work of Seligman (2011), Butler and Kern (2016) developed and validated the PERMA-Profiler as a brief assessment of the PERMA model. The 23-item measure includes three items tapping each domain, an overall wellbeing question, and additional filler items assessing negative emotion, physical health, and loneliness. The measure asks about wellbeing in general. The measure provides a brief, easily proctored self-assessed questionnaire that allows analysis by dimension rather than an aggregate score.

All four models suggest that the promotion of wellbeing will have a greater impact on someone’s mental health than a focus on a reduction of symptoms. Furthermore, flourishing has been linked to self-esteem, emotional self-efficacy, and affects balance on happiness (Dogan, Totan, & Sapmaz, 2013). Other positive outcomes associated with flourishing include effective learning, productivity and creativity,
good relationships, pro-social behavior, good health, and high life expectancy (Huppert & So, 2009).

Each of these models and measures have been used in the context of individual flourishing in life overall, which combines home, work, and other domains of a person’s life, rather than being context-specific. Table 2 summarizes the different measures discussed in this chapter.

**Table 2. Measures of Wellbeing**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Number of Items</th>
<th>Dimensions</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Keyes (2002)</td>
<td>MHC-SF</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Emotional</td>
<td>Social</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Psychological Well-Being</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huppert &amp; So (2009)</td>
<td>Flourishing Across Europe</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Positive characteristics</td>
<td>Positive functioning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Positive appraisal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deiner et al. (2010)</td>
<td>Flourishing Scale</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Feelings</td>
<td>Positive thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Psychological Well-Being</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kern &amp; Butler (2016)</td>
<td>PERMA-Profiler</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Positive Emotion</td>
<td>Engagement Relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Meaning</td>
<td>Accomplishment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Gaps in the Literature**

Despite evidence that demonstrates some correlation between servant leadership and wellbeing (van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2011; Panaccio, Henderson, Liden, Wayne, & Cao, 2015; Parris & Peachey, 2013), a comprehensive literature review did not find any studies that specifically examined dimensions of servant leadership defined by Barbuto and Wheeler (2006) and dimensions of wellbeing defined by Butler and Kern (2016). Therefore, the findings generated from this research will help extend scholarly understanding of the correlation between both theories.

Sufficient information in the literature regarding how servant leaders influence follower wellbeing is lacking. A leader who makes decisions that values all stakeholders by first embracing followers as distinct individuals with unique strengths is primed to navigate the organizational paradox of short-term fiscal goals with the long-term wellbeing of individuals (van Dierendonck & Patterson, 2010). Defining the practices that a leader engages in order to successfully address these paradoxes will be explored through qualitative methods of inquiry.

Coming to a consensus on a consistent set of operational dimensions of servant leadership has eluded scholars for the last 40 years (van Dierendonck, 2011). The existing quantitative studies use different conceptualizations across a broad array of contexts (Parris & Peachey, 2013). Much of the scholarly research to date has focused on the development of theoretical constructs and instruments to measure servant
leadership (Blanch, Gil, Antino, & Rodríguez-Muñoz, 2016). This opened the door for further researchers to contribute to the literature through empirical studies.

Scholars have suggested that one need for future empirical studies includes the link between servant leadership and wellbeing (Parris & Peachey, 2013).

Like servant leadership, there are different views on what constitutes wellbeing and how it is achieved (Dodge, Daly, Huyton, & Sanders, 2012). The PERMA construct put forth by Seligman (2011) has influenced scholarly understanding of how people create and sustain their own wellbeing (McQuaid & Kern, 2017). Research suggests that one approach to positively effecting individual wellbeing in organizations is to focus on the leader-follower dyad. This study will use a concurrent mixed methods approach to examine what dimensions of servant leadership and wellbeing exist while exploring the leadership processes that influence these outcomes.
Chapter 3: Methodology

This chapter outlines the methodology used in this research study and provides detailed information about the research questions, design, the setting and participants, data collection procedures, and the coding process.

Definition

The purpose of this study was to explore how business leaders influence the wellbeing of individuals working in a for-profit organization (FPO). In academic research, the research question identifies the problem the researcher intends to investigate (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2006). Bryman (2007) wrote that the research question plays a pivotal role in social science research as a crucial point of orientation for the entire study that links the review of the literature to the method of data collection. This study employed a concurrent, or convergent, mixed methods research (MMR) approach to identify components of the two research variables while exploring the phenomena more deeply through semi-structured interviews with individuals from the same sample population.

Quantitative measures included two survey instruments and a demographic form. The first instrument was used to collect information about servant leadership dimensions exhibited by leaders. The second instrument was used to gather self-assessed scores of subjective wellbeing. Qualitative information was gathered using semi-structured interviews.
Research Approach

This study used a mixed methods design to collect survey and interview data pertaining to the research questions that drove this study. Creswell (2014) described MMR as the “combining, or integration, of both quantitative and qualitative data in a research study” (p. 14). While there are multiple ways to go about combining quantitative and qualitative data for MMR, this study uses a convergent data collection strategy characterized by two distinct phases. Error! Reference source not found. illustrates the conceptual flow of the research study. One phase consisted of quantitative data collection and the other phase consisted of qualitative data collection. Quantitative data were collected simultaneously but independently of the qualitative data. One set of data did not influence the other.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase 1 – Quantitative Data:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st section – Demographic form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd section – SLQ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd section – PERMA-P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Surveys collected via paper copy and SurveyMonkey.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase 2 – Qualitative Data:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Semi-structured interviews</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Analysis

Figure 1. Research Approach
A correlational analysis of the aggregated results from both survey instruments was conducted. Quantitative results supported the researcher in making reliable claims about significant relationships that exist between the two variables. Leavy (2017) pointed out that by integrating quantitative data with qualitative data, mixed methods researchers seek a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomena being investigated. In order to strengthen the analysis of the quantitative data, all of the leaders from the participant population were invited to participate in the qualitative phase by participating in a semi-structured interview.

This study used nine interviews collected from leaders within the sample population. The questions used for the face-to-face interviews were written from an Appreciative Inquiry (AI) perspective (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987). Appendix E: Interview Guide lists the questions asked of the participants during the interview.

Interestingly, five different levels of organizational hierarchy are represented in this group of leaders. This represents all the levels of leadership within the sample group. A common theme among all the interview participants was a fondness for the subject of leadership. The researcher believes that this alignment between research topic and the interest of the participants motivated individuals to participate, which aided in the scheduling and completion of the interviews in a timely manner. Understanding the outcomes fundamental to this study are better understood through a social constructivist framework.
Research Framework
The framework for this study was motivated by a social constructivist perspective. Creswell (2014) identified a social constructivist worldview as one that believes individuals construct meaning through their experiences. A social constructivist perspective provides a strong link between theory and the practical application of interpersonal relationships. This is a relevant worldview in modern organizations because of the influence the leader has in changing the paradigm that wellbeing must be sacrificed in the name of fiscal goals. A social constructivist perspective offers the potential that corporate profits and individual wellbeing can co-exist and flourish in an FPO.

Researchers in the constructivist paradigm “examine how people engage in processes of constructing and reconstructing meaning through daily interactions” (Leavy, 2017, p. 129). The leadership team that participated in this study makes the social constructivist framework ideal for exploring leader-follower relationships for two reasons. First, each one of these leaders works in an operations environment that involves consistent daily interactions with direct reports. Second, working in a global, publicly traded company, FPO leaders must interact with a workforce while being accountable for fiscal success. An operations environment made up of multiple levels of hierarchy and dependent on multiple stakeholder groups offers a rich array of perspectives.
Research Questions and Hypothesis

To better understand the influence leaders have on follower wellbeing, two types of research questions guided the mixed-methods study. From a quantitative perspective, this study addressed the following questions:

- Is there a relationship that exists between follower notions of servant leadership and their own subjective wellbeing?
- What specific dimensions of servant leadership flourish in an FPO?
- What specific dimensions of wellbeing flourish in an FPO?

The following hypothesis guided the quantitative phase of this study:

- Hypothesis: There will be a positive relationship between leaders who exhibit dimensions of servant leadership and followers who report high levels of individual flourishing.

The following research questions guided the qualitative perspective:

- How do leaders use skills, traits, or behaviors to influence wellbeing in followers working in an FPO?
- What are the conditions that allow this positive relationship to flourish in a work environment focused on fiscal goals?

Setting and Participants

The setting for this study was the North American operations of a global, multinational corporation. This publicly traded company has been experiencing significant growth year-over-year for the last eight years. For the purposes of this study, the Legal and the Human Resource (HR) departments requested that the
researcher protect the identity of the company. Therefore, no more information will be provided that may reveal the identity of the company. For reasons of anonymity, the researcher will refer to the participant company as Global Manufacturing Corporation, a pseudonym intended to aid in the readability of the remaining chapters.

The specific business unit involved in this study is the logistics and distribution-based segment of the company located in the Midwestern portion of the United States. This particular business unit was chosen for multiple reasons. First, and most importantly, this business unit is primarily an operations group with a diverse range of job titles from hourly employee up to and including the Chief Operating Officer (COO). Because of the nature of the relationships in operations environments, namely the divide between management and hourly employees, this setting lends itself to extensive examples of leadership experience. Second, being a business unit in a rapidly growing supply chain, this group is subjected to constant change, strengthening the richness of the data in terms of challenging leadership experiences. Third, this business unit was chosen because it is a good representation of the participant company as well as a good representation of a typical operation found throughout the distribution and logistics industry. Finally, being an employee of Global Manufacturing Corporation, the researcher had the approval and support of the business unit leaders.
Based on this criterion, the study focused on facilities that contained warehousing and distribution operations as well as logistics responsibilities (i.e., transportation). This included approximately 150 hourly employees and 15 members of management located in six different physical locations. The participating business segment of Global Manufacturing Corporation averaged 10 direct reports per leader, ensuring each leader that participated in the qualitative interview had relevant experience to draw from.

**Sampling Procedures**

Sampling procedures included the recruitment of individuals to participate in the survey from a follower perspective as well as in-person recruitment of individuals to participate in semi-structured interviews from a leadership perspective. The researcher used knowledge of the organization and permission from senior leaders to collaborate directly with leaders within the participating business segment to develop a strategy and execute the collection of data. This strategy involved the researcher reaching out directly to frontline leaders and coordinating a time to physically come to each facility to pass out the survey. In order to gain agreement from hourly employees, the researcher and the frontline supervisor introduced the surveys as a team. Envelopes were provided to each frontline supervisor to collect completed surveys. The researcher drove to each location every day to collect envelopes with surveys and drop off new envelopes.
The investigator used knowledge of the organization to reach out directly to individuals to invite them to participate in leader interviews. Criteria as to whom would be invited to participate in the qualitative phase was based on who held formal management titles within the distribution and logistics segment of Global Manufacturing Corporation. Formal management titles within Global Manufacturing Corporation included supervisor, manager, director, vice-president, and chief executive. Due to the hierarchical nature of the business unit, it was necessary to ask certain individuals to participate from both perspectives (as a formal leader could also be a follower in certain scenarios).

Followers

At the recommendation and request of the company’s Human Resources department, followers were recruited in person rather than through company email. In-person recruitment was vital to gaining follower agreement for a few reasons. First, hourly employees, a significant majority of the target population, generally did not have company sponsored email accounts. Second, a better participation rate was expected with a personal introduction. Third, senior leaders of Global Manufacturing Corporation did not want participants to perceive the company as the sponsor of this study. Therefore, no company resources, like community computers in the break room, were allocated for use in the online survey. A link to the online survey was communicated in the introduction of the paper version and participants were invited to participate online when they were not at work. It was orally communicated to each
potential participant during the introduction meeting to complete the entire survey one time, either the paper version or the online version.

Followers were invited to participate in the survey during a regularly scheduled face-to-face meeting hosted by supervisors. This meeting was part of the daily routines where supervisors meet with their direct reports before the start of their respective shifts. Jointly, the supervisors and investigator introduced the survey, distributed paper copies, and asked for their participation. The leader of the meeting and the investigator distributed paper copies of the survey and verbally introduced the survey (Appendix A: Survey Introduction). The paper copy included an introduction and instructions for completing the survey, the Servant Leadership Questionnaire (SLQ) (Appendix B: Servant Leadership Questionnaire), and the Workplace PERMA-Profiler (Appendix C: Workplace PERMA-Profiler). Finally, at the shift meetings, the investigator verbally reiterated that this project was not sponsored by the company, that participation in the study was completely voluntary, and that in no way did participation influence their status with the company.

The introduction page included information about the general purpose of the study, a description of the steps taken to ensure confidentiality of the participants, the general procedure of the study, the instructions for consent, and a link to the online version of the survey. The online version of the survey was hosted by the website SurveyMonkey (www.surveymonkey.com).
Leaders
Leaders were recruited to participate in semi-structured interviews from a leadership perspective through personal conversations with eligible participants. Eligibility was determined by those holding management titles working in the distribution and logistics business units. The investigator used personal knowledge of the organization to identify and ask individuals if they were interested in participating in the study. This conversation was done in person or over the phone. Upon agreement from the individual participant, a meeting was scheduled and conducted at a time and place of the participants choosing. This was done to prevent any potential conflict with company duties. Seven participants asked to conduct the interviews in their offices prior to the start of the day, and two participants chose to meet at offsite locations.

