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**Leadership in Policing:  
Serving Others to Serve Society**

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*Thesis Submitted to Durham University  
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy*

**2019**



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## List of Key Terms from Policing

**Code of Ethics.** Published by the College of Policing in July 2014, the Code of Ethics represents a clear iteration of the standards of behaviour that the public can expect from those who work in policing, both police officers and police staff, and provides those individuals with a guide to decision-making in their working lives. It applies to more than 200,000 individuals who work within policing.

**College of Policing.** The professional body within policing to provide education in the skills and knowledge needed to support those working within policing. Founded in 2012, a main focus for the College is to develop an evidence-based approach to policing and ensure consistency across police forces in England and Wales.

**HMIC / HMICFRS.** The independent body who engages in assessment of police forces and policing activity across England and Wales. These assessments address efficiency and effectiveness across all types of policing activity, and provide a series of reports on these issues, which are available to all on-line. From July 2017, this organisation has been referred to as HMICFRS, or Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services after the amalgamation of fire and rescue services into the inspectorate across England and Wales. From this date, the HMICFRS has also carried out assessments of efficiency, effectiveness and leadership across the 45 fire and rescue services in England.

**PCSO. Police Community Support Officer.** Individuals who work alongside warranted police officers and share some, but not all, of their powers. The exact roles and responsibilities differ across police forces within England and Wales.

**Police officer.** A person who holds the office of Constable. Their main roles include the prevention and detection of crime, maintaining public order and protecting members of the public. They are warranted individuals hold the associated legal powers of being able to arrest and detain individuals suspected of engaging in criminal behaviour and are authorised in the use of force.

**Police staff.** People employed by a specific police force to assist officers in their duties, maintaining the everyday functions of the organisation. In general, they do not hold any legal powers in these roles



# Chapter 1. Introduction

## 1.1 The Importance of the Topics and Context of this Research

The servant leadership field is currently in a period of rapid expansion and receiving increased research attention (Hoch, Bommer & Duhlebon, 2018), following initial research to define and measure servant leadership (*e.g.*, Graham, 1991; Farling, Stone & Wilson, 1999; Sendjaya & Sarros, 2002; Ehrhart, 2004). Much current leadership research emphasises the need for a deeper understanding of the underlying mechanisms through which this leadership approach influences follower attitudinal and behavioural outcomes (*e.g.*, Chiniara & Bentein, 2016; Feldman, 2014; Mayer, 2010; Mayer & Gavin, 2005; Panaccio, Henderson, Liden, Wayne, & Cao, 2015; Peterson, Galvin, & Lange, 2012; van Dierendonck, Stam, Boersma, de Windt & Alkema, 2014). Specifically, this thesis returns to Greenleaf's conceptualisation of servant leadership (1977) to propose alternative processes through which servant leadership influences follower outcomes. In addition to examining additional outcomes of servant leadership, with particular emphasis on forms of previously untested follower discretionary effort, it also examines three different mediating mechanisms, namely motivation, resources, and self-identity. This thesis aims to meet academic calls for a better understanding of the influence of servant leadership on follower attitudinal and behavioural outcomes (*e.g.*, Parris & Peachey, 2013; Mittal & Dorfman, 2012).

Furthermore, calls for the examination of the effectiveness of servant leadership in different organisational contexts have been made (*e.g.* Hu & Liden, 2011; Liden, Wayne, Meuser, Hu, Wu & Liao, 2015; Mittal & Dorfman, 2012; Sun & Wang, 2009). In this thesis, policing is proposed as an appropriate, novel and very important context for the study of servant leadership.

Policing plays an important role in society (Van Dijk, Hoogewoning, & Punch, 2015) and is recognised as being both demanding and frequently dangerous work (Frank, Lambert, & Qureshi, 2017; Houdmont & Elliot-Davies, 2017; Martinussen, Richardson, & Burke, 2007).

Following the financial global crisis and the Government's implemented policy of austerity the level of funding to police forces in the United Kingdom has been significantly reduced (Morrell & Bradford, 2018). Furthermore, policing has faced increased pressure due to increased levels of demand and changes in the nature of demand, while facing an unprecedented period of reform (HMICFRS, 2018).

A striking moment within the UK public sector was a speech made by the then-Home Secretary, the Right Honourable Teresa May MP, to the Police Federation Annual Conference 2015, appropriately named "*The Policing Challenge: Cuts Have Consequences*". This speech, which still resonates across policing in the United Kingdom to date, emphasised the need for policing to work to deliver "more with less" (May, 2015). The response in the key-note speech by the Chair of the Police Federation of England and Wales stating that policing was "down to the bone" (White, 2015), confirmed the dramatic impact of sector-wide austerity and increasingly stringent budgetary restrictions on policing.

More recently, the Government has started to acknowledge the urgent need to resolve the strain police forces are under and support them in their ability to deliver service to the public. For example, the current Home Secretary (the Right Honourable Sajid Javid MP) recently stated to The Police Superintendents' Association Annual Conference (Javid, 2018):

*"You've been telling me that you and your forces are feeling stretched. That the nature of crime is changing and that sometimes you feel that you just can't keep up with it. ... You're having to change the strategic direction of your forces to manage new and emerging threats and to adapt your resources accordingly. I want you to feel that you are comfortably equipped to deal with the changing crime landscape".*

Furthermore, the Minister of Police and the Fire Service (the Right Honourable Nick Hurd MP) announced the need for a fundamental review of front line policing (Home Office, 2018). Dr Les Graham<sup>1</sup>, who acted as first supervisor for this thesis, was appointed to the Steering Group of the Front Line Review of Policing in May 2018. At the personal request of the Minister of Police

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<sup>1</sup> Dr Les Graham is the Principle Investigator for the International Centre for Leadership and Followership Policing Research Unit, Durham University Business School.

and the Fire Service, Dr Les Graham and colleagues have produced a report summarising the evidence and findings from collaborative research conducted by the ICLF Policing Research Unit<sup>2</sup> with 31 Home Office police forces in the past two year period (Graham, Plater, Brown, Zheng & Gracey, 2019). Theoretical perspectives and findings developed and tested in the three empirical studies of this thesis have been included in this report.

Furthermore, this thesis was undertaken to investigate and test the claim made by the College of Policing (2015; 2017) of the need for policing to adopt a more supportive style of leadership in order to meet the challenges faced. Each of the three empirical studies were designed to contribute both theoretically, to the positive leadership literature, and practically, providing police organisations, officers and staff with robust evidence through which to reconsider the benefits of a servant leadership style in the context of their work.

By testing servant leadership in relation to variables such as public service motivation and taking charge behaviours (Study 1), ethical voice behaviours (Study 2) and commitment to the public and moral disengagement (Study 3), this thesis provides significant practical implications for leaders at all levels of UK policing and the broader UK public sector, alongside applicability in more general occupational contexts.

## **1.2 The Purpose of this Research**

The central theme of this research is that the experience of supervisory servant leadership, through a variety of mediational mechanisms, fosters follower discretionary effort in the workplace. The purpose of this research is to investigate this proposition within a specific occupational context, that of policing in the United Kingdom.

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<sup>2</sup> The ICLF Policing Research Unit is currently working with 38 police forces across England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The aim of the collaborative research conducted in policing has which can inform policy at both a local and national level to improve police officer and staff well-being and policing service provision to the public.



### **1.2.1 Aims and Objectives**

The aim of this study is to meet the calls for further research identified in the previous section, and to make useful contributions to the understanding of the impact of supervisory servant leadership on follower public service motivation, hindrance stressors, ego depletion, self-identity levels, taking charge behaviours, ethical voice behaviours, commitment to the public and moral disengagement. It also considers the role of organisational vision clarity as a boundary condition of servant leadership effectiveness in organisations.

### **1.2.2 The Contributions of this Research**

Three separate field studies were conducted, each in different UK police forces. Data was collected using on-line surveys. Quantitative analyses were undertaken using regression methods. The studies were designed and undertaken with the aim of making the following contributions:

1. Study 1 investigates the relationship between supervisory servant leadership and follower taking charge behaviours (Morrison & Phelps, 1999). This represents a contribution to the servant leadership literature in considering a form of incremental, constructive and non-traditional discretionary effort, responding to calls within the extant literature to consider additional follower outcomes of supervisory servant leadership (*e.g.* Brubaker, Bocarnea, Patterson & Winston, 2015; Feldman, 2014).
2. Moreover, Study 1 tests whether public service motivation (Perry & Wise, 1990) mediates the relationship between supervisory servant leadership and follower taking charge behaviours. To the author's knowledge this study is the first to investigate the influence of servant leadership on follower discretionary effort from a motivational perspective, and responds to calls in the extant literature to develop a deeper understanding of the processes through which servant leadership influences follower behaviour (*e.g.*, Feldman, 2014; Hunter, Neubert, Perry, Witt, Penney & Weinberger, 2013; Mayer, 2010).

3. As a field under rapid expansion, there are several statements which comment on the need for a more extensive examination of the boundary conditions that constrain servant leadership effectiveness (Chiniara & Bentein, 2016; Feldman, 2014; Wu, Tse, Fu, Kwan & Liu, 2013). Study 1 theorises and tests whether organisational vision clarity (Wright & Pandey, 2011), moderates the relationship between servant leadership and public service motivation, such that the relationship is only significant when organisational vision clarity is high.
4. Much extant literature adopts social learning theories as the underlying psychological mechanisms that underlie servant leadership influence on followers (*e.g.* Grisaffe, Vanmeter, & Chonko, 2016; Tang, Kwan, Zhang, & Zhu, 2016; Tuan, 2016). To extend the line of research calling for clarity within the processes that underlie servant leadership (*e.g.*, Feldman, 2014; Liden et al., 2015; Peterson et al., 2012), Study 2 proposes an alternative internal resource mechanism (Hobfoll, 1989) of leadership influence on follower outcomes. Moreover, findings related to the proposed internal resource mechanism are strengthened by testing the resource perspective against the pre-established mechanism of follower engagement (*e.g.* Xanthopoulou, Bakker, Demerouti & Schaufeli, 2009). Alongside strengthening these findings, the comparison meets calls for the elucidation of the relative importance of mediators within the servant leadership field (de Clercq, Bouckennooghe, Raja, & Matsyborka, 2014; Liden, Wayne, Liao & Meuser, 2014a).
5. Study 2 also responds to several calls in the literature to explore additional outcomes of servant leadership (*e.g.* Hunter et al., 2013; Wu et al., 2013), thereby departing from the field's emphasis on organisational citizenship behaviours as the dominant individual-level behavioural outcomes of servant leadership in the workplace. To the author's knowledge, Study 2 is a preliminary test of the influence that servant leadership has on an ethical outcome. This is in spite of the inclusion of ethical concerns in much conceptual work in the field of servant leadership (*e.g.*, Greenleaf, 1977; Page & Wong,

2000; van Dierendonck, 2011). Operationalised as ethical voice behaviour, a constructive and change-oriented form of voice for ethical concerns (Huang & Paterson, 2017), this study therefore represents a novel, salient outcome of servant leadership influence.

6. Study 3 contributes to the literature by considering two novel, salient, and previously untested follower outcomes of servant leadership. To date, commitment and servant leadership have been considered (*e.g.*, Bobbio, van Dierendonck, & Manganelli, 2012; Goh & Low, 2013; Sokoll, 2014; van Dierendonck et al., 2014), but are limited to referents within the organisation. This study returns to Greenleaf's conceptualisation of the leader as servants to their people and to wider society, and tests follower commitment to the public (Klein, Becker & Meyer, 2012), or a form of followers attachment to external referents. Moral disengagement represents an additional contribution to the literature by presenting a preliminary assessment of how this leadership style can reduce unethical behaviour in the workplace, an outcome that has received little attention within the academic field (Jaramillo, Bande, & Varela, 2015).
7. It is broadly acknowledged that a more comprehensive understanding of the mechanisms through which servant leadership influences followers would be beneficial to the field (*e.g.*, Chiniara & Bentein, 2016; Feldman, 2014; Hunter et al., 2013; Mayer, 2010; van Dierendonck et al., 2014). From this combined perspective, Study 3 represents a contribution to the extant literature by proposing and testing an identity-level perspective of leadership influence, responding to multiple calls for future research. This focus further responds to calls within the extant literature to uncover additional mediators of the relationship between servant leadership and follower desirable outcomes (*e.g.*, Feldman, 2014; Liden et al., 2015; Peterson et al., 2012).
8. A further contribution of this thesis is the occupational context in which the three studies are conducted. The occupational context of policing within the United Kingdom is proposed as a novel and distinct occupational context for the study of servant

leadership. This context meets a multitude of calls for the examination of the effectiveness of servant leadership in different organisational contexts (*e.g.* Hu & Liden, 2011; Liden et al., 2015; Mittal & Dorfman, 2012; Sun & Wang, 2009). Moreover, other-oriented attitudes and public sector outcomes were selected within this context, ensuring there are organisationally relevant outcome variables in each hypothesised model, meeting further relevant calls from the extant literature for this applicability (*e.g.* Parris & Peachey, 2013; Wu et al., 2013).

9. Finally, as a targeted contribution for the United Kingdom public sector and policing organisations, the positive influence of a supportive, ethically- and other-oriented supervisor are highlighted in this thesis. As the traditional leadership approach in UK policing is widely posited as a more directive, controlling leadership style (College of Policing, 2015), this thesis responds to occupationally-specific concerns and statements about the potential influence of positive leadership style in the workplace (College of Policing, 2014; 2015).

### **1.3 The Design and Outline of this Thesis**

In this first chapter, the topics that will be examined within this thesis are introduced, alongside underlining the importance these topics in contemporary social science research. Subsequently, the purpose of this research, the calls for future research that are addressed and the contributions made by this thesis are discussed.

Chapter 2 provides a general definition of leadership. It presents a brief overview of the contemporary leadership literature and reviews some of the main themes in leadership research. The origins and definitions of the servant leadership construct are then discussed. An overview of the attitudinal and behavioural outcomes of this leadership approach in the workplace is then provided. This chapter also provides a consideration of the occupational context in which the data for this thesis were collected, the policing establishment in the United Kingdom, which includes an introduction to the key professional bodies within this context. It

also provides some practitioner perspectives on the contemporary state of leadership in policing, alongside a consideration of the strengths and limitations that this context adds to this thesis. To conclude this chapter, a discussion and general review of each of the main theories applied in this thesis is then conducted, addressing values and self-identity perspectives (Lord & Brown, 2001, 2003), the expectancy theory of work motivation (Vroom, 1964), and the conservation of resource theory (Hobfoll, 1989, 2002). Further discussion of each of these theories is presented in subsequent chapters with a greater depth of explanation and relation of the relevant theory to the generated hypotheses.

Chapter 3 describes the methodological approach adopted in each empirical study. In the first instance, the research paradigm adopted in the thesis is presented and then an overview of study design is provided, alongside a comment on both the issue of causality and common method variance in social science research. The statistical approaches applied within this thesis are then briefly considered, addressing the use of confirmatory factor analysis, structural equation modelling with bootstrapping procedures and moderation analyses with mean centring within empirical studies.

Chapters 4, 5 and 6 present independent empirical studies. Each of these chapters includes (1) an introduction, (2) a theoretical perspective, (3) a description of the study-specific methodology, including a description of the variables and statistical methods employed, (4) a presentation of research findings, and (5) a discussion and review of the contributions, limitations, and future research directions that arise from the study.

This thesis concludes with Chapter 7, summarising the findings of each empirical study and discusses the strengths and limitations of the thesis. The main contributions of this thesis are discussed in relation to the proposed purpose of this thesis, reviewing the combined results as to the follower behaviours that arise from servant leadership and the alternative psychological mechanisms through which this influence is realised. Finally, practical implications of this thesis

for the policing establishment, the public sector and wider organisational settings are presented, before directions for future research are proposed.

## **Chapter 2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Leadership Theory and Research**

The field of leadership research is extensive (Dinh, Lord, Gardner, Meuser, Liden, & Hu, 2014), ever-increasing (Van Knippenberg, Van Knippenberg, de Cremer & Hogg, 2004), and argued by some to be the most prominent form of research in the field of organisational science (Clark & Harrison, 2018). Leadership theory and research have undergone significant changes between the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, and several reviews of this attention-grabbing field have been published to date (Dinh et al., 2014; Gardner, Lowe, Moss, Mahoney, & Cogliser, 2010; Lord, Day, Zaccaro, Avolio & Eagly, 2017). Research focus has shifted from research into an individual's personal power within a large, corporate organisation to a broader perspective on leadership as a social influence process within different social systems (Avolio, Walumbwa, & Weber, 2009). This conceptualisation of leadership as social influence represents a more complex, dynamic process that involves not only a senior leader but includes organisational members at all levels of the hierarchy, leader-follower interrelatedness, everyday working environments and organisational cultures (*e.g.*, Dinh et al., 2014). Moreover, research has begun to examine alternative occupational contexts, including public sector and not-for-profit organisations, a perspective that also involves the integration of different approaches and philosophies into the leadership field.