Quantitative Data Collection
Survey research was the type of quantitative data collection used in this study. Creswell (2014) identified a survey design as a “quantitative or numeric description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population that studies a sample of that population” (p. 155). The two variables of the study were servant leadership and workplace wellbeing. The survey instrument used to measure servant leadership dimensions was Barbuto and Wheeler’s (2006) Servant Leadership Questionnaire (Appendix B). Wellbeing was measured using Butler and Kern’s (2016) PERMA-Profiler (Appendix C). Demographic data (Appendix D: Demographic Form) was collected from followers.
**Servant leadership**
As mentioned in Chapter 2, there are multiple constructs that measure dimensions of servant leadership. Barbuto and Wheeler’s (2006) SLQ was chosen for this study for two reasons. First, other academic research studies, including doctoral dissertations, have shown the SLQ to be a valid and reliable instrument for five dimensions of servant leadership. Second, the dimensions represented in the SLQ stem from the seminal works of Greenleaf (1977) and Spears (1995). Building on the foundations of theory using valid and reliable instruments is important to the goal of perpetuating a consistent definition of servant leadership theory. Third, the SLQ is a rater assessment that measures follower’s perceptions of servant leadership dimensions. Measuring the follower’s perceptions of leadership characteristics at the same time that they assess their own wellbeing strengthens correlational validity of the overall project.

The SLQ (Appendix B: Servant Leadership Questionnaire) is a 23-item questionnaire that measures five dimensions of servant leadership: altruistic calling, emotional healing, wisdom, persuasive mapping, and organizational stewardship. The SLQ is administered as a 10-point Likert scale and takes approximately three minutes to complete.

**Wellbeing**
The Workplace PERMA-Profiler survey instrument (Appendix C: Workplace PERMA-Profiler) was used to measure wellbeing. Building on Seligman’s (2011) construct of flourishing, the PERMA-Profiler was developed to measure subjective
notions of individual wellbeing. The PERMA-Profiler measures the five dimensions of positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishment. The workplace variation of the PERMA-Profiler rewords the items to fit a workplace context and adds the dimension of health. At the request of the participant company’s legal department, the investigator was required to remove questions that inquired about employees’ physical health due to Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) requirements.

The PERMA-Profiler takes a dashboard approach to measuring wellbeing dimensions. This allows the participant to obtain separate quantifiable results on each of the domains as well as an overall wellbeing score. This is important because it allows the researcher to focus an analysis on a specific dimension as opposed to an aggregate wellbeing score. By focusing the correlational analysis on individual dimensions of servant leadership and individual dimensions of wellbeing, the investigator can explore specific dimensions of each variable that demonstrate the strongest relationship.

**Demographic data collection**
All individuals who participated in the survey were asked to complete a demographic form (Appendix D: Demographic Form) created by the researcher. Individuals reported on their title, their experience with the company, and their tenure as a leader. The demographic form was included in both the online survey and the paper copy and was collected before starting the SLQ. Demographic data were collected in order to
identify any trends associated with the findings and will be discussed in the next chapter.

**Qualitative Data Collection**

To better understand how leaders act to meet workplace challenges, all leaders within the population group were asked to participate in one-hour face-to-face interviews. Fifteen individuals were identified as meeting the criteria of a leader. All 15 individuals were asked to participate by the researcher through a phone call or in-person. Sixty percent of eligible leaders—9 out of 15—agreed to participate. This group consisted of three supervisors, two managers, two directors, a vice-president, and a Chief Operating Officer (COO). To respect the confidentiality of the participants, all identifying information was removed from the coding process.

**Interviews**

The investigator used semi-structured, open-ended interview questions (Appendix E: Interview Guide) during the one-on-one interviews. The interview questions were developed using the Appreciative Inquiry (AI) style of questioning. Barrett and Fry (2008) defined AI as “a strength-based, capacity building approach to transforming human systems toward a shared image of their most positive potential by first discovering the very best in their shared experience” (p. 13). The purpose of these semi-structured, AI-interview questions was to bring out positive stories of servant leadership in the workplace using the participants’ own experiences and language. The interviews were recorded using an audio recording device and were transcribed prior to coding.
Data Analysis Procedures

Quantitative data analysis
In total, 46 surveys were completed—25 surveys were completed online and 21 surveys were completed by paper. Scores from the online survey and paper surveys were consolidated and downloaded into an Excel spreadsheet. Next, the results for each participant were calculated by servant leader domain and wellbeing domain. Finally, the results were uploaded into SPSS for Windows (version 24.0) where Pearson correlation tests were used to assess the hypothesized relationships. The level of significance was set at 0.05. An alpha of .05 is often recognized as the cutoff for significance in quantitative analysis (Holcomb, 2016). To integrate the quantitative and qualitative data, the study used a concurrent mixed methods approach.

Qualitative data analysis
Quantitative surveys were administered for two reasons: (a) to identify if a strong and significant relationship exists between the two variables and (b) to focus the discussion of the study by identifying which specific dimensions are significantly correlated. Qualitative interviews were administered to gain a deeper understanding of themes experienced by individuals living and working within the phenomena.

The interviews were initially coded and analyzed to generate grounded theory. Strauss and Corbin (1994) identified grounded theory as a general methodology for developing theory that is grounded in data systemically collected and analyzed. Creswell (2013) elaborated that grounded theory is “a qualitative research design in
which the inquirer generates a general explanation of a process, an action, or an interaction shaped by the views of a large number of participants” (p. 83). The researcher identified themes from codes pulled directly from the transcribed interviews, allowing theory to be developed from the exact language used by the interviewees.

**Coding**
The interviews were transcribed and downloaded into Atlas.ti software for coding. Atlas.ti is a qualitative data analysis software package used to aid in coding, retrieval of data, development of categories, and analysis of conceptual relationships (Woods, Paulus, Atkins, & Macklin, 2016). Creswell (2013) defined coding as a process which aggregates text or visual data into small categories of information by assigning a label to the code. Line by line, in vivo coding was used to develop first order codes. In vivo coding is described by Charmaz (2014) as codes that researchers adopt directly from the data, such as telling statements they discover in interviews, documents, and the everyday language used in the studied environment. In vivo coding for this study generated 222 first-order codes. Table 3 represents a list of exemplar first-order codes while Appendix G: 1st Order Code lists all 222 first-order codes identified during the data analysis phase of this study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3. First-Order Code Exemplars</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>First-Order Codes</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to read people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Able to articulate concept</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### First-Order Codes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Authentic dialogue</td>
<td>Leader stays in touch, continues to mentor follower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better attitude</td>
<td>Leader talks to peers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better interdepartmental relationships</td>
<td>Leaders drive the work culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better leader-follower relationship</td>
<td>Leaders maintain consistency of character</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boost morale</td>
<td>Learn by observation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cares about follower</td>
<td>Learn from failure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicate expectations</td>
<td>Let follower learn process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicate goals</td>
<td>Listening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company benefits</td>
<td>Manage competing interests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comradery</td>
<td>Meaning in work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confidence</td>
<td>Motivate follower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee opens up</td>
<td>Move followers around</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empowered to make decision</td>
<td>Not failing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engaged followers</td>
<td>Not wasting time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engaged individuals create results</td>
<td>Open dialogue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engaging person in the moment</td>
<td>Organizational results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience strengthens teams performance</td>
<td>Other Outcome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explain rationale, provide context</td>
<td>Patience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairness</td>
<td>Positive morale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fights hard for the employee</td>
<td>Positive relationship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focused worker</td>
<td>Pride in follower's success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow up</td>
<td>Promotions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follower agreement</td>
<td>Put your best foot forward.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follower empowered</td>
<td>Puts follower's mind at ease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follower feels better about work</td>
<td>Reassure follower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follower feels like they're cared about</td>
<td>Reduce naysayers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First-Order Codes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follower finds meaning in his work</td>
<td>Reduction in errors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follower growth</td>
<td>Reduction of stress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follower growth ahead of leader's needs</td>
<td>Reinforcing follower value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follower is given voice</td>
<td>Relationship building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follower is motivated</td>
<td>Removes defensiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follower is prepared</td>
<td>Respect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follower opens up to leader</td>
<td>Review followers work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follower passes on knowledge</td>
<td>Roll up sleeves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follower promoted</td>
<td>See follower's potential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follower strengths influence decision making</td>
<td>Self-reflection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follower success is leader success.</td>
<td>Sense of all in it together</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follower trust leader</td>
<td>Share reason for a change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Followers felt listened to</td>
<td>Share vision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Followers open up to him, respect him more</td>
<td>Start conversations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Followers success</td>
<td>Success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frame situations for perspective</td>
<td>Teaming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom to engage followers</td>
<td>Took employee under wing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gained support from organization</td>
<td>Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Give constructive feedback</td>
<td>Trusting relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater sense of follower worth</td>
<td>Turn fear to adrenaline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Happier follower</td>
<td>Utilized network for employee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Happier leader</td>
<td>Values trickle down from the top</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Happier workforce</td>
<td>Visualize self in others shoes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help follower recognize strengths</td>
<td>Walk around to talk to people</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Initially, the open coding process resulted in 239 first-order codes. The total number of first-order codes was narrowed down to the 222 by looking for similarities and relationships and eliminating duplicate codes. Once a clearer view of the codes emerged, they were clustered into meaningful code families. With a focused set of codes, the axial coding process was employed allowing the identification of 19 themes, which will be discussed in Chapter 4.

**Strategies for validating findings**

It is the responsibility of the researcher to present a clear and convincing argument to the study’s audience by ensuring the study is credible and reliable. “Validity in academic research is achieved when a measure is proven to be tapping into what we think it is tapping into and reliability refers to the consistency of the results” (Leavy, 2017, p. 113). Yin (2014) cited four common tests for judging quality research: *construct validity, internal validity, external validity, and reliability.*

**Reliability**

Rudestam and Newton (2015) identified the term *reliability* as the replicability of a study under similar circumstances. A study is reliable when a different researcher, unassociated with the original study, could deploy the same procedures and come up with similar results. When results are reliable, it means a researcher can depend on the procedures to minimize errors and bias.

Qualitatively, three factors helped ensure reliability of the study. First, an interview guide was developed and followed for every interview. The interview guide ensured
the researcher was consistent in questioning across interviews, but also served as a tool that can be utilized to replicate the study. The guide includes an introduction to the topic, the interview process, and the specific questions used across all interviews. Second, all interviews used in the study were tape-recorded for accuracy. Third, a professional third party transcribed the audio recordings in preparation for coding.

Validity
Internal validity is the strength of a cause-effect link made by showing the absence of spurious relationships (Yin, 2014) and the rejection of rival hypothesis (Leavy, 2017). In other words, has an unforeseen variable interjected to affect the link between the dependent and independent variables? With the quantitative findings, correlational analysis was used to identify specific dimensions of servant leadership and wellbeing. Both questionnaires present results with a dashboard approach, which allowed for the segregation of results by dimensions opposed to a single score for each variable.

External validity refers to the ability of the research to be generalized by groups outside of those supported by the study (Leavy, 2017). This study converged data from different types of data sources, surveys, and qualitative interview questions in order to identify new ways of looking at the relationship between the variables in question. External validity of this study was strengthened by bringing in external researchers to review the generalizability of codes produced during the analysis phase.
Creswell (2014) described cross-checking as a way for a lead researcher to compare results independently derived from other researchers. Using code-checkers is a method used to support the credibility of qualitative data. The researcher asked two fellow Ph.D. candidates to review first level codes, second order themes, and third level dimensions. The investigator developed and distributed an intercoder agreement (Appendix F: Code-Checker Agreement) to validate consistent themes. Code-checkers were sent an intercoder agreement through email. Follow up conversations and clarifications were conducted through email and in person. General agreement was achieved regarding codes and concepts in the data.

**Ethical Assurances**

As a leader within the participant organization, the researcher needed to reassure participants of a transparent process that avoided unnecessary bias. The researcher took four steps to aid in these assurances. First, the researcher clearly communicated to the participants the purpose and the potential benefits of the study. Second, the procedures of the study, including voluntary participation, confidentiality and withdrawal procedures, were clearly outlined and verbally reiterated prior to the deployment of all data collection procedures. Third, informed consent of each participant was collected prior to collecting both quantitative and qualitative data. Leavy (2017) referred to informed consent as when a participant acknowledges that they understand the possible risks and benefits associated with participation in the research. Fourth, steps were taken to ensure that information obtained from participants in this study will be kept strictly confidential.
Confidentiality of individual participants and the participant company was imperative. Rudestam and Newton (2015) referred to confidentiality as “the treatment of information that a participant has disclosed in a relationship of trust, with the expectation that a participant not be divulged to others without permission in ways that are inconsistent with the understanding of the original disclosure” (p. 319). There were two steps taken to ensure confidentiality. First, no names were asked for in the collection of the quantitative data. Second, data were analyzed on an aggregate level only. Under the confidentiality section of the informed consent, participants were informed that the data may be published or presented at professional conferences, yet their individual identity will not be disclosed.

Maintaining the confidentiality of participants is important, so the files and data pertaining to both quantitative and qualitative phases will be stored on Benedictine University’s campus, locked under Marie Di Virgilio’s (Dissertation Chairperson) supervision. The data will be stored for seven years and then destroyed, according to Institutional Review Board (IRB) guidelines.

**Research Limitations**

This study examined the actions and behaviors of leaders that contribute to the wellbeing of followers in an FPO. In this study, correlation and assessment of servant leadership and wellbeing dimensions were from a small population potentially limiting the generalizability of the results. It is important to understand that any
findings of this study are limited to the distribution and logistics departments of the
participant organization. It is also important to note that the researcher is a member of
the participant organization. This dual role brings a potential for bias to the study,
despite steps taken to separate the study from the organization.

**Summary**
This chapter presented the research approach and methods used for this study on the
relationships between leaders and followers in an FPO. The sections included the
definitions and research approach, research framework, research question and
hypothesis, setting and participants, sampling procedures, quantitative data collection
measures, qualitative data collection measures, data analysis procedures, strategies for
validating findings, ethical assurances, and research limitations.

The primary focus of this research study was to examine the relationships between
leaders exhibiting servant leader characteristic and followers’ perception of their own
wellbeing. The findings gained from this study will potentially contribute to the
general knowledge regarding how servant leaders achieve their ultimate goals of
meeting the needs of followers working in FPOs. The quantitative and qualitative
data analysis will be presented in Chapter 4.
Chapter 4: Findings

This study analyzed the relationship that exists between leaders and followers in a for-profit organization (FPO) and how leaders influence follower wellbeing. This chapter presents an overview of the findings. This chapter will also address the study setting, sampling procedure, and data analysis.

Study Setting
A global manufacturing company was selected as the setting for this study. The focus of the research was narrowed down to the logistics and distribution units located in the Midwestern portion of the United States. Any individual working within the identified business unit was invited to participate in the study.

Sampling Procedure
Between November and December of 2018, approximately 150 people were invited to participate in the study. This group represented various levels of responsibility, from hourly associate up to the Chief Operating Officer (COO). Everyone who participated in the quantitative portion of the study was asked to do so from a follower perspective. The researcher followed up with facility managers on a daily basis to collect paper copies of the survey. The results of the online version were retrieved and downloaded from the SurveyMonkey website one time once the survey was closed.
During this same period, the investigator used personal knowledge of the organization to identify 15 individuals from the sample group who held leadership or management roles for the qualitative portion of this study. These 15 individuals were invited to participate in an interview via a face-to-face conversation or phone call. Once a verbal agreement was obtained, the researcher sent meeting requests to the individuals and asked them to confirm the time and place for the interview. This step was taken to ensure the interviews did not interfere with company duties and that the time and place were convenient to them.

**Quantitative Data Analysis**
This section of Chapter 4 presents the data from the demographic form, the SLQ, and the Workplace PERMA-Profiler. All three sections of the survey were administered at the same time using either the paper copy or the SurveyMonkey online version (https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/89T8RBT). Table 4 represents the ratio of surveys completed by paper or online. Twenty four surveys (52.2%) were completed by paper while 22 surveys (47.8%) were online. The average time spent to complete all three sections was 10 minutes, and all participants completed the survey within two weeks of the initial introduction meeting.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Survey</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paper</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>52.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>47.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Follower demographics**
A total of 49 individuals agreed to participate in the study. Three individuals started taking the online version of the survey but did not complete it. Incomplete survey answers were not included in the final results. Therefore, 46 participants out of a targeted population of 150 individuals resulted in a 31% response rate. While there are no universally agreed upon minimums in terms of response rate for quantitative data, Baruch and Holtom’s (2008) review of scholarly publications suggests average trend for quantitative data collected in organizations at approximately 35%. A 31% response rate was deemed adequate for the purposes of this study. Table 5 lists the demographic characteristics of the followers. Of the participating followers, 32 reported being hourly associates (69.9%). Of the hourly associates, 7 reported other (15.2%). Participants were instructed to write in their response if they chose other, and upon review of those seven responses, the researcher determined all seven answers related to hourly associate positions. The remaining population was represented by 6 supervisors (13.0%), 5 managers (10.9%), 1 director (2.2%), 1 vice-president (2.2%), and one C-level (2.2%).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5. Demographic Data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Title</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice President</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Rank

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C-Level</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Experience With Company

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 1 year</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>21.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 3 years</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>19.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 to 6 years</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>30.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 to 9 years</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>21.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 to 12 years</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 15 years</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Leadership Experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None/NA</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>37.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 1 year</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 3 years</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>19.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 to 6 years</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 to 9 years</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 to 12 years</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 15 years</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### # of Direct Reports

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reports</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None/NA</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 5 people</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 to 10 people</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 to 15 people</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 to 20 people</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 to 25 people</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 25 people</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In terms of experience at the participant company, nearly one-third of the participants have been with the company between 3 and 6 years (30.4%), 10 people reported being at the company less than a year (21.7%), another 10 reported being with the
company between 6 and 9 years (21.7%), 9 reported being employed at the company between 1 and 3 years (19.6%), and 3 had been with the company between 9 and 12 years (6.5%).

In terms of personal leadership experience, regardless of current responsibilities, 17 individuals (37.0%) reported not having any leadership experience whatsoever; 4 individuals (8.7%) reported having less than 1 year of leadership experience; 9 individuals (19.6%) reported having between 1 and 3 years of leadership experience; 5 individuals (10.9%) reported having between 3 and 6 years; 3 individuals (6.5%) reported having 6 to 9 years of leadership experience; 3 individuals (6.5%) reported having 9 to 12 years of leadership experience; and 5 individuals (10.9%) reported having more than 15 years of either leadership or managerial experience.

In terms of leadership experience at the participant company, exactly half of the participants (50.0%) reported not being in a managerial or leadership position. The remainder of the population was represented by 7 individuals (15.2%) who had 1 to 5 direct reports; 5 individuals (10.7%) who had 6 to 10 direct reports, 3 individuals (6.5%) who had 11 to 15 direct reports; 3 individuals (6.5%) who had 16 to 20 direct reports; and 5 individuals (10.7%) who had more than 25 direct reports.

**Follower rated assessment of servant leadership**
The SLQ is a rater-assessed tool used to identify feelings of servant leadership measured by five dimensions: altruistic calling, emotional healing, wisdom,
persuasive mapping, and organizational stewardship. All 46 participants, regardless of leadership responsibilities, were asked to think of a specific leader within their current chain of command as they answered each of the SLQ items. This person did not have to be their direct supervisor, but it had to be someone within the chain of command and of whom they have directly worked with. The participants were instructed to maintain this exemplar throughout the remaining SLQ section. Due to the nature of the organizational hierarchy, it is normal to work with someone multiple layers away in formal hierarchy. For instance, a supervisor often works on teams with directors or vice presidents. Table 6 shows the different titles of leaders reported by followers during the SLQ portion of the survey.

The results of this demographic data help support the importance of the leader-follower relationship. Interestingly, 24 individuals (52.2%) reported thinking of a supervisor when asked questions about servant leadership while 25 associates (54.4%) completed the SLQ. In the Global Manufacturing Corporation, associates report directly to supervisors. Therefore, the demographic data related to follower and leader titles suggests that a significant portion of the sample group related to their direct supervisor and not someone further up in the chain of command.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 6. Breakdown of Reported Leadership Titles</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SLQ</td>
<td>Supervisor</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>52.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Manager</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>23.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Rank

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Director</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>19.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice-President</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-Level</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Follower self-reported assessment of wellbeing.**

The third and final part of the survey was the Workplace PERMA-Profiler. Each participant self-reported their own level of wellbeing based on the dimensions of positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishment.

**Statistical analysis of hypothesized research questions**

This section presents the data and statistical analysis of the SLQ and the Workplace PERMA-Profiler. The SLQ generated a different score for each one of the five dimensions of servant leadership. The Workplace PERMA-Profiler generated a different score for each one of the five dimensions of wellbeing plus an overall wellbeing score and scores on filler questions such as loneliness, happiness, and negative emotions. Butler and Kern (2016) designed filler questions to disrupt response tendencies as well as add more information related to respondent’s wellbeing. The hypothesized relationship between servant leadership and wellbeing were analyzed using data aggregated by dimension. The research question that drove this study and the corresponding hypothesis were intentionally developed to be broad. This was done by design for two reasons. First, to show evidence that there was a relationship between the two variables within the desired context. Second, due to the
dashboard reporting approach of both measurements, the researcher believed quantitative data would show evidence of strong relationships between specific dimensions. That would allow the researcher to narrow the scope of the analysis down to specific dimensions.

Each participant’s scores were tallied by dimension. Both individual level (scores by dimension) and aggregate level data (overall wellbeing score) were contained in the correlational analysis. Positive and significant correlations were found between dimensions of servant leadership and overall wellbeing supporting the hypothesis that there is a strong relationship between servant leadership and wellbeing (see Table 7).

The two most significant correlations with overall wellbeing at .01 level were wisdom ($r(46) = .476, p = .001$) and persuasive mapping ($r(46) = .476, p = .001$). Emotional healing ($r(46) = .357, p = .016$) and organizational stewardship ($r(46) = .351, p = .018$) resulted in significant correlations at the .05 level.

Table 7 also demonstrates a positive correlation between all five dimensions of servant leadership and happiness. Consistent with the hypothesis that servant leadership positively influences wellbeing, all five dimensions of servant leadership demonstrated an inverse correlation to loneliness and negative emotion.
Table 7. Servant Leadership and Overall Wellbeing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Servant Leadership Dimension</th>
<th>Test Factor</th>
<th>Overall Wellbeing</th>
<th>Happiness</th>
<th>Loneliness</th>
<th>Negative Emotion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Altruistic Calling</td>
<td>Pearson r</td>
<td>.273</td>
<td>.349</td>
<td>-.130</td>
<td>-.330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Significance (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.069</td>
<td>.019</td>
<td>.394</td>
<td>.027</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Healing</td>
<td>Pearson r</td>
<td>.357*</td>
<td>.317*</td>
<td>-.167</td>
<td>-.305*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Significance (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.016</td>
<td>.034</td>
<td>.272</td>
<td>.042</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wisdom</td>
<td>Pearson r</td>
<td>.476**</td>
<td>.512**</td>
<td>-.219</td>
<td>-.478**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Significance (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.148</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persuasive Mapping</td>
<td>Pearson r</td>
<td>.463**</td>
<td>.509**</td>
<td>-.271</td>
<td>-.360*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Significance (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.072</td>
<td>.015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Stewardship</td>
<td>Pearson r</td>
<td>.351*</td>
<td>.432**</td>
<td>-.315*</td>
<td>-.347*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Significance (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.018</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td>.035</td>
<td>.020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8 shows the results of the correlational analysis between the different dimensions. Consistent with the overall wellbeing score, persuasive mapping \( r(46) = .645, p = .000 \) and wisdom \( r(46) = .579, p = .000 \) demonstrated a moderately strong correlation with the wellbeing dimension of positive relationships. However, the findings were not significantly correlated at the either the .01 or .05 level.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Servant Leadership Dimension</th>
<th>Test Factor</th>
<th>Positive Emotion</th>
<th>Engagement</th>
<th>Relationships</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Accomplishment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Altruistic Calling</td>
<td>Pearson $r$</td>
<td>.214</td>
<td>.100</td>
<td>.459**</td>
<td>.120</td>
<td>.198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Significance (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.158</td>
<td>.514</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.434</td>
<td>.192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Healing</td>
<td>Pearson $r$</td>
<td>.342*</td>
<td>.237</td>
<td>.383**</td>
<td>.366*</td>
<td>.287</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Significance (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.022</td>
<td>.116</td>
<td>.009</td>
<td>.014</td>
<td>.056</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wisdom</td>
<td>Pearson $r$</td>
<td>.382**</td>
<td>.342*</td>
<td>.579**</td>
<td>.339*</td>
<td>.322*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Significance (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.010</td>
<td>.021</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.023</td>
<td>.031</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persuasive Mapping</td>
<td>Pearson $r$</td>
<td>.398**</td>
<td>.273</td>
<td>.645**</td>
<td>.284</td>
<td>.294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Significance (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.007</td>
<td>.070</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.059</td>
<td>.050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Stewardship</td>
<td>Pearson $r$</td>
<td>.337*</td>
<td>.223</td>
<td>.476**</td>
<td>.220</td>
<td>.283</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Significance (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.023</td>
<td>.141</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.146</td>
<td>.060</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
While other correlations between the two variables demonstrated direct relationships, the most consistent stream of data suggests the strongest relationship between wisdom and persuasive mapping on the servant leadership side and positive relationships for wellbeing. Table 9 summarizes the results of the quantitative findings relative to the quantitative research questions and hypothesis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 9. Overall Quantitative Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Results of Hypothesis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hypothesis 1</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strongest Correlations</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Qualitative Data Analysis**

This section presents the findings generated from nine semi-structured interview responses from one business unit. Key themes will be defined, discussed, and summarized with a perspective on the relationship between the themes.

**Key themes**

Four key themes explain how FPO leaders influence follower wellbeing: (a) invests time building relationships; (b) creates environment for authentic dialogue; (c)
demonstrates a caring attitude; and (d) positively influences follower perception. The findings for each of these themes are discussed next.