Scholars explicitly comment on several trends within leadership research over the past century, highlighting differences in the three main areas of conceptual, theoretical and methodological development (Lord et al., 2017; Dinh et al., 2014). Initial emphasis was placed on the trait paradigm and early behavioural approaches to leadership, followed by an extension of research into the behavioural approaches to leadership, including contingency approaches, social-cognitive theories and information-processing perspectives of leadership influence. Following this, a subsequent trend addresses the emerging foci of leadership theories, including neo-charismatic theories, ethical and moral approaches to leadership, relational leadership

paradigms and identity-based considerations of leader influence. This section summarises these key trends, describing the development of leadership conceptualisation and theory. See Table 2.1 for a chronological overview of trends in leadership research.

### **2.1.1 Initial Trait Paradigm and Early Behavioural Approaches to Leadership**

*The trait paradigm*, a perspective which suggests certain individuals have innate characteristics or qualities that differentiate them from non-leaders, was popularised in the 1930s (Northouse, 2016). At times referred to as '*great man*' theories, leadership is seen through the lens of exceptional individuals with certain dispositional characteristics that differentiate them from others (Day & Antonakis, 2012). Clusters of these traits were associated with leadership ability, with measured by individuals undergoing tests of their intelligence and temperamental fitness to assess their leadership capability (Lord et al., 2017). Examples of leadership traits are seen in physical qualities such as height and personality features such as extraversion, alongside other characteristics such as intelligence and communication fluency (Northouse, 2016). This trait paradigm implies that individuals who have not inherited a certain level or combination of these characteristics will always be restricted in their leadership potential and ability.

Although the trait paradigm dominated much leadership research across the first half of the twentieth century, several coinciding reviews of the literature criticised this approach (e.g. Mann, 1959; Stogdill, 1948). Concerns regarding an inability to explain the effectiveness of leadership and lack of an adequate account of the impact of situational variance in leadership contributed to its decline. As these concerns became more widely considered, a more situational approach to leadership was undertaken. This situational approach, with research focusing increased attention on the behaviours of leaders in a given situation rather than on the leader as an individual, represented a major paradigm shift towards the early behavioural approaches to leadership (Lord et al., 2017).



The trait paradigm received renewed interest in the 1980s in line with advances in methodological techniques and the inclusion of meta-analyses as a methodological approach in social psychology (Day & Antonakis, 2012; Lord et al., 2017). Several influential meta-analyses clarified the role of several individual traits in relation to leadership. Examples of this are seen in personality characteristics and intelligence (Lord et al., 2017). Personality, operationalised using the Big Five characteristics was highlighted as a statistically significant trait predicting leadership ability as had been theorised in early research (Judge, Bono, Ilies, & Gerhardt, 2002; Lord, Vader, & Alliger, 1986). However, the intelligence trait was found to be overstated when considered from a meta-analytic perspective (Judge et al., 2002). In spite of this resurgence, several recent reviews have suggested a continuing decline in trait-based leadership research (Dinh et al., 2014; Gardner et al., 2010; Lowe & Gardner, 2000), with Dinh and colleagues (2014) finding only 20% ( $n = 149$ ) of publications in ten top-tier journals between 2000 and 2012 being based on trait perspectives. In Gardner and colleagues' (2010) review of publications in *Leadership Quarterly*, they found that trait theories only represented 8.5% of publications ( $n = 17$ ) between 1990 and 1999, a proportion that had reduced to 3.8% of publications in the same journal ( $n = 26$ ) between 2000 and 2009.

**Early behavioural theories** received increasing attention from the 1940s to the 1950s (Day & Antonakis, 2012; Lord et al., 2017; Northouse, 2016). Early behavioural perspectives include the *consideration to initiating structure* perspective, which was explored in most detail at this time (Lord et al., 2017). This emphasis on an understanding of how a leader behaves and a leader's influences on various outcomes, research from a behavioural perspective continues vibrantly to date, including a documented increased in attention between 2000 and 2009 (Gardner et al., 2010).

In work originating at Ohio State University and the University of Michigan, two dominant groups of leader behaviour were highlighted in relational-oriented behaviours and task-oriented behaviours. Relational-oriented behaviours, at times referred to as *consideration* behaviours, are supportive and person-oriented (Day & Antonakis, 2012), with leaders showing concern and

respect for their followers. Task-oriented behaviours, also known as *initiating structure* behaviours, are directive (Day & Antonakis, 2012). They involve the initiation of performance standards and reward is contingent upon achievement of explicit task goals.

**Table 2-1: Chronological Overview of the Development of the Leadership Field**

<b>Era</b>	<b>Dominant Interests in Leadership Research</b>
<b>1930s</b>	<p><b>Traits</b>, individual differences and aspects of personality that identify individuals as leaders</p> <p>Interaction of leader personality traits with those of a group</p> <p>Influence, not domination</p>
<b>1940s</b>	<p>Gradual shift in focus towards the <b>behaviour</b> of an individual in leadership roles, rather than individual leader traits</p>
<b>1950s</b>	<p><b>Behaviour</b> gains increasing research attention, often considered from the <i>initiating structure</i> to <i>consideration</i> paradigm</p> <p><b>Group theory</b>, how leaders influence others within groups and group effectiveness</p> <p>Leadership as a <b>relationship</b> that develops shared goals between people</p>
<b>1960s to 1970s</b>	<p>Leadership as influencing people in a <b>shared</b> direction</p> <p>Focus on leadership <b>contingencies</b>, incorporating situational factors into conceptualisations of leadership</p> <p><b>Organisational behaviour</b> approach</p> <p>Leaders initiating and maintaining <b>group structures</b></p> <p>Increasing interest in <b>relational approaches</b>, seen in vertical dyad linkage theory</p>
<b>1980s</b>	<p><b>Social-cognitive approaches</b>, including implicit leadership, prototype and categorisation theories</p> <p>Renewed interest in <b>trait</b> perspective in popular press, supported by integration of meta-analytical methodologies</p> <p><b>Charismatic, transformational and visionary leadership processes</b> to achieve higher levels of motivation and morality</p>
<b>1990s to present</b>	<p><b>Leader-member exchange</b> and the process of leadership as the quality of relations between leaders and followers</p> <p><b>Team-oriented approaches</b>, or how a leader influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal</p> <p><b>Information-processing approaches</b>, cognitions, prototypes and emotions</p> <p><b>Diversification of leadership styles</b> (<i>e.g. authentic, charismatic, ethical, transformational, servant</i>)</p>

Table adapted from: Day & Antonakis, 2012; Dinh et al., 2014; Lord et al., 2017; Northouse, 2016

These early behavioural perspectives instated the foundations of many later conceptualisations of leadership, included in both contingency theories, which dominated the 1960s to 1970s, and neo-charismatic theories, which dominated research between the 1980s and 2000s (Day & Antonakis, 2012; Lord et al., 2017).

### **2.1.2 Further Behavioural Approaches to Leadership**

**Contingency theories** of leadership, often inspired by scholars such as Fiedler (1967, 1971) throughout the 1960s and 1970s, emphasised the inclusion of situational factors that contribute to variability in the effectiveness of leader behaviour. Situational factors such as leader-member relations, task structure and the position of power held by the leader are all considered to influence leadership effectiveness (Day & Antonakis, 2012). Research into contingency approaches to leadership included theories examining under what conditions leadership is most effective. An example of this is seen in the substitutes for leadership theory (Kerr & Jermier, 1978), which argues that certain situational factors can either strengthen or suppress the efficacy of leadership behaviour on follower outcomes. Examples of these substitutions can be seen in human resource management practices and organisational formalisation, task characteristics and subordinate ability (e.g. Howell & Dorfman, 1986; Keller, 2006; Lord et al., 2017; Podsakoff, Mackenzie, & Bommer, 1996).

As the contingency approach developed, growing attention was directed towards subordinates in behavioural studies. Subordinate ratings were increasingly recognised as reflecting the rater's cognitive processes as well as the leader's actual behaviour (Lord et al., 2017). With these processes potentially undermining the accurate measurement of actual leader behaviour, the contingency field declined (Gardner et al., 2010) as research into social-cognitive and identity perspectives of leadership gained momentum (Lord et al., 2017).

**Social-cognitive theories** were developed across the 1970s and 1980s as alternative conceptualisations of leadership due to a gradual shift from the behavioural to the cognitive perspective, assessing the processes through which leader transmit information to followers,

and how those followers process salient information (Lord, Gatti & Chui., 2016). General information-processing theory provides the theoretical background to many studies, including implicit leadership theories (Eden & Leviathan, 1975; Lord, 1985), connectionist approaches to leadership research (Lord & Shondrick, 2011), and attribution theory (Martinko, Harvey, & Douglas, 2007). Rather than relying purely on reports of leader behaviour, the information-processing approach underscored the importance of how an individual perceives their leader. This perspective relies upon leadership influence being dependent upon whether or not the perceiver views the leader as legitimate and, as a result, accords them due influence (Day & Antonakis, 2012). Lord and Maher (1990) contend that an individual's perception of a leader will be dependent upon the leadership prototype they hold, with their judgement about the leader's effectiveness being related to the match or mismatch with this prototype. The development of the information-processing perspective was also marked by the implementation of different methodological strategies. Rather than relying purely on questionnaire-based, retrospective assessments of leader behaviour, advancements were made to target the underlying cognitive schema of the perceiver (Lord & Shondrick, 2011).

Implicit leadership theories were subsequently refined into leadership categorisation theories (Lord, Foti, & De Vader, 1984). These categorisation theories attest to how a perceiver's rating of leadership is influenced by that perceiver's implicit leadership theories. Lord and colleagues (1984) described the existence of leadership prototypes held by individuals and their influence on how they interpret actual leader behaviour, suggesting that ratings of leadership perceptions will reflect match or mismatch to the prototype rather than to more objective judgment criteria (Gardner et al., 2010). The information-processing perspective on leadership continues to develop, with 26% of articles in ten top-tier journals ( $n = 194$ ) applying models of leader and follower cognitions, implicit leadership, attribution and information-processing and decision-making theories (Dinh et al., 2014).

### 2.1.3 Emerging Foci of Leadership Theories

**Neo-charismatic approach** and associated leadership theories were by far the most dominant area of leadership research at the turn of the century (Day & Antonakis, 2012; Dinh et al., 2014), having attracted many new scholars to leadership research throughout the 1990s (Gardner et al., 2010). Often considered together due to Bass's inclusion of charisma in the early multidimensional conceptualisation of transformational leadership (Bass, 1985), neo-charismatic leadership includes both charismatic and transformational leadership approaches. Inspired by work of Bass and colleagues (*e.g.* Bass, 1985; Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999; Bass, Waldman, Avolio, & Bebb, 1987), charismatic, transformational and visionary leadership styles began to receive widespread attention (Lord et al., 2017). Referring back to Max Weber's early conceptualisation of leader charisma (1947), a charismatic leader has power through others' perceptions of them as exceptional, rather than power due to official status or position in an established hierarchy. Leaders were increasingly viewed as someone who was idealised, inspiring and visionary, using the relevant behaviours to encourage followers to transcend self-interest to the benefit of others, including their group (Day & Antonakis, 2012). Neo-charismatic approaches therein assume that leadership influence is realised through the communication of a vision and symbolic leader behaviour to create meaning in workplace events for followers. These theories are therefore targeted towards an understanding of neo-charismatic leaders as developing an emotional connection with their followers which, in turn, improves follower performance (Avolio & Yammarino, 2013). Meta-analyses were also conducted as to the relative influence of transactional and transformational leadership styles, alongside the examination of antecedents and consequences of transformational leadership styles (Lord et al., 2017).

Although neo-charismatic leadership was the dominant paradigm, found in 86 of 353 articles in *Leadership Quarterly* between 2000 and 2009 (Gardner et al., 2010), and 39% of publications ( $n = 294$ ) across ten top-tier journals between 2000 and 2012 (Dinh et al., 2014), this same era also highlighted emerging fields of research in leadership, including ethical and moral approaches to leadership.

***Ethical and moral approaches to leadership*** are receiving increasing scholarly and practitioner attention due, in part, to increasing public interest in more moral and socially conscious leadership in modern organisations (Gardner et al., 2010). Additionally, the neo-charismatic approach has received some challenge in its manner of influence on followers, with the interplay between leadership, ethics and accountability gaining increasing attention (Day & Antonakis, 2012; Dinh et al., 2014; Gardner et al., 2010). As a result of these factors, ethical and moral approaches to leadership are emphasised, examples of which are seen in authentic, ethical and servant leadership (Gardner et al., 2010). Representing 11% of publications across ten top-tier publications between 2000 and 2012 (Dinh et al., 2014), these emerging theories have garnered attention that has continued to gain prominence in the leadership field (Gardner et al., 2010).

***The relational school of leadership research*** also represents a line of research that underscores the importance of the relationship between leaders and followers, and it received increasing attention in the first decade of the twenty-first century (Dinh et al., 2014; Gardner et al., 2010). Leader-member exchange theory, originating from the vertical-dyad approach to leadership (Dansereau, Graen, & Haga, 1975), relies heavily upon theories of social exchange to explain its influence (*e.g.* Settoon, Bennett, & Liden, 1996; Wayne, Shore, & Liden, 1997). This exchange-based leadership approach typifies the relational school, distancing this leadership theory from more traditional approaches (Lord et al., 2017). Traditional leadership approaches imply there is one general style of leader behaviour that all followers receive, including levels of directness and consideration (Lord et al., 2017). Leader-member exchange theory represents a shift away from this consistent approach, contending that leadership influence is jointly determined by both leader and follower (Lord et al., 2017). This implies that leaders and followers may develop differentiated relationships within each dyad, with high quality dyadic relationships being based upon reciprocal exchange, trust and mutual respect (Day & Antonakis, 2012), rather than a “one size fits all” approach.

Having been the subject of many meta-analytic considerations (e.g. Dulebohn, Bommer, Liden, Brouer, & Ferris, 2012; Gerstner & Day, 1997; Ilies, Nahrgang, & Morgeson, 2007), leader-member exchange theory has an established nomological network addressing antecedents (e.g. Schyns, Paul, Mohr, & Blank, 2005; Wayne, Shore, Bommer, & Tetrick, 2002), consequences and job-related attitudes as outcomes (Settoon et al., 1996). In spite of stated concerns regarding the inconsistencies in construct definitions and measurement approaches in research (Dulebohn et al., 2012; Liden, Sparrowe, & Wayne, 1997), alongside questioning of the level at which it should be studied (Schriesheim, Castro, & Cogliser, 1999), leader-member exchange theory has been one of the most studied facets of leadership research to date (Lord et al., 2017). This includes 25-year perspective on relational-based leadership by Graen and Uhl-Bien (1995) being the most cited article in *Leadership Quarterly* between 2000 and 2009 (Gardner et al., 2010).

***Identity-based leadership theories*** have also received growing research interest in the twenty-first century alongside the aforementioned relational perspectives (Dinh et al., 2014). As a theoretical approach, identity-based leadership theories attest to both self-concept and social identities. Often said to rely on the developments on conceptualising identity by Hogg (2001), leader categorisation theory, social identity and self-concept frameworks are employed in both quantitative and theoretical studies (Dinh et al., 2014). These approaches imply that leaders emerge within a social system due to their match to the prototype held by group members. When established as a leader, influence is realised when leaders alter or activate dynamic aspects of the self (Lord et al., 2016). In line with the three identity levels proposed by Brewer and Gardner (1996), individual, relational and collective identities, leaders and environmental conditions are contended to activate one of those identity levels (e.g., Lord & Brown, 2003; Lord et al., 1999; van Knippenberg, van Knippenberg, De Cremer, & Hogg, 2005). These three distinct identity levels create different meaning for followers, their motivation and behavioural outcomes. At the individual level, self-interest and egocentrism are paramount, at the relational level followers will be concerned for the benefits of their actions to specific others, and at the

collective level, followers will transcend self-interest and consider the welfare of the collective in their actions and decision-making.

Although the field is still emerging, many promising findings from the identity perspective as to leadership influence on follower outcomes are evident. With transformational and charismatic leadership, Kark and colleagues (Kark & Chen, 2003) suggest that leadership positively influences follower attitudes through the identification a follower has, both personally with the leader, and socially with their wider social group. Brown and Mitchell (2010) also highlight the importance of future study into the role that identification processes will have in understanding follower outcomes related to moral identity, ethical and unethical behaviour.

In consideration of activated identity levels, Kark and Van Dijk (2007) contend that leaders play a major role in the dynamic identity processes their followers experience. They contend that a leader's own activated identity plays a role in how they behave towards followers which, in turn, might also activate a socially responsive follower identity level. They provide thought-provoking calls for future research in integrating the activation of follower identities into the field of leadership research. Gardner and colleagues (Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, May, & Walumbwa, 2005) also consider the role of self and identity in their conceptual paper addressing authentic leadership. In discussing collective social identities, Gardner and colleagues (2005) underline a proposed influence of authentic leadership through forming meaningful groups amongst followers. The social categorisation taking place is therefore proposed to lead to the emergence of future authentic leaders. In differentiating the proposed outcomes of each identity level in relation to authentic leadership, the potential scope for research into this area is highlighted.

#### **2.1.4 Positive Leadership Approaches**

Hoch and colleagues (2018) explicitly comment on the paradigm shift within the leadership field away from classical or traditional leadership approaches. The new directions of leadership research were termed *positive forms of leadership* (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Hoch et al., 2018).



In their integrative review of the evolution of the field of leadership, Avolio and colleagues (2009) echo this assertion, commenting that positive models of leadership are increasingly integrated into the leadership literature. This is also repeated in other reviews that emphasise the increase in both scholarly and practitioner attention to moral and ethical leadership approaches (e.g., Day & Antonakis, 2012; Dinh et al., 2014; Gardner et al., 2010; Hoch et al., 2018). Several of these positive leadership approaches which are highlighted as emerging foci of research are authentic, ethical and servant leadership (Dinh et al., 2014), styles which are often considered alongside the more established transformational leadership style. Table 2.2 provides an overview of these styles, highlighting areas of conceptual overlap and differentiating features across them.

***Transformational leadership*** typified leadership study for much of the aforementioned second trend of leadership research (Lord et al., 2017). Originating in work by Burns (1978), transformational leadership was conceptualised as the on-going process between leaders and followers to elevate each other to serve collective interests. Bass extended this positive leadership style in organisational contexts (1985), emphasising that a leader could transform their followers and, as a result, could achieve higher levels of performance. The moral component of transformational leadership was included in early work by Burns (1978), but it was not explicitly included in the initial conceptualisation of the transformational leader by Bass (1985). Bass and colleagues assert that transformational leadership exerts its influence on follower performance through the concepts of idealised influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualised consideration. Many empirical studies have employed this conceptualisation of transformational leadership, finding positive relationships between this style and outcomes such as follower attitudinal outcomes, several measures of satisfaction, organisational citizenship behaviours and various forms of performance (*for meta-analytic reviews see* Clarke, 2013; Dum Dum, Lowe, & Avolio, 2013; Wang, Oh, Courtright, & Colbert, 2011).

In spite of many desirable outcomes of transformational leadership, concerns have been raised regarding whether or not leaders can lack authenticity. These concerns contend that a leader is either authentic in their transformational leader behaviour, or that they are inauthentic, therein engaging in what has been termed *pseudo transformational leadership* (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999). To make this judgment, three assessments are made. Firstly, a consideration of the moral character of the leader is undertaken by the follower, secondly the leaders' ethical values are either accepted or rejected by their followers, and thirdly, the morality behind the choices and actions that the leader and follower should pursue are considered (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999). In part, this delineation between authentic and pseudo-transformational leadership predicated the development of the authentic leadership style.

***Authentic leadership***, after its' initial proposition by Luthans and Avolio (2003), was further developed in response to corporate scandals and proposed coercive leadership influence (Avolio & Luthans, 2005; Gardner et al., 2005). High levels of moral character are inherent in the authentic leadership style, with the authentic leader being aware of both how they think and behave. They will also consider the moral perspectives that they hold, as well as opinions held by those around them (Avolio, Gardner, Walumbwa, Luthans, & May, 2004; Hoch et al., 2018). They are motivated by a sense of social responsibility and a desire to act in ways consistent with their authentic self (Luthans & Avolio, 2003).

Several definitions of authentic leadership are available throughout the extant literature, with Avolio and Gardner (2005) proposing the following dimensional structure: (1) a positive moral perspective highlighting the strong moral character of the leader and inherent positive virtues upon which they make decisions; (2) self-awareness, which indicates a leader will be open, transparent and conscious of their own beliefs and values whilst leading; (3) they engage in balanced processing, objectively considering multiple perspectives and integrating them, alongside integrating various sources of information before making decisions that affect those around them; (4) relational transparency describes the open manner in which they deal with their followers, sharing information about their values, limitations and weaknesses; (5) positive

psychological capital is also reflected in the resilience, optimism and confidence of the authentic leader; and finally (6) leader behaviours will also be authentic, reflecting their true values and perspectives in how they act, rather than being influenced by external factors.

***Ethical leadership.*** As a leadership style that emphasises an ethical dimension at the centre of its conceptualisation, Brown and colleagues (Brown, Trevino & Harrison, 2005) assert this ethical core as the principal difference between ethical leadership and other positive leadership styles. They also assert that ethical leadership has both trait-based and behavioural attributes in its dimensionality (Brown et al., 2005). The three dimensions of ethical leadership are (1) being an ethical example and demonstrating normatively appropriate conduct for their followers; (2) treating people fairly through their personal actions, interpersonal relationships and generation of ethical working climates, and (3) actively managing morality in their environment, promoting ethicality in decision-making and actions. The ethical leader is thought to have its influence on followers both through social learning theory (Bandura, 1986) and associated behavioural modelling, alongside integrating leader behaviours which uphold moral standards through both reward and punishment (Hoch et al., 2018). Ethical leaders try to do the right thing, behaving and leading in ways that reflect their own high moral and ethical standards (Brown & Treviño, 2006). Similarly to authentic leadership, ethical leaders are said to be socially motivated, alongside having a desire to spread ethical conduct within their working environment (Brown et al., 2005).

**Table 2-2: Overview of Selected Positive Leadership Styles**

	<b>Authentic Leadership</b>	<b>Ethical Leadership</b>	<b>Servant Leadership</b>	<b>Transformational Leadership</b>
<b>Definition</b>	<p>“a process that draws from both positive psychological capacities and a highly developed organizational context, which results in both greater self-awareness and self-regulated positive behaviors on the part of leaders and associates, fostering positive self-development”</p> <p><i>(Luthans &amp; Avolio, 2003:243)</i></p>	<p>“the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, and the promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement, and decision-making”</p> <p><i>(Brown et al., 2005: 120)</i></p>	<p>“an approach to leadership called servant leadership focuses on developing employees to their fullest potential in the areas of task effectiveness, community stewardship, self-motivation, and future leadership capabilities”</p> <p><i>(Liden et al., 2008; 162)</i></p>	<p>“leader behaviours that transform and inspire followers to perform beyond expectations while transcending self-interest for the good of the organization”</p> <p><i>(Avolio et al., 2009:423)</i></p>
<b>Leader motives</b>	<p>Social motivation To behave in ways which reflect their true self</p>	<p>Social motivation Spread of ethical conduct</p>	<p>Facilitating development and well-being of followers</p>	<p>Reaching organisational targets and goals or leader’s personal goals</p>
<b>Style dimensions</b>	<p>Positive moral perspective Self-awareness Balanced processing Relational transparency Positive psychological capital Authentic behaviour</p>	<p>Being an ethical example Treating people fairly Actively managing morality</p>	<p>Emotional healing Creating value for the community Conceptual skills Empowering Helping subordinates grow and succeed Putting subordinates first Behaving ethically</p>	<p>Idealised influence Inspirational motivation Individualised consideration Intellectual stimulation</p>
<b>Follower attitudinal outcomes</b>	<p>Org. commitment Satisfaction (job &amp; supervisor) Empowerment Task engagement Positive self-esteem</p>	<p>Trust in leader Org. trust</p>	<p>Commitment (supervisor &amp; org.) Satisfaction (job &amp; life) Trust in supervisor Empowerment Engagement</p>	<p>Satisfaction (job &amp; supervisor) Engagement</p>
<b>Follower behavioural outcomes</b>	<p>OCB Performance (job) Well-being</p>	<p>Ethical behaviour Prosocial behaviour</p>	<p>OCB Performance (job) Creativity &amp; innovation</p>	<p>Org. climate OCB Performance (individual, group &amp; org.) Reduced turnover</p>

*Table adapted from: Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Avolio et al., 2004, 2009; Bass, 1985; Brown & Treviño, 2006; Ilies, Morgeson, & Nahrgang, 2005; Luthans & Avolio, 2003; Shamir, House, & Arthur, 1993; van Dierendonck, 2011*

### 2.1.5 Summary: Focusing on Servant Leadership

In summary, this section of the thesis has provided an overview of leadership theory and research throughout the twentieth and early twenty-first century. Within this period, positive leadership approaches have garnered attention from many researchers, as well as significant interest from the popular press, publishing houses, and many organisations. It is against this backdrop of combined interest from academics and practitioners that the author chose to focus on the servant leadership style.

From a research perspective, studies to date have found positive relationships between servant leadership and desirable follower attitudes and behaviours such as engagement, in-role performance and extra-role behaviours (please see *Section 2.3: Empirical Findings in Servant Leadership Research* for an elaboration of the relationships between servant leadership and follower attitudes and behaviours). Moreover, these evidenced positive relationships are maintained when controlling for other leadership styles such as ethical and transformational leadership (e.g., Liden et al., 2008; Hoch et al., 2018). The incremental validity of this leadership approach therefore presents an area of leadership influence which remains understudied.

It is at the interface between researchers and practitioners where servant leadership was chosen as the primary focus of this study. As organisational research began to focus on suggestions as to why transformational leadership may have specific gaps in its conceptualisation (Walumbwa et al., 2010), the ethical, practical and meaningful core of servant leadership propelled it into focus as an alternative to other, more traditional leadership styles. With organisations increasingly looking to better understanding unethical behaviours and encouraging ethical attitudes and behaviours (e.g., Hale & Fields, 2007; Liden et al., 2008; Walumbwa et al., 2010), the philosophy of servant leadership is, again, emphasised. When specifically considering the policing establishment, servant leadership presents a particularly compelling approach to supervision of police officers and staff. Similarly to many organisations searching for a way to redress unethical behaviour which can, in part, be attributed to the self-

serving behaviours of leaders (Walumbwa et al., 2010), policing in the United Kingdom had called for a way to lead ethically, supportively, and with the intent to strengthen the efficiency, effectiveness and legitimacy within society (HMIC, 2017; College of Policing 2014; 2015). Greenleaf's servant leadership philosophy (1977) therefore responds to each of these practitioner calls, including the creation of a subsequent generation of servant leaders after they have been led by someone who follows the servant leadership philosophy, the relevance of adopting servant leadership in policing research also informed the selection of this leadership style.

Therefore, from both the academic and practitioner perspectives, servant leadership has been chosen by the author for the focus of this thesis and the theoretical and practical implications presented within it.

## **2.2 Servant Leadership**

### **2.2.1 The Origins of Servant Leadership**

Although the concept of the leader as a servant has been prevalent in western civilisation for an extensive period, many authors refer to Robert Greenleaf's writings '*Servant leadership: A journey into the nature of legitimate power and greatness*' (1977) as the seminal writing in the contemporary literature. This treatise firstly addresses the role of the leader as servant to their followers, and then highlights an increasing societal need to choose to follow servant leaders before describing the nature of the person who becomes a servant. Much of the contemporary servant leadership field originates from this work.

The most frequently cited source of direct inspiration for Greenleaf's writings is Hermann Hesse's novella, *Journey to the East*, first published in 1932. Greenleaf drew many lessons about the role of the leader from this short story, conclusions which ultimately evolved into his concept of *servant leadership* (Dennis & Winston, 2003). This novella is used as the allegorical inspiration for the nature of the servant leader, wherein the character Leo comes to fill the role of servant

to a group of men who are travelling on a great journey. It is only when he leaves them that they come to realise he was, whilst serving, leading them to discovery.

Several authors also attest to a more distant inspiration of the writings undertaken by Greenleaf in the 1970's, that of the old Roman standard *primus inter pares*, or *first among peers* (Buchen, 1998; Reinke, 2004; Spears, 1996; van Dierendonck, 2011; van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2011). This standard was invoked by Greenleaf as an antidote to his concerns about leadership in the workplace (Buchen, 1998), namely that of coercion and undue influence exhibited by individuals in contemporary leadership positions (Reinke, 2004). In adopting this standard, alongside an understanding of the cautionary tale of Hesse's work, Greenleaf's servant leader is posited as an individual who would emerge from within their organisation to lead others by adopting strategies of service, community-building and stewardship (Buchen, 1998; Crippen, 2004). Whilst not giving a concise conceptual definition of servant leadership, Greenleaf poses a series of questions as a test through which the process of identifying and evaluating servant leadership can begin:

*"The best test, and difficult to administer is: Do those served grow as persons? Do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, and more likely to become servants? And, what is the effect on the least privileged in society; will they benefit, or, at least, not be further deprived?"*

(Greenleaf, 1977, p. 22)

Frequently referenced in the extant literature (*e.g.* Buchen, 1998; Kool & van Dierendonck, 2012; Spears, 2004), these questions attest to the overriding assertion that leadership is experienced through the service one provides to others (Greenleaf, 1977). Greenleaf's model places a focus on the leader's potential to develop and advance their followers, their peers and the surrounding environment. It is from this conceptual basis that the servant leadership field has garnered increasing attention.

In the first instance, much early research focussed on how to better understand and conceptualise servant leadership in applied contexts, alongside an emphasis on developing a

robust means of operationalising the concept in a series of measurement studies. The reader is politely directed to section 3.2.2 of the Methodology Overview of this thesis for an overview of the measurement of servant leadership.

### **2.2.2 Defining Servant Leadership**

The aforementioned questions proposed by Greenleaf are amongst the best-known comments on servant leadership in the field. In spite of their popularity, these questions lack the conceptual clarity that is expected of a construct definition, a deficit that is widely acknowledged as an inhibiting factor in the development of empirical research into servant leadership (Laub, 1999; Liden, Wayne, Zhao & Henderson, 2008; Reinke, 2004; van Dierendonck, 2011). From this, a broad range of interpretations of this construct and the behaviours it exemplifies are evident across the literature. To date, the most influential models of the servant leader exist in work from Spears (1995), Laub (1999), Russel and Stone (2002), and Liden and colleagues (2008). These four models each possess different components with considerable conceptual overlap between them. The differing characteristics of the servant leader found within these models are included in Table 2.3, informed in part by van Dierendonck's review of the servant leadership field (2011).

Across the breadth of characteristics highlighted in each of these perspectives of servant leadership, several similarities become evident. In the first instance, the relationship between the servant leader and their followers receives much attention. The servant leader consistently is highlighted as emphasising high levels of communication (Spears, 1995) and encouraging participation in decision-making by delegating tasks to their followers (Liden et al., 2008; Russell & Stone, 2002). To support their followers in acting with autonomy, servant leaders empower their followers (Laub, 1999; Liden et al., 2008; Russell & Stone, 2002) through the provision of trust (Russell & Stone, 2002) and through a consistently emphasised focus on the personal development of their people (Laub, 1999; Liden et al., 2008; Spears, 1995). With the inherent values of stewardship (Spears, 1995) and service (Russell & Stone, 2002) being made clear, the



humility, authenticity and empathetic approach of the servant leader (Laub, 1999; Spears, 1995; van Dierendonck, 2011) is thought to result in them behaving ethically, with honesty and integrity (Laub, 1999; Russell & Stone, 2002). Finally, although termed differently across the literature, the servant leader is also seen to possess intellectual capabilities or skills (Liden et al., 2008). They must understand the organisation and environment in which they work (Liden et al., 2008), possessing the conceptual skills required to ensure success for the organisation into the future (Laub, 1999; Liden et al., 2008; Spears, 1995), alongside being able to establish and communicate a vision for their followers to work towards (Laub, 1999; Russell & Stone, 2002).

Also informing Table 2.3, Van Dierendonck's review of the servant leadership field (2011) highlights 44 different characteristics, but asserts six characteristics that address the conceptual overlap that exists in the field. This review provides a more ordered conceptualisation of the servant leadership concept through the delineation of the six following characteristics; (1) to empower and develop followers, (2) to show humility, (3) to be authentic, (4) to accept people for who they are, (5) provide direction, and (6) to act as stewards in working for the good of the whole.