**Invests time in building relationships**
According to the data, servant leaders take time for the explicit purpose of spending it with followers to develop relationships with them. For the theme *invests time in building relationships*, 41 first-order codes were identified through the open coding process. After reviewing the first-order codes for similarities and differences, the investigator was able to reduce 41 first-order codes down to 22 first-order concepts. Axial coding identified three second-order themes that demonstrate how servant leaders invest time in relationships. These themes include (a) taking time for the explicit purpose of talking to followers, (b) making time to work alongside a follower, and (c) building relationships. **Error! Reference source not found.** represents the data structure for investing time in building relationships and illustrates the connections between first-order codes and second-order themes.
Figure 2. Invests Time in Building Relationships Theme
The data suggesting that servant leaders invest time in relationships were prevalent across all of the interviews. The data points show that servant leaders do this by making time to work alongside followers as well as making time for the explicit purpose of talking to followers. Leaders at all levels spoke explicitly about the necessity to prioritize the development of personal relationships. The following quotation represents the sentiment found throughout the data that suggests the most fundamental aspect of leadership is the relationships formed between individuals:

A successful leader has to understand it's not about, necessarily, at the end of the day, completely the bottom line. It's not, necessarily, at the end of the day, making the numbers, making those truck loads go out. That is obviously very, very important. But a leader, in my mind, also has to have the focus that we're not dealing with computers, we're dealing with humans. And to be successful in leadership, you always have to have that kind of look if you will, in matter of the way that you lead the people. They're not all just wind-up robots. You have to deal with this nature of leadership. You have to, right, wrong or indifferent, convenient or not, you have to, at times, jump in there and stir that pot. And not only stir it, but protect it. (Participant #5, Interview, 2017)

This quotation suggests that in a business environment the responsibility to initiate the relational effort often falls to the leader. This is done without sacrificing the performance goals of the business. The data revealed examples of how leaders can invest their own time in initiating and developing positive relationships with followers.
Make time for the sole purpose of talking to followers
Evident throughout the interview data were examples of leaders choosing to spend
time interacting with followers with the primary intent on developing a personal
relationship with individuals.

I do truly try to get to know all of my employees, and not even just my
direct reports, but those employees below me. I take the time to go and
walk with them by myself just so that they get that feeling of getting to
know me as well as me getting to know them a little bit more, because
I think that helps when you develop a little bit of that personal, one-on-
one relationship with a person, not just that it's all about business and
nothing else. (Participant #4, Interview, 2017)

There was no set pattern for these conversations, just leaders showing genuine and
organic interest in the lives of followers. One leader described making a point every
Monday to walk around on the warehouse floor simply making small talk: “But I
think it’s personal relationships, like talking to the people and asking ‘em about their
day, asking ‘em how their weekends were” (Participant #1, Interview, 2017). The
goal of these actions is to lay the ground work for sustainable positive relationships
with followers.

This leader went on to say that, “by talking to people and relating to them, I can
understand where they’re coming from and maybe help them do better and help them
either want to do better or enjoy more of what they’re doing” (Participant #1,
Interview, 2017). The mediating factor between the action and outcome was
described as trust between leader and follower:
Just knowing the people who I work with and working with day in and day out. I think we also built a type of trust to where they know, if any of us are doing anything it's for the benefit of the company and the greater good. It's something that's gonna be a positive outcome. (Participant #8, Interview, 2017)

By initiating personal relationships with followers, leaders are able to lay the groundwork for being able to understand the needs of followers. This results in positive relationships mediated by a factor of trust.

Make time to work with follower
This was a consistent theme throughout the data that leaders seem particularly proud of. In an operations environment, like a distribution center, leaders described a desire to create bonding experiences with direct reports by working one-on-one with a follower:

But being a good leader isn't just knowing the business. It's being able to develop relationships with people. And that's kind of the thing that you always gain when you're working with somebody one-on-one or you have those personal experiences with those persons or you build a better relationship with them. (Participant #2, Interview, 2017)

By going through the exercise of working alongside a follower, a leader not only develops their own conceptual understanding of the workplace landscape, but they physically demonstrate that they understand the challenges faced by followers.

I think having the experiences is really a critical thing and you have to kinda go through 'em yourself. Unless you go through it yourself as a leader, it’s very difficult to go ask the team that you’re leading to go do what you’re asking to do, unless you’ve experienced it yourself. Or, if you haven’t experienced it yourself, that you’re willing to roll up
your sleeves and go learn it with them. (Participant #9, Interview, 2017)

This quotation represents a popular idea found throughout the data—that leaders can demonstrate and earn respect by getting out from their desks and going onto the floor of an operation to do challenging or unpopular tasks alongside their people. One leader describes the outcome of such leadership actions: “If you're not willing to go do that and you wanna manage from your office or from your desk, it doesn't work. It's just, you're not gonna gain their respect and people will respect you more” (Participant #5, Interview, 2017).

Relationship building
One leader described the ability to delegate routine tasks as an effective way to build positive relationships in two ways:

It frees you up to go around and talk to the employees, engage with them in that respect, talk to them a little more, but it also gets them by delegating these tasks to them, instead of me interfacing with them, it's now their co-workers interfacing with them, and it gets them to work a little bit more as a team. (Participant #1, Interview, 2017)

This quotation demonstrates that delegation not only frees the leader to go around talking to people, but it gets followers interacting and working together to form more effective teams and more effective follower-to-follower relationships in the process.

Create environment for authentic dialogue
Open coding identified 53 first-order codes from the transcripts. After reviewing the first-order codes for similarities and differences, the investigator was able to reduce
53 first-order codes down to 27 first-order concepts. Axial coding identified three second-order themes that encompass how servant leaders generate open dialogue with followers. Finally, through the process of selective coding, a dimensional theme emerged that demonstrates how servant leaders create authentic dialogue. These themes include (a) empowering follower voices, (b) communicating for transparency, and (c) having an ability to articulate why. Figure 3 on the following page represents the data structure that creates an environment for authentic dialogue and illustrates the connections between first-order codes and second-order themes.
The data suggest that servant leaders aim to empower follower voices by creating an environment where followers not only feel free to speak candidly, but they will feel
heard as well. Leaders contribute to the open dialogue by sharing their rationale for decisions and articulating expectations for accomplishing tasks. Many of the interviewees describe a process they called active listening. One interviewee described active listening as a characteristic that contributes to employee flourishing:

It's actually listening to the employees now. There’s a difference between listening and then going, “Yeah. Okay, get back to work.” And then there's active listening, where I’m sitting down and I’m engaging the employee, and I’m challenging, “Okay. If we did that, what would be the outcome of that?” And they’d go, “Well, I haven’t really thought about that.” It’s showing them that their voice matters. (Participant #2, Interview, 2017)

The most important part of active listening is for the leader to demonstrate that they are engaged with what the follower is saying. The data suggest that these actions can take on many forms. Whether or not a leader was able to give the follower exactly what they want was not as important as the act of following up the follower’s request with an explanation of the leader’s action. One leader described this active process in the following way:

I have a little rock on my desk that says, “Two ears, one mouth. Use the ears more.” And so that's the biggest thing, is being able to say that, “Okay, I'm actually actively open to listening.” But I'll also be very blunt. If there is something that somebody's telling me that I just cannot make happen, I'll tell 'em, “I can't make it happen.” I'll tell 'em why, but I'll also make sure they know I heard them. “I heard you, I understand that this is a frustration or a roadblock that you feel like you can't get around, but I can't move it out of the way.” (Participant #4, Interview, 2017)
The data suggest that complimenting an active listening process, the leader has a responsibility to start conversations, provide followers the opportunity to ask questions, and engage the follower during the conversation.

Communicate for transparency
Servant leaders in an FPO can demonstrate transparent communication through the acts of visioning and setting expectations, pulling people aside to have difficult conversations, and giving constructive feedback. One interviewee summed it up with this quotation:

The other day, we were loading a truck for a customer. I was sitting down, I saw a pallet that's being loaded and I saw some crushed cases on the pallets. I said to the loader, I said, "Hey, can you stop loading that really quick?" And I asked my lead, I said, "Rico, what do you see wrong with that right now?" And he's like, "What's wrong with it?" I'm like, "You don't see those two crushed cases on there? You don't see the box that's ripped open? You really want our customer to get... Yeah, it's not damaged. The product is not damaged, but it's cosmetic damage, right? Do you really want our customer to get crushed cases? That really is a representation of how our company sends product to our customers. How would you appreciate if that was sent to you like that? Would you be upset? If you got a UPS box that you ordered that was crushed, would you be upset or would you call up UPS, and maybe call up the company and ask them to send you a new product?"
"I'd probably be upset." "So why would we send a product like that to our customer? (Participant #2, Interview, 2017)

This quotation represents a consist theme of leaders stopping the follower in the middle of a routine task to in order to set an expectation for improved quality of service. These actions demonstrate coaching behaviors as opposed to telling
behaviors on behalf of the leaders. Throughout the data, leaders described the necessity of addressing situations in the moment. Another leader described the benefit of setting expectations by informally pulling a follower to the side and providing feedback in the moment:

But sometimes just pulling people aside and have an open transparent dialogue around what you seek in the moment. It has to be in the moment, if it's not, then it's not authentic and it's not real, but people will pick up on it. (Participant #9, Interview, 2017)

Authenticity is the result of leaders being able to clearly communicate expectations and being transparent with their intentions.

Able to articulate why Servant leaders are able to provide context, articulate concepts, and often do so while managing competing interests. In the following example, a leader is describing a routine challenge when trying to manage people on multiple shifts:

I think the second shift, 'cause they would come in and like, "Aah, we're coming in to this!", I'm like, "Yeah, but it could've been worse. To them, when they come in sometimes and they see that kinda thing, they're like, "Ah, they didn't do anything on first shift," but it's not true. And that's what... So you have to talk to their supervisor. "Hey, look. These are the things we went through. This is why we left this for you," to help them explain the bigger picture to their guys to keep them motivated [chuckle] 'cause it's not a popular decision to leave a huge jumble of stuff, 'cause it looks bad. 'Cause this is the first thing you see, you don't see the dock; you see all this packaging poured out over the dock. But sometimes this is what you have to do, so that they can focus their labor on getting that out of there. (Participant #1, Interview, 2017)
Often times in a multi-shift environment one shift does not understand or respect the work of the other shift, which can lead to tension between people on different shifts.

In this scenario, the leader is describing a situation where the tension is eased by the leader providing context to individuals on a particular shift.

**Demonstrates a caring attitude**

The data in this study show that servant leaders influence follower wellbeing by creating caring work environments. Open coding identified 56 first-order codes from the transcripts. After reviewing the first-order codes for similarities and differences, the investigator was able to reduce 56 first-order codes down to 28 first-order concepts. Axial coding identified two second-order themes that include (a) contributing to follower development and (b) demonstrating caring actions. Figure 4 on the following page represents the data structure for demonstrating a caring attitude and illustrates the connections between first-order codes and second-order themes.
The data suggest that servant leaders demonstrate caring for followers in two ways. First, they facilitate development opportunities that enable follower growth. Second, leaders take actions that demonstrate to the follower their level of caring. The data suggest that in this workplace environment, when a leader takes interest in the professional development of followers they are in fact demonstrating caring for the follower. One leader describes a situation where a high-visibility project was being
worked on by a follower, but the leader was anxious to get it done in a way that the leader knew would be successful:

What was in their best interest was to learn how to expand their strategic thinking and for me to be patient while they did that, and for them to do the work instead of for me to do the work, which is what we were able to accomplish. And the benefit to that obviously, was that this person now felt a significant degree of greater worth, I would say, more than anything else, but then I would also argue they became more strategically acute, or more strategically capable, because they had to then build a certain section of the business case CAR that they wouldn't have had to, had we not been patient enough to wait. And the section in essence was about futuristic capabilities. So for them to just say, "Hey, I need three more production lines. This is the equipment manufacturer. This is how much they cost. I'm gonna go out and do bids. This is how fast the line would run. This is how long it's gonna take for the machine to be built. I'll bolt them to the floor. We'll start them up. (Participant #6, Interview, 2017)

Instead of telling the follower exactly how to be successful, the leader allowed the follower to do the work themselves. In this quotation, one can see a significant degree of patience on the part of the leader which pays off in a greater sense of worth and strategic development of the follower. This is a scenario where a protégé of the leader is being tasked with a project that is specifically designed to enhance the development of an up-and-comer. The data from this study also show that leaders can create learning opportunities out of routine workplace scenarios. Another leader describes a scenario where an off-hour contingency plan needed to be activated:

I think we all learned from that, I think. From security, personnel, management, the customer. It's just a situation where you can draw from that, and if nothing else, you can make it a training tool or you can make that something that you can speak to... As something that you don't know, but you wanna learn in a different way. You don't
wanna be reactive, you wanna be proactive. So maybe there's things that we should go through... Maybe emergency procedures, protocols. It just helps you build and get stronger and that's just one scenario that we were able to avoid the negative consequence. And we learned something. We took something from it. We all grew. So now if nothing else, you know what to do in an emergency, you know who to contact, you know what should happen, a time frame. So like you asked if anybody benefited, I think we all benefit in a way; the customer, the client, they save money, we save face. Everybody learns in the process, so I think it's something that you can take away something positive from. (Participant #8, Interview, 2017)

While this specific emergency may not happen every day, the need to develop contingency plans in that particular work environment was necessary. This leader highlights the need to take these situations and create learning that benefits all stakeholders.

One way in which servant leaders in an FPO develop follower conceptual ability is to move them around the organization in order to experience more of the organization.