**Table 2-3: Overview of the Key Characteristics of Servant Leadership Highlighted across the Servant Leadership Field**

<b>Spears (1995)</b>	<b>Laub (1999)</b>	<b>Russell &amp; Stone (2002)*</b>	<b>Liden et al., (2008)</b>	<b>Van Dierendonck (2011)</b>
<p><b>Listening</b> Emphasising the importance of communication and seeking to identify the will of the people</p>	<p><b>Shares leadership</b> Empowers others by sharing power and status, is humble, leads through personal influence rather than positional authority</p>	<p><b>Empowerment</b> Give followers trust and authorise them to behave autonomously; delegate decisions about how to reach organisational goals</p>	<p><b>Empowering followers</b> Encouraging and facilitating others in solving problems and distributing workload</p>	
<p><b>Empathy</b> Understanding others and accepting how and what they are</p>	<p><b>Values people</b> Maintain a high view of people by believing in them, by putting others first, by listening and being receptive</p>	<p><b>Appreciation of others</b> Value and care for their followers through the provision of resources to their followers</p>		<p><b>Interpersonal acceptance</b> Possess the ability to understand and experience the feelings of other people, accept people for who they are</p>
<p><b>Healing</b> The ability to make whole</p>			<p><b>Emotional healing</b> Shows sensitivity to others' concerns</p>	
<p><b>Persuasion</b> Seeking to influence others relying on arguments not on positional power</p>		<p><b>Trust</b> Builds trusting relationships with people by demonstrating concern for them, practices integrity in action and decision-making</p>		
<p><b>Conceptualisation</b> Thinking beyond the present-day need and stretching it into a possible future</p>	<p><b>Provides leadership</b> Intuition as to the direction of the organisation through envisioning the future and clarifying goals for others</p>	<p><b>Vision</b> Uses conceptual skills to establish strategic organisational vision, communicates vision to others</p>	<p><b>Conceptual skills</b> Possesses knowledge of the organisation and everyday tasks so that they can effectively support and assist followers</p>	<p><b>Provide direction</b> Ensures people know what is expected from them, provides direction about responsibility and accountability</p>
<p><b>Foresight</b> Foreseeing outcomes of situations and working with intuition</p>		<p><b>Pioneering</b> Act as extraordinary agents for change, undertake challenges, demonstrate courage in innovation and experimentation</p>		
<p><b>Stewardship</b> Holding something in trust and serving the needs of others</p>		<p><b>Service</b> Possess a moral imperative to serve others rather than attending to self-interest</p>	<p><b>Putting subordinates first</b> Making clear to followers that satisfying their work needs is a priority, often at personal cost</p>	<p><b>Stewardship</b> Express a willingness to take responsibility for the wider institution, engage in service behaviours rather than self-interest</p>

**Table 2.3: Overview of the key characteristics of servant leadership highlighted across the servant leadership field (continued)**

Spears (1995)	Laub (1999)	Russell & Stone (2002)*	Liden et al., (2008)	Van Dierendonck (2011)
<b><i>Commitment to the growth of people</i></b> Nurturing the personal, professional, and spiritual growth of followers	<b><i>Develops people</i></b> Developing potential by providing for learning and growth and modelling appropriate behaviours	<b><i>Modelling</i></b> Instil values through their deeds, establish the ethical tome of the organisation through their behaviours	<b><i>Helping subordinates grow and succeed</i></b> Demonstrating genuine concern for others' career growth and development through the provision of support and mentoring	<b><i>Empowering and developing people</i></b> Enabling followers by establishing a proactive, self-confident attitude, giving followers a sense of personal power
<b><i>Building Community</i></b> Emphasising that local communities are essential in a persons' life	<b><i>Builds community</i></b> Emphasises teamwork by working collaboratively and enhancing relationships, by valuing the differences of others (including cultures and viewpoints)		<b><i>Creating value for the community</i></b> Hold a conscious, genuine concern for helping the community	<b><i>Humility</i></b> Places their own talents and accomplishments in a proper perspective, admit that they can learn from others
<b><i>Awareness</i></b> Being awake	<b><i>Displays authenticity</i></b> Willing to be transparent and open, by being self-aware and open to input from others, by maintaining integrity through honest, consistent and ethical behaviour	<b><i>Honest &amp; Integrity</i></b> Establishes credibility and admiration through truth-telling and promise-keeping; consistently adheres to an overall moral code and awareness of ethics	<b><i>Behaving ethically</i></b> Interact openly, fairly and honestly with others	<b><i>Authenticity</i></b> Adhere to moral code, do what is promised, is visible to followers, is consistent in both communication and behaviour

\*This includes the 9 functional characteristics of servant leadership included in work by Russell and Stone (2002), alongside which 11 complementary additional characteristics are explored, namely communication, credibility, competence, stewardship, visibility, influence, persuasion, listening, encouragement, teaching and delegation. *Table adapted from* (Laub, 1999; Liden et al., 2008; Russell & Stone, 2002; Spears, 1995; van Dierendonck, 2011)

The conceptualisation and measurement of servant leadership by Liden and colleagues (2008) is used throughout this thesis. This version of servant leadership is held as a more comprehensive conceptualisation of this leadership philosophy and has been widely used in empirical research (e.g. Chan & Mak, 2014; Chen, Zhu & Zhou, 2015; Chiniara & Bentein, 2016; de Clercq et al., 2014; Peterson et al., 2012; Tang et al., 2016). This model finds empirical support for seven dimensions within their samples, these dimensions are as follows:

1. *Emotional healing* – the act of showing sensitivity to others' personal concerns
2. *Creating value for the community* – a conscious, genuine concern for helping the community
3. *Conceptual skills* – possessing the knowledge of the organisation and tasks at hand to be able to effectively support and assist others, especially immediate followers
4. *Empowering* – encouraging and facilitating others, especially immediate followers, in identifying and solving problems, as well as determining when and how to complete work tasks
5. *Helping subordinates grow and succeed* – demonstrating genuine concern for other's career growth development by providing support and mentoring
6. *Putting subordinates first* – using actions and words to make it clear to others (especially immediate followers) that satisfying their work needs is a priority
7. *Behaving ethically* – interacting openly, fairly, and honestly with others

*Adapted from Liden et al., 2008*

From these dimensions, the servant leader places the needs of their followers above and beyond their own and 'focuses on developing employees to their fullest potential in the areas of task effectiveness, community stewardship, self-motivation, and future leadership capabilities' (Liden et al., 2008, p. 162). This definition addresses the most common facets of strong relationship with followers, as well as underlining the influence of servant leadership on the wider community.

### 2.2.3 Comparing Servant Leadership to Other Positive Leadership Styles

Servant leadership is often compared to authentic leadership, charismatic leadership, ethical leadership, and is most often compared to transformational leadership. Comparative assessments of servant leadership against other leadership models often comment on the areas of conceptual overlap between them, each of which is now discussed.

***Authentic leadership and servant leadership.*** Several authors have considered the shared conceptual underpinnings of authentic and servant leadership (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006; Sendjaya, Sarros, & Santora, 2008; van Dierendonck, 2011). Both styles are emerging as ethical and moral leadership styles, emphasising stewardship (van Dierendonck, 2011) and notions of service (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006). Avolio and Gardner (2005) comment on several focal components that the two styles share which are seen in positive moral perspectives, leader self-awareness, authentic behaviour and positive modelling. Both leadership styles also focus on follower development and self-determination (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Sendjaya et al., 2008). They also emphasise social persuasion to achieve effective leadership influence rather than being more forceful in their interactions with followers (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006).

In spite of many shared conceptual components, extant research has also highlighted areas of difference between authentic leaders and servant leaders (*e.g.* Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Sendjaya et al., 2008). A spiritual orientation is emphasised in conceptual considerations of servant literature (Farling et al., 1999; Page & Wong, 2000; Spears, 1996), however, this is not strongly highlighted in writings on authentic leadership (Sendjaya et al., 2008). Avolio and Gardner (2005) also find authentic leadership to utilise emotional contagion as a form of influence, however no such influence is proposed in the servant leadership literature.

***Charismatic leadership and servant leadership.*** As the servant leadership field was on the cusp of diversifying into rigorous empirical research, several authors provided assessments of the similarities and differences between servant leadership and charismatic leadership (Barbuto

& Wheeler, 2006; Sendjaya & Sarros, 2002; Smith, Montagno, & Kuzmenko, 2004). Although lacking empirical study, a consensus arises from conceptual assessment of the relationship between charismatic and servant approaches to leadership in the workplace.

In the first instance, Sendjaya and Sarros (2002) comment on the philosophical origins of the servant leader in the Bible, emphasising the self-concept of this leadership approach originating in the role of steward. They propose that the primary interest of this leader is in serving others first, rather than leading them. They attribute common biblical roots to both charismatic and servant leadership, where a sense of charisma or the ability to convince people to follow a shared vision underpins leadership legitimacy. They also provide an overview of the differences between these two leadership approaches. They comment that a leader's social responsibility and dedication to the needs of their followers are two aspects of servant leadership that differ from salient conceptualisations of charismatic leadership (Sendjaya & Sarros, 2002).

Smith and colleagues also attest to the interest of the servant leader in caring for and developing their followers as the principal difference between charismatic and servant leadership (2004). Similar to work by Barbuto and Wheeler (2006), Smith and colleagues (2004) also address the role of Weberian charismatic authority in the study of leadership. This form of charisma attests to how followers come to identify with their leader, alongside the inherently charismatic components of a servant leader which encourage followers to share and work towards a future vision. An additional point of divergence between the two leadership conceptualisations is seen in how the servant leader facilitates their followers, whereas the charismatic leader relies upon this personal charismatic power to influence them (Smith et al., 2004).

***Ethical leadership and servant leadership.*** Servant leadership also has several similarities with Brown and colleagues' ethical leadership theory (Brown et al., 2005). The most striking similarities between these two approaches are the common intent on building strong

relationships with their followers, holding the needs of followers at the forefront of their actions, and the importance of behaving ethically (Brown et al., 2005; Liden et al., 2008; van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2011). In their meta-analysis of several positive leadership styles, Hoch and colleagues (2018) provide a similar perspective to Van Dierendonck's review (2011), in that servant and ethical leaders both also generate fair and ethical organisational environments through the support of fairness in decision-making. Their assessment also highlights the role of social learning and the creation of positive learning environments as shared between the two leadership approaches (Hoch et al., 2018).

Ethical leaders and servant leadership share a focus on protecting the best interests of followers and behaving ethically in the workplace; however, the two styles do differ. Van Dierendonck (2011) provides a concise comment on differences that lie in how an ethical leader emphasises both normative and directive behaviours, whereas the servant leader has a much more acute focus on the personal development of their followers. This emphasis of the servant leader is predominantly seen in the three servant leadership characteristics of authenticity, interpersonal acceptance and providing direction. These three characteristics are at the core of the central definitions of servant leadership, but lack any significant foundation in ethical leadership theory (Brown et al., 2005).

***Transformational leadership and servant leadership.*** Much more empirical work has been undertaken to understand the differences and similarities between servant leadership and transformational leadership. This research interest is often contributed to the inherent overlap of between them. In its infancy, considerations of these leadership styles were undertaken exclusively in conceptual papers which addressed the similarities between Burns' transformational leader (1978), and contemporary definitions of the servant leader (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006; Farling et al., 1999; Graham, 1991; Sendjaya & Sarros, 2002; Smith et al., 2004). Parallels are highlighted in the vision and positive example they provide to followers, alongside the way in which they both motivate and encourage their followers to put additional effort into

their roles (Graham, 1991). However, in spite of these similarities, conceptual distinctions are consistently established (Farling et al., 1999; Graham, 1991; Sendjaya & Sarros, 2002; Smith et al., 2004). An example of these differences is seen in motivation, wherein the servant leader is motivated to lead through a call to service rather than being called to lead as is argued in transformational leadership (Sendjaya & Sarros, 2002). Furthermore, the target of these two leadership styles also differs, with the servant leader acting to attend to the emotional needs of their followers and the transformational leader working to meet the expectations of the organisation and of their shareholders (Smith et al., 2004).

In their tabulated comparison of the dimensions of both leadership styles, Smith and colleagues (2004) highlight that, in spite of the significant conceptual overlap, servant leadership does not readily address the dimension of *intellectual stimulation*. Although a servant leader is seen to encourage their followers to reach their full potential (Liden et al., 2008), their focus is on personal development rather than on a change that would positively benefit the organisation as is posited in the *intellectual stimulation* dimension of transformational leadership (Bass, 1985; Smith et al., 2004). Additionally, transformational leadership is proposed to place much less emphasis on the emotional connection between leader and follower, extending to the lack of direct emphasis being placed on learning from others as is seen with a servant leader (Smith et al., 2004). The comparison conducted by Smith and colleagues (2004) also emphasises the transformational leader as encouraging risk-taking behaviour in the pursuit of enhanced business success, whereas the servant leader does not emphasise this approach. This conceptual paper therein provides an overall perspective on the differences between the conceptualisation of these leadership styles, attesting to both the evident overlap and more nuanced differences between them.

In one of the early empirical papers comparing the impact of servant and transformational leadership on follower outcomes, Barbuto and Wheeler echo the aforementioned conceptual considerations in their scale development paper (2006). They find servant leadership and



transformational leadership to demonstrate shared components, but that servant leadership better predicts leader-member exchange quality than transformational leadership (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006). Servant leadership is also found to explain additional variance than transformational leadership in follower attitudes such as commitment and satisfaction (Schneider & George, 2011). Liden and colleagues found supervisory servant leadership to explain incremental variance in organisational commitment, community citizenship behaviours and in-role performance when controlling for both transformational leadership and leader-member exchange (Liden et al., 2008). Servant leadership is also found to explain additional variance in performance behaviours, organisational citizenship behaviours and discretionary effort towards customers beyond that of transformational leadership (*e.g.* Chen et al., 2015; Grisaffe et al., 2016).

Moreover, Hoch and colleagues' work (2018) provides a meta-analytic perspective on these same relationships. They found incremental variance of servant leadership over and above transformational leadership in several measures including trust, leader-member exchange, and 15% more over organisational commitment. As servant leadership and transformational leadership have only a moderate correlation (.52), they argue that both incremental variance and empirical distinctiveness are evident between the two styles (Hoch et al., 2018). In this instance, servant leadership also adds significant variance over and above ethical and authentic leadership. Although a limitation of this study is the smaller number of empirical studies exploring servant leadership and the inconsistency in the relationships explored within these papers, this meta-analysis provides a positive outlook for the further elaboration of the servant leadership field, especially in the assessment of affective responses to work and follower discretionary effort (Hoch et al., 2018).

Extant research also evidences certain instances in which transformational leadership better predicts valued follower behaviours. For instance, in a study of organisational learning within a private-sector service organisation, transformational leadership was found to be a more

important predictor than servant leadership (Choudhary, Akhtar, & Zaheer, 2013). From this, evidence suggests that each leadership style may be more useful in specific settings (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006; Choudhary et al., 2013; Grisaffe et al., 2016).

#### **2.2.4 Summary: The Servant Leadership Philosophy**

This thesis emphasises servant leadership as the paradigm of interest for the following reasons. Firstly, scholars consistently position the servant approach at the emerging frontier of leadership research (*e.g.*, Day & Antonakis, 2012; Dinh et al., 2014; Gardner et al., 2010). As a field in the relatively early stages of development (Hoch et al., 2018), the small quantity of empirical research therefore presents informative avenues for further development of the field.

Similarly, preliminary research in the field established the conceptual (*e.g.*, Sendjara & Sarros, 2002; Stone, Russell & Paterson., 2004) and empirical distinctiveness (*e.g.*, Van Dierendonck et al., 2014; Schneider & George, 2011) of the servant leadership construct. This distinctiveness, combined with findings which indicate that servant leadership predicts incremental variance in multiple individual-level variables above more established leadership styles (Hoch et al., 2018), informs the selection of the servant leadership approach to be studied within this thesis.

Thirdly, servant leadership is frequently highlighted as a practical strategy through which we can understand the development of employee engagement, organisational citizenship behaviours, commitment and other positive follower attitudinal outcomes (*e.g.*, Liden et al., 2015; van Dierendonck, 2011; van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2011). These outcomes are seen to be especially salient as the focus of the servant leader is on the provision of service for others and to support and develop their followers, rather than on the pursuit of organisational performance indicators, acknowledged as the focus of transformational leadership (Smith et al., 2004). Servant leadership is found to be empirically distinct from and results in incremental variance in such desirable outcomes over authentic, ethical and

transformational leadership (Choudhary et al., 2013; Hoch et al., 2018; Panaccio et al., 2015). Servant leadership is also found to be particularly effective in promoting positive follower behaviours that benefit customers over and above transformational leadership (Grisaffe et al., 2016; Liden et al., 2008). This positioning of servant leadership influence on individual-level outcomes relating to positive attitudes and engagement in discretionary effort inform the selection of this leadership paradigm for further inquiry. Following calls from Hoch and colleagues (2018), this study contributes to the extant literature by specifying additional, novel follower outcomes of supervisory servant leadership.

Fourthly, consistent and repeated calls are evident within extant empirical research, therein providing broad scope for deepening the understanding of servant leadership influence. These calls present an impetus to explore the range of workplace outcomes of an individual's experience of supervisory servant leadership (*e.g.* Mayer, 2010; Chan & Mak, 2014; Tang et al., 2016). Calls are also made for a more nuanced understanding of the mediational processes through which these outcomes arise (*e.g.* Peterson et al., 2012; Feldman, 2014; van Dierendonck et al., 2014), including highlighting the relative importance of these differing mechanisms (de Clercq et al., 2014; Liden et al., 2014a).

Further to these calls, the servant leadership construct is also argued to be of significant contemporary relevance in changing social and cultural contexts (*e.g.*, Hale & Fields, 2007). Uniquely positioned due to the ethical, workplace well-being and other-oriented facets of this leadership style (*e.g.*, Liden et al., 2008; van Dierendonck, 2011), scholars and practitioners converge to popularise the servant leadership paradigm. A series of organisational scandals as a result of unethical behaviour became public knowledge from private sector companies in the early twenty-first century, for example Enron and Worldcom (*e.g.* Graham, 1991; Hale & Fields, 2007; Liden et al., 2008; Reinke, 2004; Sendjaya et al., 2008). Resulting from these corporate scandals (Hale & Fields, 2007), the general response from government bodies and industry alike has been to reconsider the role of moral and ethical values in the workplace (Reinke, 2004; Sousa

& van Dierendonck, 2017). This response is in keeping with many studies that have suggested that positive leadership behaviours serve a critical role in demotivating unethical behaviours in the workplace (Brown & Treviño, 2006; Treviño & Brown, 2005). Furthermore it resonates with the emerging trends of leadership research in the interplay between leadership, ethics and accountability (Gardner et al., 2010). With its emphasis on behaving ethically, creating value for the community and putting others first (Liden et al., 2008), servant leadership is therefore highlighted within this thesis as a leadership paradigm of particular relevance in applied settings.

The changing nature of the workforce in both demographic changes and shifting societal norms and expectations is also said to contribute to the increasing popularity of servant leadership (Hale & Fields, 2007). From the traditional leadership styles addressed by Crippen (2004), to contemporary organizational life, demographic changes can be seen in the increase of women, and more racial and ethnic diversity in the working population (Laub, 1999). Marking the refocusing of attention on servant leadership in the early twenty-first century, these workforce differences, alongside the ever-increasing use of technology in the workplace (Kool & van Dierendonck 2012; van Dierendonck et al., 2014), necessitate an adapted approach to management and leadership. With organisations becoming increasingly aware of the complexity of the workforce, especially the importance of dealing with the individual in a knowledge-based economy, modern workplaces are held as learning environments (*e.g.* Laub, 1999; Liden et al., 2008). Servant leadership is in a unique position to respond to these changes (Hale & Fields, 2007). Primarily, servant leadership places explicit attention on creating value for organisational stakeholders and positions the leader as servant rather than master (Hoch et al., 2018), a focus which is lacking in other contemporary positive leadership styles. Furthermore, the servant leader values each individual employee and seeks opportunities to support their welfare and personal development (*e.g.*, Spears, 1995; Laub, 1999; Russell & Stone, 2002). With this other-centred orientation (Greenleaf, 1977; Liden et al., 2008), this thesis positions servant leadership as a key response to changing conceptualisations of the modern workplace. Similarly, in

adherence with the opinions expressed by multiple influential stakeholders in UK policing (*e.g.*, May, 2015; White, 2015; Javid, 2018; HMICFRS, 2019), the policing establishment within the United Kingdom faces increasing strain from the broader contractions in public sector funding. Against this backdrop of reduced resources and an increasing need to rely upon discretionary effort from followers to continue to police the United Kingdom, the importance for individuals to feel supported and cared-for by their supervisor is imperative to managing the impact of this challenging environment. Servant leadership is therefore contended to be in a unique position to respond to the needs of individuals, the strategic direction of public sector organisations, and to interacting with members of the public and partner agencies within the same philosophy.

### **2.3 Empirical Findings in Servant Leadership Research**

To date, empirical servant leadership research has been undertaken exclusively in field settings. Within these studies, the effects of servant leadership on several follower attitudes and behaviours have been discussed. Three key reviews exist within the extant servant leadership literature: a review and synthesis carried out by van Dierendonck (2011), a literature review undertaken by Parris and Peachey (2013), and a meta-analysis by Hoch and colleagues (2018) which addresses servant leadership in relation to ethical, authentic and transformational leadership styles. These three complementary considerations of servant leadership inform the following section of this thesis.

#### **2.3.1 Antecedents of Servant Leadership**

The majority of empirical research in the servant leadership field has focused on outcomes, leaving antecedents understudied in the literature. Although a deeper understanding of these antecedents is beyond the scope of this research, this section provides a brief overview of the antecedents that have been explored to date. Studies into these antecedents address individual differences in leader personality and leader values (Hunter et al., 2013; Peterson et al., 2012; Washington, Sutton, & Feild, 2006). Agreeableness has been highlighted as a key antecedent of

servant leadership (Hunter et al., 2013; Washington et al., 2006). Found to be positively related to servant leadership when rated by their followers, agreeableness in a leader is described as them being 'fundamentally altruistic, generous, and sympathetic' (2006, p. 702). This perspective of agreeableness echoes Greenleaf's treatise on the leader as servant (Greenleaf, 1977), which emphasises the nature of a servant leader in being other-oriented. To strengthen this finding, leader extraversion, proposed as a motivational tendency of the leader to be self-serving in their interests and behaviours, is found to be negatively related to servant leadership when rated by followers (Hunter et al., 2013). A similar negative relationship is seen between CEO servant leadership and leader narcissism (Peterson et al., 2012).

Furthermore leader values have, although widely addressed in conceptual writings on servant leadership, received little attention in empirical research. Washington and colleagues (2006) address the leader's values of empathy, integrity and competence. Empathy is considered to be a representation of the servant leader's work to 'reinforce their communication and decision making with a deep commitment to listening intently to others' (Washington et al., 2006: 702), a value which is seen as relevant in fostering the high levels of communication inherent in the leader-follower dyad. Integrity is defined by the authors as being imperative in building trust and is best maintained by consistency between the leader's espoused values and the actions experienced by their followers (Washington et al., 2006). This value can be seen to echo the servant leader's connection to ethical behaviour and the moral structures behind reasoned and informed decision-making that is highlighted in the literature (*e.g.* Laub, 1999; Page & Wong, 2000; Reinke, 2004; Russell, 2001; Sendjaya & Sarros, 2002; van Dierendonck, 2011). Moreover, the value of competence as an antecedent of servant leadership is highlighted. They argue that followers must believe their leader is capable and competent, both technically and in terms of leadership skills (Washington et al., 2006) and, as a result, can be seen to align with the strong exchange relationships extolled in the servant leadership literature.

In a conceptual piece, Liden and colleagues (Liden, Panaccio, Meuer & Hu 2014b) propose a series of antecedents that, although not tested empirically, present a compelling conceptualisation of the antecedents of servant leadership. In the first instance they propose that an individual should have six characteristics that are indicators of servant leader potential. These are the desire to serve others, emotional intelligence, moral maturity and conation, prosocial identity, higher levels of core self-evaluation and low levels of narcissism (Liden et al., 2014b) . They contend that an individual who possesses these characteristics shows the potential required to become a servant leader. Although these propositions are empirically untested, they echo comments made by Peterson and colleagues as to the importance of low leader narcissism (Peterson et al., 2012) and highlight the similarities between a leader's emotional intelligence and their agreeableness and empathy (Washington et al., 2006).

### **2.3.2 Individual-Level Outcomes of Servant Leadership**

One of the key aspects of servant leadership that has garnered significant attention in both academic and practitioner arenas is its people-centred approach to leadership (Chen et al., 2015; Chiniara & Bentein, 2016; Yoshida, Sendjaya, Hirst, & Cooper, 2014). Followers of servant leaders are also thought to be better performing in their role-related performance, contextual performance and other-oriented behaviours. The positive influence of servant leadership on this broad range of follower outcomes is attributed to several different mediational mechanisms, including leader-member exchange, trust, engagement, commitment and satisfaction.

#### ***Behavioural outcomes of servant leadership***

***Performance*** as a domain is often separated into both task performance and contextual performance (Borman & Motowildo, 1997). In considering job or task performance, Hoch and colleagues comment on consistent findings of a positive relationship between servant leadership and job performance (2018). This is supported by several studies across diverse samples evidencing this positive relationship (*e.g.* Chiniara & Bentein, 2016; Liden, Wayne, Liao, & Meuser, 2014; Liden et al., 2015; Neubert, Kacmar, Carlson, Chonko, & Roberts, 2008). Servant

leaders are seen to encourage and support follower job performance through the creation of positive psychological climates (Jaramillo et al., 2015), and social learning or role modelling processes (e.g. Chiniara & Bentein, 2016; Liden et al., 2014a). As leader behaviour communicates what is expected in a working environment, followers are seen to emulate the servant leader's behaviours, behaviours which emphasise the importance of acting with integrity, nurturing others and personal growth. When contextual performance is role-modelled on a servant leader, its' inherent ethical, nurturing, and other-oriented characteristics are expected to be manifest in behavioural outcomes. These types of performance are considered of specific utility and value in the policing environment, wherein ethical standards and integrity are paramount, and all police officer and staff behaviours are expected to be in-keeping with the Code of Ethics (College of Policing, 2014).

Followers are therefore seen to exhibit higher instances of job performance under a servant leader role model (e.g. Chiniara & Bentein, 2016; Jaramillo et al., 2015). Additional studies also contend that servant leadership is positively related to job performance through the development of high-quality social exchange relationships between leaders and followers (e.g. Chiniara & Bentein, 2016; Liden et al., 2015). As servant leaders fulfil the psychological needs of their followers (e.g. Chiniara & Bentein, 2016; Liden et al., 2015), followers feel an increased sense of self-efficacy and autonomy in making decisions at work. In a contribution in-kind to that dyadic leader-follower relationship, discussed in more detail below, individuals are seen to exhibit increased job performance (Chiniara & Bentein, 2016; Liden et al., 2015).

The influence of servant leadership is not limited to individual follower performance, an example of which is seen in a study by Liden and colleagues (2014). Alongside a positive relationship between servant leadership and individual performance through role modelling mechanisms, servant leadership was found to be positively related to unit-level performance through the mechanisms of social identity theory (Hogg & Terry, 2000), and group identification processes (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). With data analysis including responses from 961 employees



in 71 restaurants, this study also highlights the role of servant leader behaviour in contributing to a pervasive serving climate in the workplace. By providing a supportive, fair environment which provides individuals with opportunities for growth, the servant leader has an indirect influence on a broad range of participative behaviours, seen in this instance in both an individual's job performance and in restaurant or unit-level performance. Individuals are seen to emulate the normative behaviours enacted by their servant leader and will direct those behaviours towards mutual or shared goals within their working unit. This study therein emphasises the complementary mechanisms through which servant leadership influences both individual-level and unit-level performance outcomes in the workplace (Liden et al., 2014a).

Secondly, the positive relationship between servant leadership and a small number of contextual performance outcomes has also been consistently found in the extant literature. A common focus of study in the servant leadership field, organisational citizenship behaviours (*subsequently referred to as OCB*) are presented as a series of follower behaviours that, in extending beyond a follower's in-role responsibilities, contribute to contextual performance at work. Organ (1988) defined organisational citizenship behaviours as 'individual behaviour that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognised by the formal reward system, and that in the aggregate promotes the effective functioning of the organisation' (1988, p. 44). The positive relationship between servant leadership and these discretionary behaviours has been established and explored throughout empirical research (*e.g.* Brubaker et al., 2015; Chiniara & Bentein, 2016; Newman, Schwarz, Cooper, & Sendjaya, 2017). In one of the earliest empirical papers, Ehrhart (2004) found a positive relationship between servant leadership and unit-level OCB. Through the provision of positive role models, unit members with servant leaders engaged more in helping behaviours directed towards other members, alongside helping the organisation in a general sense with increased conscientiousness whilst at work (Ehrhart, 2004).

In referring back to the initial conceptualisation of servant leadership, Greenleaf contended that one way to test the effectiveness is to ascertain whether or not the followers of servant

leaders become servants themselves (Greenleaf, 1977). In his review of the servant leadership field, Van Dierendonck (2011) contends that followers engaging in OCB are indeed acting as servants, directed towards both colleagues and the organisation. An example of this effect is assessed at the individual-level, with Brubaker and colleagues (2015) evidencing this role-modelled behaviour. The positive relationships that followers experience with a servant leader were hypothesised to be significantly correlated with individual-level OCB-altruism, a follower's foresight in work-related activity which benefits their co-workers, and OCB-courtesy, a follower who provides help in preventing future potential problems at work. This research has been extended across different occupational contexts and various countries, all of which demonstrate a comparative positive relationship (*e.g.* Bobbio et al., 2012; Brubaker et al., 2015; Grisaffe et al., 2016; Panaccio et al., 2015; Wu, Tse, Fu, Kwan, & Liu, 2013). Research can therefore be seen to provide critical evidence as to the positive relationship between servant leadership and follower contextual performance. This initial evidence provides several examples of future research directions as to developing the breadth of follower outcomes of servant leadership that extend beyond forms of in-role performance (Parris & Peachey, 2013; Liden et al., 2015).

***Extra-role behaviours.*** Servant leadership is consistently found to be related to contextual performance, operationalised through the aforementioned study of OCB. However, increasing attention is being paid as to how servant leadership relates to other, more progressive forms of discretionary effort in line with van Dyne and LePine's taxonomy of extra-role behaviours (1998). These additional forms of discretionary effort are often considered necessary to support organisations in dealing with challenging environmental contexts (LePine & Van Dyne, 2001). As policing is currently under an extended period of strain originating in public sector austerity across the United Kingdom (May, 2015; White, 2015; Javid, 2018), it is considered by many establishment policy-makers and influencers to be relying upon police officer and staff discretionary effort to remain functional. From this position of a strained, challenged

environmental context, the relevance of applying a servant leadership philosophy within this thesis is further emphasised.

When considered in studies with servant leadership, creative behaviours are considered to represent the development of new ideas or approaches that are practical or novel, whereas innovation behaviours address the implementation of such novel ideas, often in team settings (e.g. Liden et al., 2014a; Neubert et al., 2008; Yoshida et al., 2014). Servant leaders empower their followers (Liden et al., 2014a) and communicate what is expected in a working environment (Neubert et al., 2008), influencing how followers behave as a result. For example, Neubert and colleagues (2008) found servant leadership to be positively related to the follower extra-role behaviours of creativity and innovation at work by triggering a state of promotion focus. Servant leaders are therein seen to generate a nurturing, aspirational environment in which their followers will be more inclined to behave in innovative and creative ways (Neubert et al., 2008). Other studies also support positive relationships between servant leadership and creative and innovative behaviours (Liden et al., 2014a; 2015; Panaccio et al., 2015). An example is also seen in work by Yoshida and colleagues (2014), who investigated the role of servant leadership in fostering follower creativity and innovation at both the individual and team levels. In hypothesising the relationship between leadership influence and follower behavioural outcomes through the lens of relational identification, they found both individual creativity and collective innovative behaviour to be positively related to supervisory servant leadership. Servant leaders therein directly enhance individual creativity through the formation of strong dyadic relationships, and indirectly augment workplace creative outcomes through instating and maintaining innovative team climates (Yoshida et al., 2014). As a wealth of extra-role behaviours exist (van Dyne & LePine, 1998), the servant leadership field is thought to be a valuable research area in which to expand understanding as to the effectiveness of servant leaders in fostering desirable extra-role behaviours in the workplace (Chiniara & Bentein, 2016).

***Customer-oriented behaviours.*** An area of servant leadership literature has also focused on the generation of follower customer-oriented behaviours in a service environment (*e.g.* Chen et al., 2015; Liden et al., 2014; Schwepker Jr, 2016; Wu et al., 2013). This is a context of particular interest for this leadership style due to the dynamic and intangible processes through which an individual engages in service interactions (Chen et al., 2015). Through social learning, social exchange and social identity processes, positive relationships between servant leadership and customer-oriented behaviours in the workplace are supported in various studies (Chen et al., 2015; Grisaffe et al., 2016; Schwepker, 2016).

Similarly to the manner in which followers of a servant leader will role model their leaders behaviour towards their co-workers and the organisation, several studies contend that this same influence extends beyond the organisation to external organisational stakeholders such as customers (*e.g.* Liden et al., 2014a; Wu et al., 2013). At the individual level, a servant leader's high-quality relationship with their followers includes the provision of one-on-one attention being provided to their followers. A follower in receipt of this attention will experience an increased salience of service, which they are then likely to model and pass forward to their co-workers and further to their customers (Liden et al., 2014a; Wu et al., 2013). At the unit level, Liden and colleagues also attest to the influence that a servant leader has on other-serving behaviours from their followers through the creation of positive psychological climates (Liden et al., 2008). They argue that the pervasiveness of the influence of a servant leader generates a fairness climate within work groups that facilitate individual-level community service behaviours. This finding is also supported by work from Schwepker (2016) in salesperson performance and activity directed towards customer value, both of which are found to be positively related to supervisory servant leadership in a sales environment.

#### ***Attitudinal outcomes of servant leadership and related mediational mechanisms***

As several positive outcomes received corroborated empirical support in relationship with servant leadership, research attention has also been placed on the mechanisms through which

servant leadership influences follower outcomes. Two commonly-used theoretical perspectives throughout the servant leadership literature are social exchange and self-determination theory. Examples of these underlying mechanisms are seen in the testing of concepts such as leader-member exchange, trust, satisfaction, commitment and engagement. The creation of pervasive social climates is also discussed, followed by a consideration of well-being related outcomes of servant leadership.

***Social exchange perspectives of servant leadership influence.*** A frequently-applied theoretical perspective within the servant leadership literature, social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) contends that the purpose of social behaviour is to maintain an equilibrium in the costs and benefits associated with a relationship. This perspective is also echoed in theoretical propositions of the norm of reciprocity, where individuals feel obliged to reciprocate positive or beneficial treatment from others, righting a perceived imbalance. Konovsky and Pugh (1994) contend that, when applied to supervisory relationships, a follower will engage in positive workplace behaviours to repay fair or beneficial treatment that they have received from their leader. Settoon and colleagues (1996) also comment as to the reciprocation of beneficial treatment in a leader-follower dyad as contributing to the development of high-quality interpersonal relationships. From this research, servant leaders are thought to influence their followers through social exchange mechanisms due to the form of relationships that are generated between leader and follower. Rather than relying exclusively on a form of economic exchange, servant leaders develop high quality relationships with their followers through their evident desire to empower followers, alongside helping them develop themselves at work (Liden et al., 2008).