In this quotation, a leader describes being empowered to facilitate this development for their followers:

Understanding and then being able to be in an environment that fosters growth that allows you to take people and put them into different situations or move your assets around so that they can get stronger, not just through training but through actually doing and working with people and stuff. So a lot of flexibility. And there's a lot of people who understand that the more knowledge and training you get typically the better results you yield once you understand how something works. So I just hope they feel they have that opportunity too the same way I feel we have opportunities 'cause I'm definitely able to take advantage of a lot of training, a lot of situational things that I can take and use as training tools or use as something to help build, skill build and just coach, coach the team. (Participant #8, Interview, 2017)
A second way in which a leader contributes to the development of a follower is by empowering them to make their own decisions:

Well, how I get people to care is I allow them to make their own decisions, because that empowers them, right? Yes, I still need to be involved, but at the end of the day, "You know what, Rico, if you wanna re-warehouse something to make it easier on everybody on the floor, let me know about it, but at the end of the day, that's your decision, right? We're adults here. If you're gonna make something... If you're gonna do something that's going to make the company better, it's going to help with the efficiency of the operation, you got my blessing, 100%." And that's how you get people to care, because they're involved in that process. (Participant #2, Interview, 2017)

By involving followers in decisions that impact their workplace, a leader is creating a sense of follower commitment to that workplace. As this quotation suggests, the follower walks away with not only a renewed sense of commitment, but also with a sense that their leader cared about the follower’s voice in decisions that were directly related to the follower.

**Demonstrates caring actions**

The ability to demonstrate care was an important action suggested by all leaders throughout the data. There are three ways in which leaders from this study demonstrated caring actions. First, they routinely followed up with followers:

Employees bring concerns, even if we or I can't fix the problem, I will follow back up with them and say, "Hey man, I totally feel your pain, but this is it right now, we can't do anything." But if there is something that I can change, and it's in my power to change it, I will definitely do that to help the employee. (Participant #3, Interview, 2017)
This quotation represents a key finding throughout the data. Servant leaders understand that they may not always have an answer that the follower wanted to hear, but the important part of the process is to follow up with a follower and display courage by addressing the reality of any outstanding concerns.

A second way in which servant leaders can influence a caring work environment is to take actions on behalf of the employee. One leader offers a scenario where a follower was going through a personal situation that did not pertain to his day-to-day routine:

And I remember saying "You have your day-to-day things," but this kind of trumped all of that. You really wanna take care of him, and you're making phone calls, and you're sending emails, and you're doing absolutely everything that you can to protect the guy and get him into a position where... It didn't pan out the way we wanted to, but at the same time, when it comes to something like that and that important to one of your employees and their families and that type of stuff, you really have to put your best foot forward. (Participant #5, Interview, 2017)

**Positively influences follower perceptions**

The fourth way in which the data show how servant leaders influence follower wellbeing is by generating positive emotions in followers. Open coding identified 25 first-order codes from the transcripts. After reviewing the first-order codes for similarities and differences, the investigator was able to reduce 25 first-order codes down to 13 first-order concepts. Axial coding identified two second-order themes that demonstrate how servant leaders positively influence emotions in others. These themes include (a) creating positive experiences and (b) motivating others. Figure 5
represents the data structure for positively influencing follower perception and illustrates the connections between first-order codes and second-order themes.

![Diagram showing first-order codes and second-order themes]

**Figure 5. Positively Influences Follower Perception Theme**

The data suggest that servant leaders take challenging or even negative situations and reframe the scenario using perspective and positive language that motivates the follower to act. This is done by creating positive experiences and motivating others.
One leader described a past experience where followers were going to have to share the resources necessary to be successful:

Cause they all made the same stuff, and so typically when that's the case, when you have more than one production facility that makes the same items, they're fighting for volume. "I'm better than the other guy. My plant's better than his." They didn't have that at all because we had pulled them together early to say, "Look, the reality is, you're all gonna win because there's enough growth here to go around." And convincing them of that was hard, but once they got onboard, they recognized it, and then they became like a community, and I was even able to back away and so, the five of them used to do all kinds of stuff together. So the teamwork there made everything better. (Participant #6, Interview, 2017)

This quotation represents how servant leader’s act in situations where followers could potentially become competitive with each other and engage in behaviors that propel their own teams at the expense of other teams. This leader demonstrates proactive behavior that frames the situation as a win-win, which created positive and teaming emotions among peers.

One tool leaders used consistently throughout the data to help them frame a positive work environment was to use positive language. One leader offered an example from his experience where language directly contributed to follower perceptions of care:

I've had managers that said, "Don't let the inmates run the asylum." They're not inmates, what the hell, this isn't a jail. So my first thing would be to change that, right there 'cause that mentality is not... You probably don't wanna have that mentality. You're not gonna get employees to buy into you if you're calling them inmates. Yeah, you're not directly saying that to them, but that right there is telling me that you don't care. (Participant #2, Interview, 2017)
By using positive language, leaders create positive emotions within the workplace.

The data further suggest that in order for positive language to be effective in framing follower perspective, the leader must engage the follower in a proactive manner. This quotation from one of the leaders represents a common theme throughout the data on how leaders create positive emotions within their organizational structure:

> Going back to if there's never a perfect, perfect world but even in that structure, you institute things that when there is that ding, you have methods of immediately, not two days later or a week later or a month later, you have methods of being able to immediately address that and move on because, again, when you talk about structure, they would be looking for that and in the absence of that, then what normally is a really strong and tight organization, it really takes a huge hit because the longer it takes, the more the mouths are going and the more the naysayers have more, "Well, they said this last week. (Participant #5, Interview, 2017)

By addressing issues immediately, a leader has the opportunity to root out negative emotions that may swell up when a leader delays addressing an issue because they do not feel like dealing with it.

Finally, servant leaders generate positive emotions by motivating followers to succeed. There are many possible ways in which a leader can motivate a follower. However, one consistent theme throughout the data was leaders motivating followers by demonstrating a caring orientation toward the follower as an individual.

> When I first started with him, he was just a forklift driver. And you could see a lot of potential in him, but he struggled with his attitude towards certain things, and he struggled... He was... It was hard to get him focused and get him to want more, 'cause he was really capable of it, but it was... He didn't like to talk about himself, I don't know, it was
really strange, but in getting to know him over time and talking to him more and more, you could try to motivate him by saying, "Hey, I know you're capable of doing something like this. Why don't you try it? Why don't you try these things?" or "How about we just send you over here to learn this really fast and see how you do," and things like that. Starting to get them motivated and... They start to open up. People like that will start to open up to you the more you talk to them and the more they get to know you. And that person has been, I think, really successful. And once that happened, our relationship kept getting and better, and he kept moving forward and forward in my company. And it was really cool to see it and be a part of it. (Participant #1, Interview, 2017)

This quotation represents the theme that when a leader develops a positive relationship with a follower, they are able to get that follower to open up and reach new heights of positive emotion and personal growth.

**Qualitative theme interactions and relationships**

In this section, four themes from the data—invests time for building relationships, creates environment for authentic dialogue, demonstrates a caring attitude, and positively influences follower perception—are reviewed and the relationship between them explained. Investing time in getting to know followers is critical to the development of positive relationships. Servant leaders do this by carving out valuable time for the sole purpose of spending it with followers, getting out from behind their desks and doing work with followers, and focusing on building relationships rather than managing tasks. In this study, creating authentic dialogue was more than using the right words. It was about empowering follower voices, communicating for transparency, and having the ability to articulate why decisions are made. Demonstrating a caring attitude towards followers in an FPO often means
contributing to follower development and purposefully demonstrating caring actions. The phrase *positively influences follower perception* describes an ability demonstrated by leaders who were able to create positive experiences for followers and rally them around agreed upon goals.

Taken together, the four themes discussed in this chapter—invests time building relationships, creates environment for authentic dialogue, demonstrates a caring attitude, and positively influences follower perception—summarize leaders’ actions that result in positive relationships with followers, which impact follower wellbeing. Decisions on “how to act” were made consciously and “in the moment.” One leader described the type of conversations they strive for in interactions with followers in the following way:

> But sometimes just pulling people aside and have an open transparent dialogue around what you seek in the moment, It has to be in the moment, if it’s not, then it’s not authentic and it’s not real, but people will pick up on it. (Participant #9, Interview, 2017)

As you can see from this example, in moments like this, leaders reveal their authentic selves to followers. This transparency is critical to the building of positive leader-follower relationships. As seen in the data, these moments occur many times a day—typically, but not always, in small ways. Because of this, we can think of these moments as *micro-moments of truth*. Error! Reference source not found. represents these moments as *micro-moments of truth*. 
The micro-moment of truth describes a momentary sequence where the leader chooses to act, or not act, which creates a genuine feeling of emotion related to the leader-follower relationship. The degree to which this emotion is perceived as positive serves to influence follower wellbeing. One leader described how they use words to demonstrate a caring attitude towards the entire team:

I’ve had managers that said, “don’t let the inmates run the asylum.” They’re not inmates, what the hell, this isn’t jail. So my first action was to change this, because you probably do not want that mentality. You’re not gonna get employees to buy into you if you’re calling them inmates. (Participant #2, Interview, 2017).

Another leader described how they positively influence positive perception by role-modeling the things that matter most and showing personal commitment and dedication to the business:

I could have easily said, “this isn’t supply chain’s job to go figure this out.” But, it was about our customer at the end of the day and we
sometimes lose perspective of that too as well. I always love when someone asks me who is responsible for service. Everybody is. So I don’t care what function you work in, it’s about servicing the customer needs. (Participant #9, Interview, 2017)

This suggests that the leader-follower relationship is made up of many different, micro-moments that compound to influence a larger workplace culture.

While micro-moments of truth occur independently, over time they have an accumulative impact on how followers experience the leader and the organization. Micro-moments of truth describes the critical moments of an interaction where followers form their interpretations of leader actions. These actions are the manifestation of what a leader genuinely values. As these moments add up, a follower begins to see the leader’s values as the organization’s values.

The research data support the idea that the leadership behaviors and skills of investing time building relationships, creating an environment for authentic dialogue, demonstrating a caring attitude, and positively influencing follower perception is part of a larger, generative process that includes antecedents and outcomes. Servant leader behaviors and abilities that build positive relationships are strongly influenced by previous experience, which in turn serves as an antecedent for future interactions. These relationships will be explored further in Chapter 5.
Summary
The quantitative research data findings showed a positive and statistically significant correlation between servant leadership and employee wellbeing—specifically, a positive correlation between the servant leader dimensions of conceptual ability and wisdom and the wellbeing dimension of positive relationships. The qualitative findings led the researcher to understand that positive relationships, which influence wellbeing, are a result of multiple micro-moments of truth. These micro-moments happen independently yet build upon each other. Four themes were found among these micro-moments: a) invests time building relationships, b) creates environment for authentic dialogue, c) demonstrates a caring attitude, and d) positively influences follower perception. These themes describe how servant leaders use micro-moments of truth to influence positive emotions. The next chapter will present an approach to incorporate the themes and integrate them with the literature.
Chapter 5: Discussion

The purpose of this chapter is to summarize the findings reported in Chapter 4 and to discuss theoretical implications of the role leadership plays in for-profit organizations. I began this concurrent mixed methods study seeking to examine the potential relationship that exists between servant leaders and follower wellbeing and how leaders facilitate feelings of wellbeing in followers working in for-profit environments. What I learned is that a positive correlation exists between servant leadership and follower wellbeing. Furthermore, four themes emerged from the qualitative portion—invests time in building relationships, creates environment for authentic dialogue, demonstrates a caring attitude, and positively influences follower perception—are part of a larger, more dynamic process where single interactions serve to influence individual perceptions that build positive leader-follower relationships. My data suggest that servant leaders build positive relationships over time via compounding aggregation of micro-moments of truth. In this chapter, I will first discuss the quantitative findings of the hypothesized relationship and the supporting research questions. Next, I will discuss the qualitative findings related to how leaders influence follower wellbeing through micro-moments of truth. Then, I expand upon theme correlations using existing literature. Finally, I will move beyond the data to explore theoretical implications for understanding the influence leader actions have as an antecedent for workplace culture.
Quantitative Findings and Discussion

Servant leaders in FPOs
Servant leadership is an approach that views the primary role of the leader as serving the holistic needs of a follower through development and autonomy (Graham, 1991). However, there are still facets of servant leadership theory that have yet to be developed. As Northouse (2016) suggested, it is unclear why conceptualizing has been an exclusive theoretical component of servant leadership models and implores future research to address this question. Interestingly, the data in this study suggest a significant correlation between the conceptual ability of a leader and the development and autonomy of followers. Despite low scores related to emotional healing, the qualitative portion of this study generated useful data regarding the role emotions play in influencing outcomes. This finding underscores the need for further study into how leaders generate positive emotions in followers.

Servant leadership and wellbeing in FPOs
A positive and statistically significant correlation was found between servant leadership scores and individual wellbeing results, thus supporting the quantitative research hypothesis.

Hypothesis 1 addressed if there was a relationship between servant leadership and individual wellbeing in the same for-profit business unit. Among the most compelling quantitative findings confirming this hypothesis was the strong correlation between four of the five servant leadership dimensions with feelings of overall wellbeing. The
results were additionally strengthened by positive and statistically significant correlations between servant leadership and happiness as well as an inverse relationship with negative emotions.