Leader-member exchange (*subsequently referred to as LMX*), typifies the relational approach to leadership that was frequently adopted in the latter part of the twentieth century and beginning of the twenty-first century (Dinh et al., 2014; Lord et al., 2017). Often employing social exchange as an underpinning theoretical perspective (Settoon et al., 1996; Wayne et al., 1997),

LMX contends that effective leadership influence will occur when leaders and followers have developed meaningful, mature relationships (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). Both leader and follower represent dyadic partners, a partnership which generates incremental influence over time (Katz & Kahn, 1978). As leader-follower relationships within LMX approaches are typified by high-quality dyadic exchange (Day & Antonakis, 2012), many similarities with servant leadership are often highlighted. These similarities arise in positive social motivations, the provision of emotional support and strong communication between leader and follower. However, despite these similarities, conceptual distinctiveness can also be seen. Described by Liden and colleagues (2008), LMX theory (Dienesch & Liden, 1986) does not explicitly address a leader's role in the development of followers into positive leaders. Moreover, LMX theory is commented not to attest to the role of the leader in encouraging service to the community (Liden et al., 2008).

Further to these conceptual differences, several studies have empirically questioned the relationship between servant leadership and LMX. Initially, research focus was on establishing LMX and servant leadership as empirically distinct concepts (*e.g.* Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006; Liden et al., 2008). Although Barbuto and Wheeler (2006) found greater shared variance between LMX and servant leadership than between LMX and transformational leadership, there were still only moderate correlations between LMX and the five servant leadership subscales (correlation coefficients between .51 and .71). The highest correlation was found with emotional healing, most likely due to the comparative high-quality, trusting and accepting aspects of servant leadership and LMX relationships alike. The lowest correlation was between wisdom and LMX (.51), which may be seen to represent the emphasis that LMX places on relationship quality, rather than on explicit behaviours that are inherent in conceptualisations of servant leadership (Hoch et al., 2018; Liden et al., 2008). Barbuto and Hayden (Barbuto & Hayden, 2011) also report emotional healing as the highest correlation with LMX (.73), and wisdom as the lowest (.55). Liden and colleagues (2008) found similar correlations between LMX and servant leadership

subscales. Although using a different measurement scale, correlation coefficients ranged between .48 and .75, with emotional healing having the highest correlation with LMX (.75).

These aforementioned studies established the predictive validity of servant leadership beyond LMX in correlations with forms of follower discretionary effort (*e.g.* Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006; Liden et al., 2008), and are asserted as tangential constructs (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006). As the conceptual distinctiveness of servant leadership and LMX was mirrored in empirical findings, servant leadership has been increasingly conceptualised as a predictor of LMX, rather than as a shared construct. For example, Wu and colleagues (2013) found LMX to mediate the positive relationship between servant leadership and customer-focused organisational citizenship behaviours. Moreover, Newman and colleagues reflected these findings (Newman, Kiazad, Miao, & Cooper, 2014), who found the mediational process of LMX to outperform the mechanism of psychological empowerment in mediating the relationship between servant leadership and organisational citizenship behaviours. Both studies reported moderate correlations between servant leadership and LMX (.41 and .63 respectively), with confirmatory factor analyses in each study providing evidence for the distinctiveness of the concepts in model comparisons (Newman et al., 2017; Wu et al., 2013).

With these empirical considerations in mind, servant leadership is found across several studies to be a strong predictor of LMX (Barbuto & Hayden, 2011; Newman et al., 2017; Wu et al., 2013). This relationship is theoretically underpinned by social exchange theory. A servant leader's influence on a variety of positive follower behavioural outcomes is therefore explained in part by leader-follower relationships. With the experience of trustworthy, empowering servant leaders as their role models, leaders and followers develop high-quality dyadic relationships. To reciprocate these positive workplace experiences, followers will engage in discretionary effort behaviours (Barbuto & Hayden, 2011; Newman et al., 2017; Wu et al., 2013).

Interpersonal trust is also thought to play a significant role in the positive relationship between servant leadership and follower outcomes from a social exchange perspective.

Definitions of trust within the literature focus on the concept as an indicator of a person's willingness to make themselves vulnerable to another person, alongside viewing that other person as being dependable (e.g. Goodwin, Whittington, Murray, & Nichols, 2011; Newman, et al., 2014; Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt, & Camerer, 1998). As a servant leader is seen to behave with both integrity and concern for others (Farling et al., 1999; Joseph & Winston, 2005), they are likely to be viewed as a dependable individual who will not violate social norms in a trusting relationship. From this, servant leadership and trust are seen to be compatible in working relationships. In early empirical work on senior level servant leadership, Joseph and Winston (2005) found servant leadership to be related to trust in both the leader and organisation, a finding echoed in other servant leadership research (e.g. Chan & Mak, 2014; Sendjaya & Pekerti, 2010). When trust in supervisor is related to the perceived ability, benevolence and integrity of the leader (Mayer & Gavin, 2005), servant leaders are found to be trusted by their followers due to their behavioural integrity, empathetic concern for followers and conceptual skills (Chan & Mak, 2014; Greenleaf, 1977; Liden et al., 2008; Sendjaya & Pekerti, 2010). Trust is also proposed as a mediating mechanism through which servant leadership influences positive follower outcomes, generating subsequent cooperation between leaders and followers (Chan & Mak, 2014; Goh & Low, 2013). An example of this is seen in research by Goh and Low (2013), who found the mechanism of affective and cognitive trust to mediate the relationship between servant leadership and follower commitment to the organisation. This finding is complemented by research by Chan and Mak (2014), who found follower trust in their leader to mediate the relationship between servant leadership and follower job satisfaction.

Fairness is also highlighted in the extant literature as a follower attitude that is generated or heightened as form of social exchange with a servant leader (van Dierendonck, 2011). Relying on its conceptual origins, Greenleaf purported the natural servant as an individual who would seek to challenge perceived injustices within their environment (Greenleaf, 1977). This perspective has been held throughout the subsequent development of the field, from some of



the earliest empirical work (Farling et al., 1999) to contemporary inquiries as to how servant leadership contributes to performance outcomes (Schwepker Jr, 2016). Schwepker (2016) hypothesised that, through their focus on behaving ethically and acting with integrity, servant leaders would facilitate the creation of equitable working environments for their people. Alongside caring for follower well-being, Schwepker (2016) argued that servant leaders would be likely to safeguard fair rewards for followers. Proposed hypotheses were confirmed in a sample of nearly 300 American salespeople, wherein followers were more likely to view the decision-making processes in their working environments as fair when their supervisor adopted a servant leadership approach. In return for the fair treatment received from their servant leaders, this study found a form of follower reciprocation in kind, with follower fairness perceptions being positively related to greater commitment to customers.

Commitment is also proposed as an additional follower outcome that is positively influenced by servant leadership. In a broad sense, this leadership approach is thought to contribute to follower commitment due to the way in which the servant leader expresses and exhibits an active concern for the well-being of their people. Liden and colleagues (2008) contend that individual-level commitment to the organisation arises as a result of followers wanting to respond in-kind to their leader's positive behaviours with expressions of commitment to the organisation. Of interest in this study (2008) is that this same relationship, servant leadership and organisational commitment, was not found to be significant at the group-level. This divergence in relationships between servant leadership and commitment provides some indication as to the role of high-quality social exchange within the leader-follower dyad, attesting to the exchange relationship inherent in this leadership approach. Moreover, Schneider and George also find a positive relationship between servant leadership and organisational commitment within a voluntary service organisation (Schneider & George, 2011). This finding is echoed in several other empirical studies in the servant leadership literature (Chan & Mak, 2014; Goh & Low, 2013; Jaramillo et al., 2015; Joseph & Winston, 2005). Taken together,

the high-quality social exchange relationships built and maintained by the servant leader are seen to alter a follower's perception of their working environments and the attitudes they hold within them (Chan & Mak, 2014; Jaramillo et al., 2015).

***Self-determination perspectives of servant leadership influence.*** As the servant leadership field develops, the impact of servant leadership on follower work attitudes is increasingly explained through the theoretical perspective of self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000) and the three psychological needs of relatedness, competence and autonomy. Self-determination theory proposes that people have an innate growth tendency, a sense of drive that must be met for individuals to behave in effective and productive ways (Gagne & Deci, 2005; Deci & Ryan, 2011; Graves & Luciano, 2013). It proposes that an individual has three basic psychological needs of relatedness, competence and autonomy which must be fulfilled in order to support their well-being and performance. Social contexts are understood to either support or thwart the fulfilment of these needs (Deci, Connell & Ryan, 1989; Ryan & Deci, 2000; Leroy, Ansel & Gardner, 2015). Several authors have proposed that each of these needs is fulfilled by a servant leader through empowerment, helping followers grow and succeed and emotional healing (Liden et al., 2008).

In Mayer's conceptual work (2010) addressing the role of servant leadership in follower need satisfaction, he proposed that followers would be more motivated to demonstrate discretionary effort and would go beyond their conventional job role due to the reciprocity norm (Gouldner, 1960) and a sense of obligation to return discretionary effort after having their needs met by their leader (Mayer, 2010). Operationalised by Panaccio and colleagues in 2015 and Chiniara and Bentein in 2016, both studies confirmed Mayer's treatise (2010), by finding positive relationships between servant leadership and OCB through psychological contract fulfilment (Panaccio et al., 2015) and psychological need satisfaction (Chiniara & Bentein, 2016). In the first instance, Panaccio and colleagues (2015) found servant leaders met follower needs by fulfilling their psychological contract with work. This fulfilment, alongside strong exchange relationships,

was found to be positively related to OCB directed to both supervisors and the organisation. No significant relationship was found between servant leadership and behaviours that directly benefitted co-workers, in this instance tested as interpersonal helping and personal industry behaviours (2015).

Chiniara and Bentein (2016) examined the role of autonomy, competence and relatedness need satisfaction in relation to OCB that benefits specific individuals and other behaviours which benefit the wider organisation. In the assessment of the three psychological needs highlighted by self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000), Chiniara and Bentein (2016) add more nuanced findings to that of Panaccio and colleagues (2015). Both OCB-individual and OCB-organisation are positively related to servant leadership through the mechanism of autonomy and competence need satisfaction. Conceptually, autonomy is said to contribute to this relationship as individuals want to help co-workers and the organisation attain strengthened or advanced social context, engaging in both forms of organisational citizenship behaviour to do so. Relatedness need satisfaction is conceptualised as explaining the positive relationship between servant leadership and organisational citizenship behaviour by highlighting a cognitive and affective relationship between followers and their colleagues, driving them to help their colleagues, and with their organisation, therein directing their behaviour towards the organisation's best interests or shared, desired organisational outcomes (Chiniara & Bentein, 2016).

Engagement, a follower attitude that is widely considered to significantly contribute towards an organisation's competitive advantage (Rich, Lepine, & Crawford, 2010), is highlighted as a significant follower attitudinal outcome of servant leadership (Carter & Baghurst, 2014; de Clercq et al., 2014; van Dierendonck et al., 2014). Contemporarily, engagement is conceptualised as the holistic investment of an individual's physical, cognitive and emotional energies into their work role (*e.g.* Christian, Garza, & Slaughter, 2011; Kahn, 1990; Rich et al., 2010). Although limited in empirical studies, several papers establish the positive relationship between servant

leadership and work engagement. In their scale development paper, van Dierendonck and Nuijten tested the criterion-related validity of their new scale against a general indicator of engagement (2011). A positive relationship between servant leadership dimensions and engagement was found (van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2011). De Sousa and van Dierendonck (2017) also found follower engagement to be positively related to servant leadership in the workplace, with servant leaders expressing both a moral and virtuous component embodied in acts of service and humility, alongside effective action orientation in their followers. Their study finds that the servant leader's humility amplifies a follower's attribution of leader effectiveness which, in turn, generates follower engagement (Sousa & van Dierendonck, 2017). In further empirical work involving self-report surveys of 200 working adults, servant leadership was also found to be positively related to follower work engagement (van Dierendonck et al., 2014). In applying a self-determination theory perspective (Ryan & Deci, 2000), servant leaders are thought to promote follower engagement by providing their followers with their own time, energy and empathy. From this, servant leaders are seen to contribute to the development of each follower as an individual, maintaining relationships which satisfy various follower psychological needs at work (*e.g.* Chiniara & Bentein, 2016; Mayer, Bardes, & Piccolo, 2008; Ryan & Deci, 2000; van Dierendonck et al., 2014).

The role of the servant leader in fostering follower work engagement through the satisfaction of employee psychological needs is also found in qualitative work by Carter and Baghurst (2014). In their inquiry into the experience of servant leadership in the workplace, focus group participants employed by a servant-led organisation attested that servant leaders created a family-like environment at work, including engaging in open and honest communication, making each individual feel valued and providing them with opportunities for development. This qualitative inquiry found that, as a follower-oriented leadership style, servant leadership provided followers with the key drivers of Kahn's engagement model (1990), supported by the theoretical perspective provided by Ryan and Deci (2000) as to the importance of competence,

autonomy and relatedness in the workplace. In this instance, qualitative work provides complementary support for the role of the servant leader in fostering work engagement through employee need satisfaction in their working environment (Carter & Baghurst, 2014). In their quantitative study, de Clercq and colleagues (2014), alongside attesting to the importance of servant leaders in providing followers with psychological safety, highlight the role of servant leaders in creating more meaningfulness in work for their followers. By granting more decision-making autonomy and growth opportunities, servant leadership encourages a positive emotional state in followers, stimulating work engagement as a state of follower motivation. This therein enables followers to expend additional effort due to a sense of meaning at work (de Clercq et al., 2014). From this sense of meaning, extant research has established the role of the servant leader in providing an environment which encourages and supports work engagement through the fulfilment of psychological needs, with preliminary evidence that a servant leader also creates meaning in work for their followers.

To date, a wealth of literature posits different types of satisfaction, for example job satisfaction and life satisfaction, as an operationalisation of worker happiness (Wright & Cropanzano, 2000). Satisfaction is proposed as a complex social attitude that reports an important conceptualisation of subjective well-being in the workplace (Judge & Klinger, 2008). Follower satisfaction is also highlighted as an attitudinal outcome of servant leadership through the lens of self-determination theory. This influence is highlighted specifically in studies by Sun and Wang (2009) and Chan and Mak (2014). In Sun & Wang's (2009) consideration of servant leadership in the Chinese context, overall and life satisfaction was found to arise from the experience of servant leadership. The authors posit that, in responding to the needs of their followers, servant leaders signal their respect for the value of each follower. Moreover, their study reports significant positive correlations between servant leadership dimensions, satisfaction and job performance, indicating that a servant leader's impact on follower overall satisfaction has positive influences on job performance (Sun & Wang, 2009). Chan and Mak also

report a positive relationship between servant leadership and job satisfaction (.58), which they define as an individual's affective reaction to their job (2014). They consider a leader's behaviour to have a substantial impact on a follower's affective relationship with their job. In developing a fulfilling relationship with servant leadership as typified in this study, servant leaders address the relatedness needs of their followers and strengthen the affective relationship that each follower has with their job and within their working environment (Chan & Mak, 2014).

***Servant leadership influence through the creation of positive climates*** has also received research attention to date, exploring the development of positive interpersonal relationships established through social exchange mechanisms and the positive attitudes which arise through the support of follower self-determination. Mayer and colleagues (2008) contend that "leaders play an important role in the development of climate, for they are the immediate source of the behavioural data on which employees base their views of organizational objectives and policies" (2008: 931), the behavioural data provided by a servant leader is proposed as pervasive and encouraging of positive follower behaviours. The extant literature provides examples such as climates of psychological safety (Chiniara & Bentein, 2016), those characterised by fairness and ethical values (Jaramillo et al., 2015; Walumbwa et al., 2010), and those which prioritise high quality service provision (Liden et al., 2014; Walumbwa et al., 2010).

The increasing popularity of servant leadership is attributed, in part, to a discipline-wide shift towards positive leadership styles that emphasise morality and integrity in leadership (Dinh et al., 2014; Day & Antonakis, 2012; Avolio et al., 2009). This interest is also seen in climate research that considers servant leadership in generating a fair and ethical working environment (Walumbwa et al., 2010; Jaramillo, Grisaffe, Chonko & Roberts, 2009). A procedural justice climate, which is typified by consistency, moral and ethical perspectives, and the ability for members to voice their opinions on concerns relating to ethics (Leventhal, 1980) is contended to arise from servant leadership (Walumbwa et al., 2010). In maintaining high standards of ethics and including followers in decision-making, servant leaders create these justice climates.

Moreover, as a servant leader's values are clear and readily communicated, the creation of this climate is further supported (Walumbwa et al., 2010). Jaramillo and colleagues (2015) also comment on the role that a solid moral compass, personal integrity and being considerate of others play in supporting the creation of ethical work climates. Acting as a positive ethical model, servant leaders are found to influence three core components of an ethical work climate as conceptualised by Babin and colleagues (Babin, Boles & Robin, 2000), being positively related ethical responsibility and trust and negatively related to both unethical peer behaviour and unethical selling practices. Alongside the positive relationship that Walumbwa and colleagues found between servant leadership and OCB via procedural justice climate (2010), findings from Jaramillo and colleagues provide support for the role that servant leaders play in creating fair and ethical working climates (2015).

Alongside the established fair and ethical climate under servant leadership, it is also seen to develop psychologically safe and supportive working environments (Chiniara & Bentein, 2016). Servant leaders are seen to emphasise the organisation's broader role in serving the community, highlighting the contribution of each employee to this shared objective (Laub, 1999; Liden et al., 2008). In order to achieve the creation of value for the community, employees must feel both safe and capable of contributing to this end-goal. As helping followers grow and succeed and putting followers interests first are core aspects of the servant leadership concept (Liden et al., 2008), Chiniara and Bentein comment that followers are at the centre of a leader's interests, encouraging the creation of empowering climates (2016). Followers therein work in a safe and supportive environment in which their psychological needs are met. This positive climate is found to increase OCBs in followers, activating their drive to help both their co-workers and their organisation (Chiniara & Bentein, 2016).