These findings suggest that a positive relationship exists between leader and follower when the leader focuses on the needs of the follower, which in turn contributes to a positive organizational culture. Noteworthy to FPO leaders is the evidence that understanding how to apply servant leadership principles can influence positive feelings in the workplace. Organizations looking to address issues of increased wellbeing and happiness in followers, including the reduction of negative emotions, may benefit from embracing servant leader principles in their leadership development strategies.

**Wisdom and persuasive mapping and follower wellbeing**
The hypothesis for the quantitative portion of the study suggested that a relationship would exist between servant leadership and follower wellbeing. However, no hypothesis was offered for which specific dimensions of servant leadership or wellbeing I expected to see emerge as the most significant among the sample group. This approach was intentionally selected to allow the data to speak for itself and reduce the potential for investigator bias during the concurrent qualitative phase of the study. I expected a relationship to exist between servant leadership and wellbeing, but I did not know which dimensions would drive the results. A positive and
statistically significant correlation was found between servant leadership dimensions of wisdom and persuasive mapping and wellbeing, thus addressing the second research question.

The second research question asked what specific dimensions of servant leadership were most prevalent in the FPO study group. The most compelling finding regarding these specific dimensions was the consistency of their dominant significance to wellbeing. In other words, wisdom and persuasive mapping held the top two correlational results across all dimensions of overall wellbeing. This includes the positive correlation to overall wellbeing and happiness and the inverse correlation to loneliness and negative emotion.

While literature has started to emerge which explores the relationship between servant leadership as an antecedent to follower wellbeing (Coetzer, Bussin, & Geldenhuys, 2017), to the best of the investigator’s knowledge, there are no studies that exist which directly address the relationship between wisdom, persuasive mapping, and wellbeing.

**Servant leadership and leader-follower relationships**

A positive and statistically significant correlation was found between all five dimensions of servant leadership measured in this study and the wellbeing dimension of positive relationships, thus addressing the third research question.
The third research question asked what specific dimensions of wellbeing were most prevalent in the FPO study group. The most compelling finding regarding this question was the finding that relationships demonstrated a positive and significant correlation to all five dimensions of servant leadership. Additionally, wisdom and persuasive mapping showed the most quantifiably significant of the correlations with the wellbeing dimension of relationships further supporting the relational significance of these two variables.

Servant leadership is well represented in the literature as a relational approach to leadership, and to the best of the investigator’s knowledge, there are no studies that directly address relationships as a factor of wellbeing resulting from servant leader actions.

**Qualitative Findings and Discussion**

The purpose of the design for the qualitative portion of the study was to identify themes that might help explain how for-profit organization (FPO) leaders utilize servant leadership principles to influence follower wellbeing. The interview questions used in the qualitative phase were designed from an Appreciative Inquiry (AI) perspective (Appendix E: Interview Guide). The goal of an AI styled interview is to have the interview participants share positive, successful stories from their own experience. These qualitative questions collected information about how servant leaders utilize their skills, abilities, and personal traits to influence wellbeing, thus addressing the qualitative research questions. In this chapter, I discuss the theoretical
implications of the findings from Chapter 4 and propose a theory as to how servant
leaders influence follower wellbeing. Next, I discuss the model using examples from
Chapter 4.

Theoretical implications of the data
The Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership (n.d.) described a servant leader as one
who focuses primarily on the growth and well-being of people, while traditional
leadership generally involves the accumulation and exercise of power by people at the
“top of the pyramid.” Servant leadership is different. Servant leaders share power, put
the needs of others first, and help people develop and perform as effectively as
possible. While the servant leadership literature cites a lack of a concise definition
(Northouse, 2016), leaders who participated in this study can be identified as servant
leaders because this study used the Servant Leader Questionnaire (SLQ) to quantify
the existence of servant leader dimensions within the sample group. The PERMA-
Profiler was used to measure the variable of follower wellbeing in the same sample
group. Error! Reference source not found. represents the concurrent mixed
methods research approach used in this study to facilitate theme development.
From the qualitative phase of the research, the themes of (1) invests time in building relationships, (2) creates environment for authentic dialogue, (3) demonstrates a caring attitude, and (4) positively influences follower perception emerged in the data and resembles Fredrickson’s (1998) *broaden-and-build* theory of positive emotions (see Error! Reference source not found.).
The broaden-and-build theory posits that positive emotions broaden an individual’s *thought-action repertoire*, which in turn serves to build that individual’s personal resources (Fredrickson, 1998). What Fredrickson called the thought-action repertoire describes a momentary process where a positive emotion elicits a particular type of response or action tendency from the individual experiencing the emotion. This action is a broadening activity that serves to build that individual’s intellectual, social, and physical resources (Fredrickson, 2013). Empirical evidence suggests that when
triggered by positive emotions, the broaden-and-build theory describes an upward spiral of effects that accumulate and compound toward psychological wellbeing (Fredrickson & Joiner, 2002). Fredrickson’s (1998) broaden-and-build theory offers a perspective into how positive emotions are psychologically processed different than negative emotions. While negative emotions trigger a fight-or-flight response, positive emotions trigger a more subtle and broadening response. The experience of positive emotions has a generative effect that increases the likelihood of experiencing additional positive emotions in the future (Cohn & Fredrickson, 2009).

The qualitative portion of this study provided insight into how servant leaders influence psychological wellbeing by building positive relationships. What emerged was a generative process where servant leaders build relationships by influencing positive emotions in followers one interaction at a time. Fredrickson (2001) clearly stated that a positive emotion begins with an individual deriving meaning from some antecedent event. To the best of the researcher’s knowledge, previous studies have not directly addressed the myriad of potential antecedents. Through this study, I found four things leaders do (themes) to influence positive emotions in followers. These four themes make up micro-moments of truth. Micro-moments of truth describe an authentic action taken by a leader during a momentary interaction with a follower. These micro-moments of truth act independently of each other, but they serve to influence follower wellbeing through the accumulation of positive emotions that result from each interaction. Error! Reference source not found. proposes that these
micro-moments of truth are critical to producing positive emotions, and that these positive emotions lead to positive work behavior and attitudes that result in improved relationships and greater productivity. When these outcomes are recognized and rewarded, they improve follower wellbeing.

**Figure 9. Servant Leader Influence on Follower Wellbeing**
Next, using my Servant Leader Influence on Follower Wellbeing model, I propose how servant leaders influence follower wellbeing through a sequence of generative positive emotions.

**Previous positive emotional experiences**

In box 1, previous positive emotional experiences shape servant leaders’ attitude and behavior. Leaders throughout the study shared stories that demonstrate the impact previous experience had on their attitude and behavior towards decision making. Leaders draw from two types of experiences in order to shape their own leadership style. These two types of experiences can be viewed as either situational or relational.

A situational experience can be described as having lived through a particular set of circumstances. One leader described the source of wisdom used in helping a direct report through difficult work situation:

> Well, I think in that case it was just my personal experience in similar situations. Especially in our jobs, shit goes wrong every day, and the more that things go wrong, the more able you are to put them in proper perspective. So take the emotions out of it for sure, deal with the facts first. My style is always fix forward, and then go back and assess why, as opposed to trying to combat them both concurrently or vice-versa, trying to figure out how did this happen before you figure out what’s the path forward. If you focus exclusively on the path forward, with everyone involved, there’s no finger pointing, it’s very constructive; you’re trying to get to a better place. But it has to be an exclusive path forward, focus first. Then once you’re in a better place, then it’s okay to pick your head up and say, “Let’s take a breath and let’s look back.” (Participant #6, Interview, 2017)
Prior positive experiences help a leader act in a manner that is effective in the present. Through the act of experiencing a set of circumstances, a leader draws upon things that went well to shape their perspective and their own leadership style.

The second type of experience leaders draw from is a relational experience. A relational experience is one in which an individual derives meaning from their interactions with another person. Another leader from this study described how relationships from their past influenced the relationships they were trying to develop in their own careers:

In past roles where I’ve struggled, and when I say struggled, I mean not entry level struggled, it’s where now you’re trying to move through the company, or you’re trying to increase your knowledge. And so, I’ve had people pull me to the side before and almost mentor me. Not an official mentor, but somebody who’ll look after you and give you a guideline and give you a plan, almost like a road map and give you advice of, “this is what you should look forward to, you may need this in your future.” (Participant #8, Interview, 2017)

Servant leaders engage in informal mentoring for the purpose of developing others. Informal mentoring is an ability to recognize an opportunity to develop another person within a momentary interaction sequence. Servant leaders embrace this type of follower development because it was effectively done by a leader from their past when they were a follower.

The one thing both situational and relational experiences have in common is when a positive perception is gained from an experience, a servant leader will replicate what
they remember for use in their own behaviors and attitudes. These experiences serve to influence behaviors and attitudes associated with micro-moments of truth.

**Micro-moments of truth**

Barbuto and Wheeler (2006) described wisdom as the combination of awareness of surroundings and anticipation of consequences, which result in adept decision making. Sternberg (2004) recognized that wisdom is the intrapersonal and extrapersonal application of intelligence and experience towards common goals. I found that servant leaders rely on personal experiences to influence their decision making during micro-moments of truth.

In box 2, during micro-moments of truth, servant leader’s attitude and behavior produces positive emotions for followers and for themselves. I propose that follower emotions result from their interactions with others, especially leaders. It is the decisions made by leaders during these interactions that have consequences for the type of emotion experienced by leader and follower. This is especially true of leader-follower interactions because managers have the dual responsibility to manage day-to-day tasks and the power to recognize and reward. Leaders often have a choice in how they decide to interact with others. These choices happen in the matter of a moment, perhaps even on a subconscious level or as an instant reflex to some sort of stimulus. Micro-moments, because they are observed and interpreted by followers, describe genuine actions that reflect a leader’s authentic intentions:
It’s literally the first few things out of your mouth, and your mannerisms and the way you hold yourself, and that type of thing in the hourly base that is either gonna turn them on or turn them off. And that’s the same thing when it goes to the executives up in the ivory tower, but there is a natural method of being able to come across to them. (Participant #5, Interview, 2017)

The four themes that make up micro-moments of truth and how they impact follower feelings of positive emotions are discussed in the following paragraphs.

Positive leader-follower relationships are built over time and are a direct result of the time spent interacting with one another. In an FPO, leaders have the choice whether to take the initiative to develop relationships as part of their daily routine or to pursue more individualized task-oriented activities. Leaders who make time to “walk the floor” or engage in friendly conversations open up opportunities to get to know followers on a personal level. The converse option described by leaders was getting bogged down by managerial tasks and being too busy to waste time talking about seemingly trivial matters. There are two common ways leaders manage the paradox of being busy with the necessity of this socializing with followers. First, leaders delegate tasks. The art of delegation not only frees up a leader’s time, but it empowers followers to take pride in their work. Second, leaders spoke about “getting out from their desks” and doing work, especially unpopular tasks, alongside followers. Many of the leaders articulated this as “leading by example.” This created a bonding experience which led to positive emotions of trust and commitment.
When leaders create authentic dialogue with their followers, they do three things: they empower follower voices, they are transparent in their communication, and they demonstrate an ability to explain why something is important. Empowering follower voices was more than just allowing followers to speak and listening to them speak. Leaders described a network of opportunities that facilitated a workplace environment that gave followers a platform to express themselves. Things like “open door” policies, town hall meetings, or one-on-one conversations are platforms for followers to express their perspectives and an opportunities for leaders to gain insight into follower perceptions. The follow-up action is the critical component to the empowerment. By following up to a followers concern, even if it is not the desired answer, it demonstrates to the follower that the leader listened to them and cared about what they had to say. Creating this platform for leader-follower dialogue is a choice a leader can choose to make and reflects their interest in creating an environment for authentic conversations with followers.

Transparency is the ability to articulate goals and observations in a way that benefits others. One leader shared a story that describes their ability to effectively influence the behavior of another individual in the organization:

You could sense the relief off their shoulder because someone noticed. At the same time, also trying to coach and say, “listen, you don’t need to come across that way because that’s not gonna do you any good in the overall scheme of things. You’re coming across as being a little bit negative, and there’s an appropriate way to do things and challenge, whether it’s leaders or counterparts or peers, your direct reports that you don’t feel like are getting the job done. But sometimes just pulling people aside and have an open transparent dialogue about what you
seek in the moment. It has to be in the moment, if it’s not, then it’s not authentic and it’s not real. (Participant #9, Interview, 2017)

Transparency in communication is the key to authentic interactions. Servant leaders attempt to have transparent communications with others as close to the moment of observation as possible. By having it close to that moment, they are able to convey a sense of authenticity. Trust, commitment, and interest are some of the positive emotions that emerge as the result of an ability to create an environment for authentic dialogue.

Sharing with followers the reason why things need to be done a certain way helps leaders to manage competing interests. When a leader needs to take an action or give a directive that is unpopular with the follower, the ability to articulate a business need creates a sense of buy-in and commitment where there might otherwise exist a sense of reluctance. Being skilled in gaining agreement towards a common goal, like a business need, creates a sense of teaming and motivation towards the task at hand.

Leaders demonstrate a caring attitude toward followers in two ways. More intuitively, caring includes things like going to bat for an employee or taking actions on their behalf. All the leaders interviewed told at least one story where they made a choice to go out of their way to help a follower through a non-work related issue. One leader described how they do this:

And you could really feel, you had to put yourself in that position, you were like “oh my gosh” but an employee looks to us to help, right? And I remember saying “you have your day-to-day things”, but this
kind of trumped all of that. You really wanna take care of him, and you’re making phone calls, and you’re sending emails, and you’re doing absolutely everything that you can to protect the guy.

(Participant #5, Interview, 2017)

Servant leaders demonstrate a caring attitude by utilizing their own resources to help followers. This is often above and beyond the scope day-to-day tasks. In turn, the leader-follower relationship gains a sense of appreciation or closeness.

Another way in which an FPO leader demonstrates care is through the development of followers. Leaders make a decision to put the strategic development of followers ahead of short-term needs or even the short-term needs of a team. This is done by moving followers into a different area of the business to gain experience or allowing a follower to take a promotion, leaving the team shorthanded. From wisdom and conceptual ability, leaders demonstrate courage and patience, which drives a psychologically safe culture. Psychological safety refers to a belief that the team is safe for interpersonal risk taking (Edmondson, 1999). A psychologically safe workplace environment includes one where a follower is able to learn from their mistakes and takes an interest in contributing to the workplace culture. Followers derive feelings of interest and joy in what they are doing as well as a sense of inspiration from being empowered.

Leaders positively influence follower perception by creating positive experiences and through the art of motivation. Leaders create a positive experience by choosing to
take time to gain situational awareness and then imparting that awareness to the benefit of followers. An essential tool for leaders is the use of positive language. Dutton, Glynn, and Spreitzer (2008) suggested that positive language has a generative capacity that cultivates individual strengths and flourishing. By engaging in interactions where a leader and follower explore a situation and frame it in a positive light, a leader instills a sense of purpose or hope from the follower perception. With a renewed sense of hope, a follower can see for themselves how to move forward with resilience and optimism.

Positively influencing perceptions is motivating in of itself, but leaders can motivate others by creating a sense of accomplishment. Many leaders spoke about deriving a sense of accomplishment in small tasks, which increases confidence in themselves and in their relationship with their leaders. The ability to instill this sort of confidence led to a likelihood of success when it came to larger, more complex tasks.

This sequence where personal experience influences a leader’s decision making during a micro-moment of truth in turn creates an experience. This feedback loop from micro-moment of truth back to experience further strengthens a servant leader’s attitude and behavior.

**Followers’ feelings of positive emotion**
Barbuto and Wheeler (2006) described persuasive mapping as being skilled at mapping issues, conceptualizing greater possibilities, and offering a compelling
articulation of possibilities. I found through this study that servant leaders use persuasive mapping skills to facilitate positive emotions by empowering others to participate in tasks that drive organizational success.

In box 3 of the model (see Figure 9), followers’ feelings of positive emotion positively impact their attitude and behavior toward work and others. Positive emotions have the ability to influence follower attitude and behavior toward work and others. One leader described emotions he observed in followers after a corrective action training session designed to improve shipping accuracy:

They just gain a sense of empowerment. They gained a sense of, “I actually have a purpose here.” They gain, “I’m not just the forklift driver, I’m somebody that’s actually making a positive influence on stuff that’s going out the door.” And getting them to care about those things, that’s huge. They gain knowledge, they gain respect, they gain the attitude that will empower them to one day lead from the front as well. (Participant #2, Interview, 2017)

This quotation highlights a popular belief among servant leaders that empowering followers at work influences positive emotions that drive performance and work culture. By delegating work appropriately, a leader can facilitate a sense of empowerment in followers. Another one of the leaders interviewed described how he empowered a junior leader, which resulted in an improved attitude toward work:

He already knew how to get things done, it was more about me challenging him with work suitable to his position with the company. He found more meaning in his work. I think he kinda felt like this figurehead of a lead that really wasn’t one, and a lot came from empowering him and making him feel like a lead. (Participant #1, Interview, 2017)
By positively influencing followers’ attitudes and behaviors, a leader is able to improve relationships and work performance.

**Followers’ positive attitude & behavior**

Box 4 of the model (see Figure 9), which demonstrates followers’ positive attitude and behavior toward work and others, results in improved relationships and greater productivity, represents improved relationships, and greater productivity as a result of followers’ positive attitude and behavior. This happens as a result of followers developing personal resources associated with positive attitude and behavior.

Personal resources are skills and abilities that develop as a result of an action tendency. Fredrickson (2001) noted that the personal resources that develop as a result of the thought-action sequence are physical, social, or intellectual in nature, and they are durable and outlast the transient emotional states that led to their acquisition.

One interviewee nicely captures the essence of how servant leaders think about the development of personal resources associated with relationships and productivity:

> That’s something that comes with time and with learning people and situations. But honestly I have to say I was fortunate enough to go through a lot of training and meet with a lot of people, hear a lot of points of view. And so in a way, I guess that’s the goal for me. And that’s a personal goal. I like for people to feel successful. That is what motivates me, is when other people feel like they are reaching their goals, and they are successful. It can all be positive and it can all be a tool to build and get better results. (Participant #8, Interview, 2017)
For servant leaders, positive relationships and greater productivity are mutually beneficial. By improving relationships with followers, leaders increase follower productivity and drive for success. This is a fundamental goal of servant leaders laid out by Greenleaf (1970).

**Servant leader provides positive feedback**
Throughout the data, there was evidence of the role that feedback plays in influencing wellbeing. In box 5 of Figure 9, which demonstrates that the servant leader provides positive feedback in the form of rewards and expressions of gratitude, I propose that servant leaders recognize and reward followers through the acts of positive feedback. Recognition can take on many forms, such as promotions, material rewards, or routine verbal acknowledgement. Regardless of what form the recognition takes, feedback serves as signal to both the leader and follower that there is alignment between the perceptions of both the leader and follower. In other words, when the leader rewards the follower’s attitude and behavior, it validates the emotion felt by the follower, which produced the attitude and behavior. For the leader, feedback recognition can also validate their own attitude and behavior associated with micro-moments of truth. This alignment of leader and follower perceptions during the interaction serves as a conduit towards an overall feeling of wellbeing in the follower. Without some sort of feedback mechanism, the leader-follower relationship would stall out because the individuals would not know if their actions were being perceived with positive emotions.
Improved wellbeing in the leader and follower
Box 6 of Figure 9 highlights the generative nature of improved wellbeing. Once an interaction completes the sequence of antecedent through to increased wellbeing, that entire sequence then serves as an experience itself. That experience then goes on to influence micro-moments of truth (Box 1) in future interactions as well as feelings of positive emotions (Box 3) for both the follower and the leader. This is a generative sequence, because when an individual experiences a positive emotion, it is more likely that they will experience more positive emotions in the future. The more positive emotions an individual experiences, the higher the state of wellbeing and the more likely that individual is to experience positive emotions in the future (Fredrickson, 1998).

The focus of this study was to identify how servant leaders influence follower wellbeing in FPOs. The theoretical models developed identify the micro-moments of truth as an antecedent to positive emotions. The following chapter discusses future horizons and includes reflection regarding leadership development opportunities. Implications of this study and recommendations for future research are also discussed.
Chapter 6: Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship that exists between servant leadership and wellbeing in FPOs. Research is emerging that suggests servant leaders possess skills and abilities that positively influence follower workplace wellbeing (Rodríguez-Carvajal, Herrero, van Dierendonck, de Rivas, & Moreno-Jiménez, 2018; van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2011). What I found in this study was a generative process where leader actions influence positive follower emotions on an interactional basis. These interactions add up to influence follower wellbeing.

Limitations

This study has several limitations that should be noted when interpreting the research findings. Although 60% of the eligible leaders participated in the study, only 31% of the eligible followers participated (46 individuals). The small sample size further limits the generalizability of results, and no assumptions can be made regarding those who did not participate. Replicating this study with a larger sample size would be recommended.

Another limitation of this study is the lack of consistency regarding an operational definition of servant leadership in the literature. The fact that researchers continue to develop different measures of servant leadership based on their own interpretations of Greenleaf’s writings serves to complicate a cohesive definition of the theory (van
Dierendonck, 2011). As noted in this study, servant leadership is a complex theory subjected to different interpretations regarding what dimensions it consists of and how to apply them. The SLQ is one such valid interpretation. Replicating this study with other measurements could yield considerable data regarding servant leadership and psychological wellbeing.

This study was conducted at one company where the investigator is also a leader, and this dual role brings potential bias. Having a single company participate in the study is a potential limitation because it could lack generalizability to other organizations. By limiting the scope of the study to the distribution and logistics units, the investigator chose a function of the company that is typically found in other companies. Replicating this study across similar business functions at multiple organizations would be recommended.

Another limitation of the study was the use of qualitative data from a leadership perspective only. Since the goal of this study was to explore how leaders influence subjective wellbeing in followers, it would be useful for future researchers to also explore follower perspectives.

Despite the limitations, the results of the study can contribute to the body of knowledge on understanding how leaders influence follower psychological wellbeing in FPOs through influential relationships. The results of this study could encourage
future researchers using longitudinal studies to assess leadership approaches to outcomes of psychological wellbeing.

**Implications and Recommendations**

The implications of this study are important because leaders do have an impact on follower wellbeing. Based on this study, I recommend leaders understand how to recognize these moments and leverage servant leader principals to effectively influence follower wellbeing. These findings have implications for scholars and practitioners of leadership development and organizational design strategies.

Previous research indicates that leadership has a direct effect on follower wellbeing (Arnold et al., 2007; McMurray, Pirola-Merlo, Sarros, & Islam, 2010; van Dierendonck, Haynes, Borrill, & Stride, 2004). Servant leadership is one such approach that has demonstrated a positive relationship to psychological health (Rivkin, Diestel, & Schmidt, 2014). This research extends previous studies by demonstrating that servant leaders use conceptual ability and wisdom to develop high-quality relationships through actions that influence generative emotions through collaboration with a network of stakeholders, especially direct reports. The results of this study have implications for the scholars and practitioners of servant leadership and positive organizational scholarship (POS).

This study also has value for FPO leaders. FPOs are faced with increasing pressure to quickly return shareholder value, thus increasing the pressure leader’s face in
accomplishing short-term financial goals. The role of the leader is critical to the success of an FPO because of the leader’s intricate responsibility to drive organizational results by motivating a workforce made up of countless individual needs. For leaders in an FPO, the implications of this study are important to consider because balancing both organizational results and follower needs are not a tradeoff. By studying and applying techniques for improving follower wellbeing, leaders can drive improved organizational performance by building collaborative networks of organizational stakeholders based on positive relationships.

The results of this study, as they relate to potential implications of servant leadership, show promise in leadership development opportunities. This study adds to the body of research on leaders driving results through the art of influence. Replicating the study with a larger sample size is one way to test and validate the findings. Examining follower perspectives in terms of how leaders influence positive relationships is another possible area to study. This could provide future researchers with insight into how to more effectively influence a follower base. This study revealed interesting findings regarding the influencing factors of positive relationships. In addition to promising implications for leadership development within an FPO, this study offers results that could benefit a broad range of FPOs.
Appendix A: Survey Introduction

English Version: Leadership and Workplace Wellbeing

Consent to Participate in Research

Thank you for your willingness to participate in this dissertation study being conducted by Benedictine University’s Center for Values Driven Leadership in Lisle, Illinois. Your participation is completely voluntary.

Background Information: The purpose of this study is to gain insight into how leaders influence the wellbeing of followers working in a for-profit business environment.

Procedures:
1. Read and confirm your consent to participate in this study,
2. Complete a brief survey that will take less than 15 minutes,
3. Return your completed survey to the collection box (if you choose the paper copy option)

Excerpts and results of this study may be published, or presented at scientific meetings, but your identity will not be disclosed, and your data will be presented in the aggregate form only. To help ensure confidentiality you will not be asked to reveal your name at any time. All information will be stored in a secure place without your name or anything else that will identify you. If, at a subsequent date, biographical data were relevant to a publication, a separate release form would be sent to you.

Your participation in this study is voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time. Your employment status and relationship with your organization will not be affected in any way by your participation.

This research is being conducted in part to provide data for a published dissertation study and fulfill requirements for my Ph.D. in Values Driven Leadership at the business school of Benedictine University in Lisle, Illinois. The Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Benedictine University has approved this study. The chairperson of this dissertation is Dr. Marie DiVirgilio, Ph.D. For further questions about the project, she can be reached at mdivirgilo@ben.edu.

Consent: By completing this survey you are consenting to participate in this study. Remember that your participation is completely voluntary and if you do not consent to participate in the study you should simply discard survey.

This survey is also available online at: https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/B0TGRBD

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Appendix B: Servant Leadership Questionnaire

Name: _________________________

This questionnaire is to describe your leadership behaviors and attitudes as you perceive them. In the statements below, organization refers to any task at Glanbia Performance Nutrition (GPN) for which you could provide leadership. Please answer all of the questions. Please indicate how well each of the following statements describes you.