As a leadership style that is of great interest to the service sector, the generation of a service climate has also received research attention (*e.g.* Walumbwa et al., 2010; Liden et al., 2014a). Originating in work by Schneider and colleagues (Schneider, 1980; Schneider, White & Paul,

1998), a service climate is conceptualised as an environment in which service is a priority. Moreover, systems and processes instated by the organisation and upheld by leaders and supervisors facilitate high quality service delivery. Servant leaders are seen to build this service climate through both role modelling values of service to their followers and in accentuating the organisation's existing practices to support a focus on stakeholders (Walumbwa et al., 2010). Walumbwa and colleagues (2010) found that servant leaders play a direct role in follower behavioural outcomes, but also that they contribute to the context in which these behaviours occur, with service climate partially mediating the relationship between servant leadership and follower OCB in their group-level analysis. Moreover, this analysis also found that service climate had a greater effect on the relationship between servant leadership and OCB than procedural justice climate (estimation of fixed effects = .20 and .16 respectively). Liden and colleagues (2014) extend this research in their multi-level, multi-rater study, finding store manager servant leadership to be positively related to serving culture, which, in turn, is positively related to store performance and employee identification with the store. An indirect effect between servant leadership and in-role performance, creativity and customer service behaviours was also found through serving culture and employee identification with the store. Through this same process, a negative relationship with turnover intentions was also reported (Liden et al., 2014a).

### ***Followers' well-being outcomes***

At the core of conceptualisations of servant leadership, servant leaders are thought to behave in ways which facilitate healing through the awareness of others' needs (Spears, 1995), are appreciative of others (Russell & Stone, 2002) and engage in emotional feeling for their followers (Liden et al., 2008). When considered together, these leadership characteristics are thought to relate to well-being. In spite of the fact follower well-being is one of the main underlying foci of the servant leader (Liden et al., 2008; Russell & Stone, 2002; Spears, 1995), little empirical evidence exists to attest to exactly what well-being related outcomes servant leadership can be seen to influence. In addressing follower well-being, Bobbio and colleagues



(2012) tested the cynicism dimension of follower job burnout (Schaufeli, Dierendonck, & Gorp, 1996), which addresses negative or excessively detached responses to aspects of the individual's job. Servant leadership was found to be negatively related to an individual's cynicism towards their job role (Bobbio et al., 2012). Moreover, in a study by Tang and colleagues (2016) considering the work-home interface, servant leadership was found to be negatively related to follower emotional exhaustion. Emotional exhaustion was also found to mediate the relationship between servant leadership and work-to-family positive spill over (Tang et al., 2016). In addressing the extent to which a follower's work-related gains are transferred into positives for their families, emotional exhaustion was found to mediate the relationship between servant leadership and work-family conflict. Argued from the perspective that followers are the recipient of emotional healing under the influence of a servant leader, the positive impact of servant leadership on follower wellbeing can be seen, extending beyond emotional exhaustion and into the work-family interface (Tang et al., 2016). This small body of research provides a preliminary perspective as to the impact that servant leadership can have on follower well-being, evidenced in the aforementioned measures of satisfaction and of burnout or emotional exhaustion (Bobbio et al., 2012; Chan & Mak, 2014; Sun & Wang, 2009; Tang et al., 2016). In consideration of the significant emphasis that the conceptual servant leadership literature places on concern for followers and their well-being (Graham, 1991; Greenleaf, 1977), the empirical literature is still relatively underdeveloped. Servant leadership and follower well-being therefore is seen as an area of the field that would benefit from future research attention (Bobbio et al., 2012; Tang et al., 2016).

### **2.3.3 Additional Outcomes of Servant Leadership**

Alongside the individual-level outcomes of servant leadership within the empirical literature, several studies have also begun to address the influence of this leadership approach on performance outcomes at the organisational and unit-levels. Although beyond the scope of this

thesis, these alternative behavioural outcomes provide a broader context as to the influence of servant leadership on a various outcomes, influences which are now briefly discussed.

**Organisational level.** In a study where findings are derived from multiple sources with financial data, Peterson and colleagues provide a compelling assessment of the relationship between servant leadership and performance (Peterson et al., 2012). Servant leadership was found to be positively related to organisational performance through testing of time lagged data collected three, six, and nine months after initial inquiry. This study assessed the lasting effects of CEO servant leadership on firm performance operationalised as return on assets. The robust findings from Peterson and colleagues are also supported by other studies reporting a similar positive relationship between senior-level servant leadership and different measures of organisational performance (Choudhary et al., 2013; Huang, Li, Qiu, Yim, & Wan, 2016; Peterson et al., 2012).

The mechanisms underlying the positive relationship between servant leadership and organisational performance are also elaborated in the existing servant leadership literature, emphasising both reciprocal processes and climate creation as mediating mechanisms of the relationship between servant leadership and organisational performance. First, Peterson and colleagues (2012) contend that servant leaders activate reciprocal mechanisms in their followers, who will subsequently direct their efforts towards organisational goals in response to a feeling of reciprocal obligation to senior servant leadership. Second, servant leaders with organisational seniority are also seen to instate positive working climates within their organisations, therein having an indirect impact on organisational-level performance metrics through their influence on individual employees (Choudhary et al., 2013; Peterson et al., 2012). Examples of the indirect effect of senior servant leaders are seen in the creation of learning cultures (Choudhary et al., 2013; Peterson et al., 2012) and climates of service delivery (Huang et al., 2016). Learning cultures are instated by servant leaders through the positive influence on follower self efficacy which, in turn, is argued to enhance the internal capabilities of their

organisation (Choudhary et al., 2013; Peterson et al., 2012). Senior organisational servant leaders also create a positive climate of service delivery, specifically highlighted by Huang and colleagues (2016) in their study of 121 hotels in China. Senior servant leadership in this context led to the creation of a strong value of servanthood within each hotel, a climate which found followers to exhibit increased serving behaviours. With senior human resource management professionals reporting CEO servant leadership, CEOs reporting service climate and CFOs reporting hotel performance 12 months later, this multi-rater, multi-wave study found CEO servant leadership to be positively related to hotel performance (Huang et al., 2016).

In summary, servant leadership as a philosophical approach to senior-level leadership within an organisation is therefore seen to contribute to organisational efficiency when measured by both subjective and objective measures of performance.

**Unit level.** To date, servant leadership has been found to be related to several unit-level outcomes (Chen et al., 2015; Ehrhart, 2004; Liden et al., 2014a; Yoshida et al., 2014). Ehrhart's study (2004) aggregated organisational citizenship behaviours for helping and for conscientiousness to the unit level across 120 departments of an American grocery store chain. This study found manager servant leadership to be positively related to unit-level organisational citizenship behaviours. Yoshida and colleagues found a positive relationship between servant leadership and team innovation in various industries across Indonesia and China (2014). The individuals chosen to take part in this data collection worked within teams who held responsibility for leading internal change and developin creative marketing and sales strategies. If considered as a form of contextual performance at the unit-level, the findings from Yoshida and colleagues (2014) reflect similar study findings from studies in the hospitality sector, wherein servant leadership is found to be positively related to unit-performane in both restaurants (Liden et al., 2014a) and hairdressing salons (Chen et al., 2015).

Further to the climate mechanisms which facilitate positive organisational performance, servant leadership has also been found to influence unit-level outcomes through additional

climate mechanisms. Servant leaders are seen to create a series of pervasive psychological climates for followers which results in positive unit-level outcomes (Chen et al., 2015; Ehrhart, 2004; Liden et al., 2014a; Yoshida et al., 2014). First, Ehrhart (2004) found that, through the creation of a procedural justice climate, servant leadership is positively related to unit-level organisational citizenship behaviours directed towards both other unit members and to the organisation as a whole. This indirect effect of servant leadership on organisational citizenship behaviours is argued to take place as, when working in a procedurally just, fair climate, individuals are more likely to behave in ways that benefit others (Ehrhart, 2004). Second, Yoshida and colleagues (2014) also found that servant leadership was positively related to team innovation through the creation of a strong team climate. This study contends that servant leaders simultaneously encourage creativity at the individual level whilst creating a social environment that encourages innovation at the unit level (Chen et al., 2015; Ehrhart, 2004; Liden et al., 2014a; Yoshida et al., 2014). Third, specifically within a service context, unit-level outcomes of servant leadership have also been identified in the extant literature (Chen et al., 2015; Liden et al., 2014a). Liden and colleagues found servant leadership to be positively related to unit-level performance when measured by combining customer satisfaction, internal regulatory scores and externally regulated aspects of store performance. This outcome is realised through the creation of a serving culture (Liden et al., 2014a).

## **2.4 Theoretical Frameworks Applied in this Thesis**

### **2.4.1 Vroom's Expectancy Theory of Work Motivation**

The valence-instrumentality-expectancy theory of work motivation (Vroom, 1964) is applied in Study 1 of this thesis to propose the boundary condition of organisational vision clarity on the influence of servant leadership on follower motivation and proactive behaviour. Three main concepts are evident in the application of Vroom's expectancy models (1964); valence, instrumentality and expectancy (van Eerde & Thierry, 1996; Vroom, 1964). *Valence* is conceptualised as a broad range of affective orientations that an individual might have towards

an outcome (Vroom, 1964), orientations that can be seen as the importance, attractiveness and desirability of an anticipated outcome (van Eerde & Thierry, 1996). *Instrumentality* is an outcome-outcome association wherein an individual believes that their completion of a specific task will lead to a subsequent desired outcome (Vroom, 1964). *Expectancy* is considered to be a subjective probability calculated by an individual, a probability that their effort will lead to the outcome that they desire or anticipate (van Eerde & Thierry, 1996; Vroom, 1964).

As perspectives and findings related to the conceptualisation of work and motivation differ greatly (van Eerde & Thierry, 1996), the valence facet of expectancy theory is highlighted for application in Study 1. According to VIE theory, valence is often posited as having a moderating influence on follower performance outcomes (van Eerde & Thierry, 1996). Valences are often considered from an affect perspective, being posited as preferences or affective reactions that an individual has towards potential outcomes (Lord, Hanges, & Godfrey, 2003). In having a positive affective reaction to an outcome, it should have a higher valence for the follower, therein motivating them towards the achievement of that desired outcome (Lord et al., 2003; van Eerde & Thierry, 1996).

When considered within a public sector occupational context, individuals are thought to have a propensity to be motivated towards public service (Perry & Wise, 1990). From the perspective of public service motivation then, Study 1 posits that a follower's understanding of the organisation's vision should contribute to the valence of activities that are inherently connected to public service. This valence-contingent boundary condition should therefore influence the effectiveness of positive leadership messages on resultant follower behaviours.

#### **2.4.2 Conservation of Resource Theory**

First proposed by Hobfoll (1989) as a new, resource-oriented model of stress, conservation of resource theory argues that people strive to retain, protect, and add to their personal resources. They do this across several resource domains, for example biological, cognitive, and social domains (Hobfoll, 2002). Significant reservoirs of personal resources are said to contain

tangible and intangible resources (Hobfoll, 1989, 2002). Returning to its original conceptualisation, resources are defined as follows:

*“those objects, personal characteristics, conditions, or energies that are valued by the individual or that serve as a means for attainment of these objects, personal characteristics, conditions, or energies”*

*(Hobfoll, 1989:516)*

Under this theoretical framework, resources are commonly divided into the four aforementioned categories. *Object resources* are valued due to something about their physical nature, or that the possession of this object adds to socio-economic status. *Condition resources* are central to an individual’s stress-resistance potential, for example marriage, and are valued to the extent which they mediate the effects of stress. *Personal characteristics* are also considered as a resource due to the way in which they generally support stress-resistance, such as self-esteem and mastery. Hobfoll (1989) makes specific comment as to the interplay between these characteristics and social support. Social support positive effects are contingent upon the personal characteristics that an individual possesses; either promoting or supporting that individual’s positive sense of self. *Energies* are the fourth and final resource category, representing a resource that is not valued for its intrinsic value; rather they are valued due to the role they play in securing resources from the other categories. Examples of energies as resources are seen in time, money, and physical resources.

This theory posits that individuals will experience stress when the collection of resources they possess, at times referred to as a personal resource reservoir, is threatened. These threats can be seen in perceived resource loss, when a personal reservoir is drained by the actual loss of resource from any life domain, or when an individual does not receive an adequate resource return following a significant personal investment (Hobfoll, 1989, 2001, 2002). Hobfoll’s model (1989) also suggests that individuals, even when they are not experiencing a period of marked stress, continue to be motivated by the acquisition of resources. They will continually seek to

deepen their resource pool, both to protect them from future stressors and to lead to enhanced status or social standing (Hobfoll, 1989).

Both social and psychological resources are highlighted within this theory as necessary to deal with stress and conflict across life domains, including stressful demands whilst at work (Hobfoll, 2002). If these resources are scarce within an individual's environment, that person's personal resource reservoir will become depleted over time (Hobfoll, 2002), and has been seen to relate to undesirable follower outcomes such as emotional exhaustion (Tang et al., 2016), depersonalisation, and generalised burnout (Halbesleben, 2006). With both the nature of resources and their central position for an individual taken into consideration, this theoretical perspective argues that both the protection and enhancement of these resources are fundamental goals for individuals (Hobfoll, 1989). These protection and enhancement motives will therefore inspire action and inaction from individuals in relation to cognitive processes assessing resource loss and gain (Hobfoll, 1989) across their life domains, including in the workplace.

A conservation of resource model is applied to Study 2, which presents a serial mediation explaining the influence of supervisory servant leadership on follower discretionary effort. This study proposes a resource mechanism due to the conceptual underpinnings of the leader as servant (Greenleaf, 1977), wherein servant leaders provide social support resources to their followers in the face of workplace stressors. Invoking the role of social support assessed by Halbesleben (2006) in his meta-analysis of conservation of resource research, servant leaders are contended to mitigate the negative influence of workplace stressors for their followers through the provision of both emotional and instrumental support. By engaging in emotional healing, putting followers interests first, and developing high-quality relationships (Liden et al., 2008), followers should receive sufficient social support resources with which to meet the demands they face at work every day. In reducing these demands, operationalised as hindrance

stressors, and subsequent ego depletion in the workplace, the experience of supervisory servant leadership in the workplace should be positively related to follower discretionary effort.

### **2.4.3 Leadership, Values and Subordinate Self-Concept Perspectives**

The values and identity perspective presented in Study 3 originates in social identity and social categorisation theories (Lord & Brown, 2001, 2003; Lord et al., 1999) to extend into the role that values and their interrelated self-identities play in individual behaviour within a working context. This perspective underlines the importance of the existence and communication of a set of socially shared values. Values, a latent construct that represents standards or norms within a specific social network (Lord & Brown, 2001), provide a reference framework for each follower as to the expectations held by the organisation (Lord & Brown, 2003). Values provide stability and form a basis for generating behaviours that fit the goals of the larger social unit (Lord & Brown, 2001). The self is conceptualised as a complex cognitive-affective mental structure that consists of a dynamic web of self-concepts and self-identities (Lord et al., 2016). The self is therefore a knowledge structure from which an individual can organize and give meaning to their experiences in a given context (Lord & Brown, 2003). Individuals therefore have situationally sensitive identities, with the social context impacting upon the activation of the respective socially salient identity. With a certain identity being activated, the subsequent cognitive, affective and behavioural processes are regulated and enacted in a comparative manner (Lord et al., 2016; Lord & Brown, 2003).

As a structure that is highly susceptible to context (Lord & Brown, 2003), external influences stemming from one's immediate social environment are closely related to identity formation and activation (Lord et al., 2016). Influential cues from one's working environment often originate from relationships and interactions between leaders and followers, with leadership functioning as a key resource for understanding the workplace (Lord et al., 2016). Leaders are therefore partially responsible for effectively managing the meaning underlying organisational structures and processes for their followers (Lord & Brown, 2003). This theoretical perspective



proposes that leaders influence follower outcomes through the activation of self-identities and working self-concepts (Lord et al., 1999; Horstmeier, Boer, Homan, & Voelpel, 2017). Through this activation, alongside the formation of new or more accessible identities within a given context (Lord et al., 1999), leaders initiate a series of emotional, motivational and cognitive structures that influence follower action and interpretation of events (Lord et al., 1999, 2016). In emphasizing socially normative and desired behaviours in the workplace, leaders are an immediate source of activation for values and identity (Lord & Brown, 2001), creating powerful effects on salient identity activation and subsequent follower outcomes by changes the way they view themselves in relation to their social context (Lord et al., 2016).