Use the following rating scale:
0 – Not at all
1 – Once in a While
2 – Sometimes
3 – Fairly Often
4 – Frequently, if not always

____  1. I put others' interests ahead of my own.
____  2. I do everything I can to serve others.
____  3. I am someone that others will turn to if they have a personal trauma.
____  4. I am alert to what's happening around me.
____  5. I offer compelling reasons to get others to do things.
____  6. I encourage others to dream "big dreams" about the organization.
____  7. I am good at anticipating the consequences of decisions.
____  8. I am good at helping others with their emotional issues.
____  9. I have great awareness of what is going on.
____ 10. I am very persuasive.
____ 11. I believe that the organization needs to play a moral role in society.
____ 12. I am talented at helping others heal emotionally.
____ 13. I am in touch with what is going on.
____ 14. I am good at convincing others to do things.
____ 15. I believe that our organization needs to function as a community.
____ 16. I sacrifice my own interests to meet others' needs.
____ 17. I can help others mend their hard feelings.
____ 18. I am gifted when it comes to persuading others.
____ 19. I see the organization for its potential to contribute to society.
____ 20. I encourage others to have a community spirit in the workplace.
____ 21. I go above and beyond the call of duty to meet others' needs.
____ 22. I know what is going to happen.
____ 23. I am preparing the organization to make a positive difference in the future.
## Appendix C: Workplace PERMA-Profiler

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Response Anchors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Block 1</td>
<td>A1</td>
<td>How much of the time do you feel you are making progress towards accomplishing your work-related goals?</td>
<td>0 = never, 10 = always</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E1</td>
<td>At work, how often do you become absorbed in what you are doing?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P1</td>
<td>At work, how often do you feel joyful?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N1</td>
<td>At work, how often do you feel anxious?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A2</td>
<td>How often do you achieve the important work goals you have set for yourself?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Block 2</td>
<td>H2</td>
<td>In general, how would you say your health is?</td>
<td>0 = terrible, 10 = excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Block 3</td>
<td>M1</td>
<td>To what extent is your work purposeful and meaningful?</td>
<td>0 = not at all, 10 = completely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R1</td>
<td>To what extent do you receive help and support from coworkers when you need it?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M2</td>
<td>In general, to what extent do you feel that what you do at work is valuable and worthwhile?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E2</td>
<td>To what extent do you feel excited and interested in your work?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lon</td>
<td>How lonely do you feel at work?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Block 4</td>
<td>H2</td>
<td>How satisfied are you with your current physical health?</td>
<td>0 = not at all, 10 = completely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Block 5</td>
<td>P2</td>
<td>At work, how often do you feel positive?</td>
<td>0 = never, 10 = always</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N2</td>
<td>At work, how often do you feel angry?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A3</td>
<td>How often are you able to handle your work-related responsibilities?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N3</td>
<td>At work, how often do you feel sad?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E3</td>
<td>At work, how often do you lose track of time while doing something you enjoy?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Block 6</td>
<td>H3</td>
<td>Compared to others of your same age and sex, how is your health?</td>
<td>0 = terrible, 10 = excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Block 7</td>
<td>R2</td>
<td>To what extent do you feel appreciated by your coworkers?</td>
<td>0 = not at all, 10 = completely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M3</td>
<td>To what extent do you generally feel you have a sense of direction in your work?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R3</td>
<td>How satisfied are you with your professional</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Block</td>
<td>Hap</td>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Rating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>Taking all things together, how happy would you say you are with your work?</td>
<td>0 = not at all, 10 = completely</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At work, to what extent do you feel contented?
Appendix D: Demographic Form

1. Which department best describes the one in which you work?
   a. Customer Service
   b. Distribution/Logistics
   c. EH&S
   d. Manufacturing
   e. Planning
   f. Procurement
   g. Quality
   h. Stagegate
   i. Other __________________________

2. Which answer best describes your current title?
   a. Associate (this applies if you do not have any direct reports assigned to you)
   b. Supervisor (must have at least one direct report)
   c. Manager
   d. Director
   e. Vice President
   f. C-Level

3. What is your age?
   a. Under 25 years
   b. 25 to 30 years
   c. 31 to 35 years
   d. 36 to 40 years
   e. 41 to 45 years
   f. 46 to 50 years
   g. 51 to 55 years
   h. Over 55 years
4. How many years have you been employed with Glanbia?
   a. Less than 1 year
   b. 1 to 3 years
   c. 3 to 6 years
   d. 6 to 9 years
   e. 9 to 12 years
   f. 12 to 15 years
   g. Greater than 15 years

5. How many years of managerial/leadership experience do you have?
   a. None/Not Applicable
   b. Less than 1 year
   c. 1 to 3 years
   d. 3 to 6 years
   e. 6 to 9 years
   f. 9 to 12 years
   g. 12 to 15 years
   h. Greater than 15 years

6. How many people do you manage/lead?
   a. None/Not Applicable
   b. 1 to 5
   c. 6 to 10
   d. 11 to 15
   e. 16 to 20
   f. 21 to 25
   g. Greater than 25
Appendix E: Interview Guide

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me today. I am a doctoral student in Benedictine University’s Values-Driven Leadership Ph.D. program. I am researching the relationship between leadership style and employee flourishing in a for-profit organization, and I would like to get your views. As a leader in the distribution network with multiple direct reports, your experience and insights are very valuable to this research. I am very excited to speak with you today because your perspective will help drive a better understanding of how leaders contribute to the wellbeing of their direct reports.

Please remember that there are no right or wrong answers, and that anything you say will remain confidential. Any and all identifying information will be stripped from the interview. None of your comments will be identified to anyone inside or outside the organization. For accuracy and clarity, I would like to audio record our conversation for later transcription. May I have your permission?

Flourishing refers to the idea of feeling good and functioning well. Often times the term flourishing is synonymous with wellbeing. While there are a few ways to think about flourishing, one way suggests flourishing is made up of five dimensions: positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishments. The questions I would like to ask you are related to these five dimensions. May we begin?

1. Please tell me a story of a time when you put a follower’s interests ahead of your own. What was the situation? Who was involved? What did you do? What did others do? How did it turn out for the employee and their life? For you and your life? For the department? For the company?

   What specific conditions would you say helped you handle this situation?

2. Please tell me a story of a time when you were able to use your position as a leader to help a follower through a hardship or trauma? What was the situation? Who was involved? What did you do? What did others do? How did it turn out for the employee and their life? For you and your life? For the department? For the company?

   What specific conditions would you say helped you handle this situation?
3. Please tell me a story about a time when your experience, knowledge, and good judgment resulted in a decision you made benefiting someone else. What was the situation? Who was involved? What did you do? What did others do? How did it turn out for the employee and their life? For you and your life? For the department? For the company?

   What specific conditions would you say helped you handle this situation?

4. Please tell me a story about a time when your ability to conceptualize a bigger picture aided the flourishing of a direct report(s). What was the situation? Who was involved? What did you do? What did others do? How did it turn out for the employee and their life? For you and your life? For the department? For the company?

   What specific conditions would you say helped you handle this situation?

5. Please tell me a story that demonstrates your commitment to leave the organization better than you found it. What was the situation? Who was involved? What did you do? What did others do? How did it turn out for the employee and their life? For you and your life? For the department? For the company?

   What specific conditions would you say helped you handle this situation?

6. Without being modest, what is it about you that contributes to employee flourishing? When answering, please consider your values, strengths, assets, capabilities, skills, relationships, ways of working, etc."

I really appreciate the time you spent speaking with me. As I go through notes, would you mind if I came back to you if I need to clarify or follow up on a response? As a reminder, I will be transcribing this interview, and would be glad to send you a copy if you’d like. Would you like a copy? Thanks again.
Appendix F: Code-Checker Agreement

Dear Colleague,

Thank you so much for agreeing to help code-check my qualitative codes. I know you’re extremely busy and really appreciate your perspective. I’ve organized the codes in a way that should aid in an efficient review and is attached. The overall goal here is to see if you would develop the same or similar codes.

- There are 5 tabs that represent the final dimension.
- Within each tab, column A is the exact *in vivo* passage I pulled from each transcript.
- Column B is the 2nd Order Theme I derived from each passage.
- Column C represents the overall dimension (same as the tab name).

The bottom line here is, (1) does column B reasonably relate to the passages in Column A and (2) does Column C represent the group of themes captured in Column B.

I thank you again for your effort here and please do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions on this.

Thank you,
Trevor
Appendix G: 1st Order Code

1st Order Codes

Ability to read people
Able to articulate concept
Able to explain it better
Able to explain, provide context
Able to look at different perspectives
Able to take on various roles
Able to use positive words
Accept consequences of actions
Address issues immediately
Allow follower to make own decisions
Allow follower to speak
Ask probing questions
Attempt to connect with follower
Authentic dialogue
Because of my experience with them
Better asset to the company
Better attitude
Better interdepartmental relationships
Better leader-follower relationship
Boost morale
Cares about follower
Challenge employee
Challenge followers during conversation
Change negative to positive
Choose to use positive language
Come out of comfort zone
Communicate expectations
Communicate goals
Company benefits
Comradery
Confidence

I want that company to succeed and do well.
Improved morale
Influenced by experience
Informal mentorship influences decision making
Invest time to get to know follower
Knowledge gained from experience
Kudos from customer
Leader asks follower for help
Leader did this in the past
Leader driven by a sense of fairness
Leader earns respect of his direct reports
Leader empowered to make decisions
Leader facilitates follower questions
Leader finds pride in follower growth
Leader gains confidence of superiors
Leader is available to talk
Leader is representation of company
Leader negatively impacted by follower’s promotion
Leader not breathing down follower’s neck
Leader reaches out to individual
Leader seeks feedback
Leader stays in touch, continues to mentor follower
Leader talks to peers
Leader wants to be a better person
Leader wants to see follower grow
Leaders drive the work culture
Leaders maintain consistency of character
Learn art of delegation through training
Learn by observation
Learn from failure
Let follower learn process
Listening
Confidence in leader
Continuous improvement.
Conversation is had immediately
Create confidence in change
Create teachable moments

Made leader a kinder individual
Manage competing interests
Meaning in work
Mentorship influenced leadership approach
Motivate follower

Continuous improvement.
Conversation is had immediately
Create confidence in change
Create teachable moments

Culture is driven by demonstrating values
Decision making influenced by experience
Decision making tailored to follower need
Delegate
Delegation creates teaming
Delegation strengthens teaming
Delivered bad news to follower
Demonstrated values create buy in
Demonstrated values create positive culture

Motivated to develop follower skills and abilities
Move followers around
Mutual employee-company benefit
Not failing
Not wasting time
Open dialogue
Organizational results
Other Outcome
Patience

Developing relationships creates buy in to value system
Different perspectives
Do not give strict guidelines
Do work alongside follower
Does not micromanage
Employee opens up
Employee understands big picture
Employees love it
Employees not complaining
Empowered to make decision
Engaged followers
Engaged individuals create results
Engaging person in the moment
Expand follower's conceptual ability
Experience in operation drives influence
Experience strengthens teams performance
Explain rationale, provide context
Extra rest leads to positive emotions
Fairness
Fights hard for the employee
Focus on problem first, not blame
Focused worker

Personal upbringing develops empathy
Perspective gained from experience
Perspective influenced by previous experience
Positive culture leads to results
Positive culture leads to results
Positive morale
Positive relationship
Pride in follower's success
Promotions
Put your best foot forward.
Puts follower's mind at ease
Reassure follower
Reduce naysayers
Reduction in errors
Reduction of negative emotion
Reduction of stress
Reinforcing follower value
Relate to people on a personal level
Relationship building
Relationships lead to better results
Removes defensiveness
Respect
Follow up
Follower agreement
Follower cares about work
Follower empowered
Follower empowered to engage in work
Follower feels better about work
Follower feels like they’re cared about
Follower feels part of decision
Follower finds meaning in his work
Follower growth
Follower growth ahead of leader’s needs
Follower is given voice
Follower is motivated

Follow is prepared
Follower is respected by leader
Follower is well-rounded professional
Follower moving on is opportunity for others
Follower opens up to leader
Follower passes on knowledge
Follower promoted
Follower promotion sends positive message
Follower reaches goal
Follower strengths influence decision making

Follow success is leader success.
Follow trust leader
Follower trusts leader’s judgment
Followers care more

Followers contribute to accomplishing tasks
Followers felt listened to
Followers open up to him, respect him more
Followers success
Frame situations for perspective
Freedom to engage followers
Gained support from organization
Get follower to open up

Review followers work
Roll up sleeves
See follower’s potential
Self-reflection
Sense of all in it together
Share reason for a change
Share vision
Start conversations
Step back and evaluate needs of others
Success
Take time to let follower learn process
Take time to talk to as many people as possible
Team benefits from follower being on team

Team negatively impacted by follower promotion
Teaming
Supervisors who were super motivated
Took actions on behalf of employee
Took employee under wing
Trust
Trusting relationships
Turn fear to adrenaline
Understand human side of business
Understanding leads to better results
Understanding resource needed for followers to be successful
Use positive language to create buy in
Utilized network for employee
Utilizing network for employee

Values spread from confidence in understanding
Values trickle down from the top
Visual evidence of improved attitude on floor
Visualize self in others shoes
Walk around to talk to people
Walk the floor with others to understand
Went to bat for the employee
Work ethic
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Getting opportunity to advance career.</th>
<th>Work through adversity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Give constructive feedback</td>
<td>Work with follower one-on-one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater sense of follower worth</td>
<td>Worker can conceptualize</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Happier follower</td>
<td>Worker has wider view of the operation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Happier leader</td>
<td>Worker reciprocates respect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Happier workforce</td>
<td>Workers achieve their goals and enjoy their work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help follower recognize strengths</td>
<td>Workers felt committed and motivated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanistic tendencies are intuitive</td>
<td>You gain experiences from your past.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
References


Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership (n.d.). *What is servant leadership?* Retrieved from https://www.greenleaf.org/what-is-servant-leadership/


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