An identity and values perspective is applied to Study 3. As leaders are responsible for the communication and derivation of meaning from organizational processes for their followers (Lord & Brown, 2003), leadership influence on the activation of identities informs cognitive, affective and behavioural follower outcomes. This influence therefore provides a compelling mechanism through which a specific leadership style might achieve its influence. Conceptually, servant leaders are known to create meaning for their followers within their working environment, with many messages being received addressing moral and ethical behaviour, creating value for the community and supporting others in achieving their full potential (van Dierendonck, 2011; Liden et al., 2008). As Lord and colleagues contend that the priming of certain follower self-identities takes place through direct communications from a leader and from leader symbolic action (Lord & Brown, 2001), servant leaders should be well-placed to influence follower outcomes. Servant leadership is therefore applied throughout this thesis to represent an effective leadership approach through which meaning can be transmitted. Study 3 focuses on caring for followers' wellbeing, creating value for the community, and behaving ethically in the workplace (Liden et al., 2008), will foster follower commitment to the public, alongside reducing moral disengagement. Following the theory of Lord and colleagues, this study conceptualizes the role that servant leaders play in activating three different levels of

follower self-identity, namely individual, relational and collective identity levels. The differential relationships between servant leadership and follower identity levels are proposed to influence follower attitudes within their social environment, the mechanism through which follower outcomes can be effectively influenced by a servant leader.

## Chapter 3. Methodology Overview

### 3.1 Research Paradigms

A key decision in designing a study is whether to apply qualitative or quantitative methods (or both). However, before addressing the methodological question of whether to use qualitative or quantitative methods, scholars recommend developing an understanding of the dominant research paradigm in the relevant area of interest (*e.g.*, Law, 2004; Wahyuni, 2012). An understanding of the research paradigm represents an adherence to a set of practices and beliefs that inform decision-making throughout the research process (*e.g.*, Law, 2004; Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012; Wahyuni, 2012). These research paradigms or philosophical assumptions function as a lens through which to design, conduct and interpret research questions (*e.g.*, Aliyu, Bello, Kasim, & Martin, 2014; Wahyuni, 2012). Three associated philosophical assumptions, ontology, epistemology, and methodology, discussed below, are often employed as a guiding framework towards informing the choice of research paradigms (Aliyu et al., 2014; Wahyuni, 2012).

#### 3.1.1 Associated Philosophies

*Ontology*, or the philosophical questioning of the nature of reality or being (Saunders et al., 2012), refers to the initial assumptions a researcher holds about what there is to learn or know about the 'real' world (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls, & Ormston, 2013). In relation to the social sciences, ontology questions the nature of social phenomena, asking if social behaviour can be viewed as objective and independent of those within its context, or indeed if it is socially constructed, subjective and vulnerable to changes (Ritchie et al., 2013; Saunders et al., 2012; Wahyuni, 2012). The clarification of the researcher's perspective on these ontological questions will inform both the researcher's belief system and research practices (Krauss, 2005).

*Epistemology*, or questioning the way in which we know and learn things about the world around us (e.g., Aliyu et al., 2014; Krauss, 2005; Ritchie et al., 2013; Wahyuni, 2012), has a primary focus on the relationship between a researcher and the knowledge that they seek to acquire (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). One's epistemological perspective conveys what is considered to be acceptable knowledge. This can be in the form of credible data and observable facts or subjective meanings that are thought to motivate social actors (Aliyu et al., 2014; Saunders et al., 2012). The epistemological stance adopted has implications for how researchers engage with the research process, i.e., whether they are objective and detached, or whether they are an actor within the social phenomena of interest (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Epistemology is constrained by a researcher's ontological perspective, which also influences subsequent methodological choices in a research project (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

*Methodology*, or the research approaches that a researcher would use to collect the necessary data for their research (e.g., Bhattacharjee, Morphet, Gutiérrez Bayo, Nam, & Pardo, 2017; Saunders et al., 2012; Wahyuni, 2012), is the third philosophy related to research paradigms. The choice of methodology is informed by both the ontological and epistemological perspectives of the researcher (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). The methodology guides the researcher to most appropriately investigate the phenomena of interest given the researcher's view of the nature of reality and what constitutes knowledge (e.g., Dobbert, 1990; Guba & Lincoln, 1994), including the choice of data collection methods (Wahyuni, 2012).

### **3.1.2 Positivist and Interpretivist Research Paradigms**

Interpretivism and positivism are two research paradigms that are often discussed in social science research. An overview of these paradigms, viewed through the lenses of ontology, epistemology and methodology, is presented in Table 3.1

*Interpretivism*. The interpretivist emphasises the differences between individuals as social actors, asserting that it is necessary to have a deeper understanding of differences in complex

social environments to understand their true nature (Griseri, 2013; Saunders et al., 2012). From the ontological perspective, interpretivism views reality as being socially constructed, subjective and susceptible to changes (Wahyuni, 2012). In keeping with this perspective of social construction, an interpretivist relies upon detailed and in-depth, investigative data collection from which the meanings of social phenomena can be derived. From an epistemological perspective, the interpretivist relies on the subjective meanings of details as motivating factors behind the behaviours of social actors (Aliyu et al., 2014). To comment on these subjective meanings therefore relies upon interpretation from the researcher (Griseri, 2013; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Methodologically, much interpretivist research relies upon small-scale, in-depth investigations using qualitative methods for data collection, for example, one-on-one interviews and case studies.

**Table 3-1: Comparison of Two Dominant Paradigms in Social Science Research**

	<b>Interpretivist paradigm</b>	<b>Positivist paradigm</b>
<b>Ontology</b> (Nature of the world)	Socially constructed Subjective, may change over time	External, objective Independent of social actors
<b>Epistemology</b> (Nature of knowledge)	Social phenomena, subjective meaning A focus of the details of a situation and the realities behind them	Credible data and facts are observable A focus on causality and generalisability
<b>Methodology</b> (Acceptable methods of investigation)	Small samples, in-depth investigations Uses qualitative methods	Highly structured, large samples, a focus on rigorous measurement, verification of hypotheses Uses quantitative methods

*Adapted from Guba and Lincoln (1994)*

*Positivism.* The positivist collects data about observable aspects of reality. An ontological perspective of realism is adopted, with the ultimate intent of formulating generalisable comments or conclusions on that observed reality (Aliyu et al., 2014; Griseri, 2013). To generate such conclusions, the methodological perspective and its research strategies involve the collection of data to examine theory through hypothesis testing (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004;

Guba & Lincoln, 1994). From the epistemological perspective, positivistic research is undertaken as objectively as possible (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Effort is made to exclude the researcher's influence or bias in data collection and interpretation (Aliyu et al., 2014; Wahyuni, 2012). This often entails uniformity in instrumentation, data collection and analysis across the sample tested. This uniformity also attests to a positivistic tendency to use a highly structured methodology to facilitate replication of their findings in future research (Gill & Johnson, 2010). Although pure positivism is unlikely to be achieved outside of the natural sciences (Griseri, 2013), the underpinning perspective that reality only exists in reproducible observation and experience is a perspective that is frequently assumed in the social sciences.

## **3.2 Research Design and Data Collection**

### **3.2.1 Quantitative Methods and the Use of Field Surveys for Data Collection**

A positivistic paradigm informs the quantitative methods in this thesis, with a deductive reasoning approach being used to underpin each study. This approach is broadly used across research in the social sciences (*e.g.*, Bhattacharjee et al., 2017; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004), with quantitative methods being considered as an appropriate form of enquiry under this approach. These methods involve the empirical investigation of study variables to generate findings which then generalise to wider populations (Hussey & Hussey, 1997; Wahyuni, 2012). All three studies in this thesis adopt such an approach to test hypotheses relating to individuals' experiences of servant leadership in the workplace.

### **3.2.2 Data Collection**

The data collection for this thesis was undertaken within a larger collaborative research project, conducted by the *Durham University Business School Centre for International Leadership and Followership Policing Research Unit*, under the leadership of Dr Les Graham. At the time of the completion of this thesis, 38 policing organisations across England, Wales and Northern Ireland were involved in collaborative projects with this unit. Research access to each

organisation was negotiated by the author supported by Dr Les Graham. This process included agreeing the integration of study variables for each empirical chapter within larger, organisation-wide staff engagement surveys. Research assistants employed in this unit, Miss Natalie Brown and Miss Marisa Plater, assisted the author with data collection for the empirical studies.

A multi-wave survey design was implemented, consisting of responses from the same individual to two different surveys, with Time 1 survey data collection and Time 2 survey data collection being separated by a time lag of approximately four weeks. These responses were matched with an anonymous identification code. This two-wave research design, incorporating a form of temporal separation between predictor variables in the first survey and criterion variables in the second survey, was adopted to help minimise common method bias (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee & Podsakoff, 2003; Podsakoff, MacKenzie & Podsakoff, 2012). Demographic information was also collected at Time 1, including the respondent's role in the organisation as either a police officer or staff member, position in organisational hierarchy, tenure in policing, gender, age, contact frequency with the public and whether the respondent routinely worked a shift pattern.

Each police force involved in the data collection for this thesis functions over a large geographical area and has more than 5,000 employees. Each organisation was responsible for the dissemination of web-based links to the Time 1 and Time 2 surveys through internal email directories. All serving police officers and staff members in each force were invited to complete the survey. Procedures were instated throughout data collection to protect both the data collected and individual respondents. The on-line survey was hosted on a secure policing network to protect survey responses and data was held throughout the research process on encrypted hard drives. Each survey had a detailed introduction page, explaining the voluntary nature of completion, the purpose of the survey and informed respondents of their

confidentiality and anonymity throughout. These instructions are included in the thesis Appendix.

### **3.2.3 Sample Characteristics and Occupational Context**

*Sample size* is understood to have a substantial impact in multivariate data analysis, and considerations of sample size should inform both research design and the statistical methods used to test study hypotheses (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, & Tatham, 2006). As sample size affects all results, with very small samples making statistical tests insensitive and very large samples resulting in statistical tests being overly sensitive (Hair et al., 2006), deciding on the appropriate sample size for a study is an important consideration for a researcher (Hinton, 2006). An appropriate sample is argued to be both representative of the population from which it was drawn (Spector, 1981), and of adequate size to facilitate subsequent reliable statistical analyses (Schmid, 1966). In consideration of conducting statistical analyses using structural equation modelling methods, Hair and colleagues (2006) contend that larger sample sizes are required to ensure the stability of model results. Different rules of thumb are recommended, varying from 15 respondents for each estimated parameter within a model (Hair et al., 2006) to numbers exceeding 500 in the case of complex models under examination (Hair et al., 2006; Schumacker & Lomax, 2016). Data collection in each study sought to maximise the number of survey responses in light of these recommendations. There were 979 matched responses between Time 1 and Time 2 surveys for analysis in Study 1, there were 701 matched responses in Study 2, and there were 566 matched responses in Study 3. As all studies have more than 500 matched responses, they exceed the recommended minimum sample size proposed by Hair and colleagues (2006) for the testing of highly complex structural equation models.

Much debate exists around the response rate that researchers can expect when undertaking survey research. Although a 100% response rate is desirable, it is not considered to be a realistic expectation for all data collection (Dattalo, 2008). Baruch and Holtom (2008) found the mean response rate for 463 questionnaire studies at the individual level was 57.2% with a standard



deviation of 20.4%. However, meta-analytic research into web-based surveys found a mean response rate of 34.6% with a standard deviation of 15.7% across 56 surveys in 39 studies (Cook, Heath, & Thompson, 2000). Further review of web-based survey response rates by Fan and Yan (2010) also comments on low response rates to web-based surveys, reporting them to be approximately 10% lower than mail or telephone surveys. Although the use of web-based surveys is established to reduce response rates when compared to pencil-and-paper survey approaches, web-based surveys were chosen as the methodological approach to data collection. Practical considerations informed this choice, including the large geographical spread of each organisation and the large organisational population invited to respond to each study, rendering pencil-and-paper surveys impractical.

Time 1 surveys across all three studies showed higher response rates (from 26.2% to 66.9%), than the Time 2 surveys (from 14.2% to 35.4% respectively), resulting in a loss of respondents. Sample size reduced further with the matching procedure adopted by the researcher to combine Time 1 and Time 2 responses for each participant. An overview of number of responses and calculated response rates from each of the three studies is included in Table 3.2.

**Table 3-2: Overall Sample Size and Response Rate for Each Empirical Study**

	Total	Responses Submitted				Matched Pairs
		Time 1	Response Rate	Time 2	Response Rate	
<b>Study 1</b>	5169	3459	66.9%	1831	35.4%	979
<b>Study 2</b>	8477	2218	26.2%	1336	15.8%	701
<b>Study 3</b>	8768	2860	32.6%	1248	14.2%	566

*Notes: Total column represents the total workforce numbers of each organisation, numbers which were provided by the corresponding organisation in advance of the Time 1 survey release*

The response rates for the matched pairs used within each empirical study of this thesis were lower than the mean values included in the extant literature (e.g., Baruch & Holtom, 2008). To

support the credibility of study findings, demographic responses from participants were considered to ascertain how representative findings would be of the relevant organisational population. The ideal verification of the representativeness of the sample for each empirical study within this thesis would have been to compare the study sample of matched pairs to objective data held by the respective organisation's human resources department. However, due to the security restrictions and confidentiality concerns that are evident when working within this occupational environment, this data was not available to the researcher for comparison. Data published by the Home Office in March 2018, however, provides a point of reference for some of the response rates included within this thesis, seen in role and gender, alongside a comment on the tenure in policing categories included in Table 3.3.

**Sample Characteristics.** In Study 1 of this thesis, 61.9% of respondents were police officers and 38.1% were police staff. Similarly, in Study 2, 36.1% of respondents were police officers and 61.8% were police staff, and in Study 3, 68.24% of respondents were police officers and 31.6% were police staff. As the national percentage of police officers is stated as 61% in the most recently published overview of the policing workforce (Hargreaves, Husband, & Linehan, 2018), the samples in Study 1 and Study 3 are held as representative of the organisational role split at a national level. The differential pattern seen in Study 2 is discussed in the relevant empirical chapter.

Respondent gender was also collected, with each study having a higher percentage of male respondents (52.2%, 53.4% and 60.1% respectively) than female respondents (37.5%, 45.8% and 38.1% respectively). Respondents were also asked the gender of their supervisor, which reflected a similar pattern of gender seen in respondents themselves (male = 63.4%, 64.2%, 68.8%; and female = 36.0%, 35.4%, 30.5% respectively). It is worth noting that, although the data collected from each organisation includes more male than female respondents in each study, this is similar to the national profile of police organisations, reported as 57.9% male and

42.1% female (Hargreaves et al., 2018). From this, the representation of male and female respondents is considered to be representative of an average policing organisation.

**Table 3-3: Sample Size and Response Rate for Each Empirical Study**

		Study 1		Study 2		Study 3	
		<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
<b>Role</b>	Officer	606	61.9	253	36.1	391	68.2
	Staff & PCSOs	373	38.1	243	61.8	181	31.6
<b>Respondent gender</b>	Male	511	52.2	374	53.4	348	60.7
	Female	367	37.5	321	45.8	218	38.1
<b>Supervisor gender</b>	Male	621	63.4	450	64.2	394	68.8
	Female	353	36.1	248	35.4	175	30.5
<b>Position in hierarchy</b>	Practitioner	544	55.6	289	41.2	311	54.3
	Supervisory manager	220	22.5	221	31.5	123	21.5
	Middle manager	108	11.0	91	13.0	96	16.8
	Senior manager	71	7.3	44	6.3	42	7.3
<b>Tenure in policing</b>	Less than 1 year	16	1.6	33	4.7	2	0.4
	1-5 years	54	5.5	89	12.7	27	4.7
	0 years	218	22.3	66	9.4	116	20.2
	11-20 years	381	38.9	298	42.5	195	34.0
	Over 20 years	300	30.6	214	30.5	232	40.5

*Notes: Position in hierarchy: practitioner = police constable and police staff equivalent; supervisory manager = police sergeant and police staff equivalent; middle manager = police inspector and police staff equivalent; senior manager = police chief inspector and higher ranks, alongside police staff equivalent*

Respondents' position within the organisational hierarchy was also assessed across four categories. As expected, the majority of respondents reported being at the lowest level of the hierarchy, representing practitioners such as police constables and police staff equivalents (55.6%, 41.2% and 42.4% respectively). In the second category, representing supervisory managers such as police sergeants and police staff equivalents (22.5%, 31.5% and 21.5%

respectively), the second largest group of respondents is seen. Individuals at the third and fourth levels in the hierarchy were much smaller as sub-groups of this population. Middle managers such as police officers of the inspector rank and their staff equivalents represented 11.0%, 13.0% and 16.8% of respondents in each study. At the senior management level, such as police officers of the rank chief inspector and above and police staff equivalents, responses were 7.3%, 6.3% and 7.3% of each respective sample.

Organisational tenure was also considered, with a small proportion of respondents reporting a tenure of less than one year (1.6%, 4.71% and 0.4% respectively) or between one and five years (5.5%, 12.7%, 4.7% respectively). This small percentage is understood, in part, due to the significantly reduced recruitment processes that have been in place across policing in the United Kingdom between 2008 and 2018 (Hargreaves et al., 2018). Respondents with occupational tenure of six years and above were represented across three categories, six to ten years (22.3%, 9.4% and 20.2% respectively), eleven to twenty years (38.9%, 42.5%, 34.0% respectively) and over twenty years (30.6%, 30.5%, 40.5% respectively) were represented in larger proportions. These tenure categories are comparable to the national police workforce levels reported by the Home Office (Hargreaves et al., 2018).

***Occupational context.*** The occupational context of this thesis is policing in the United Kingdom. It explores the nature of the policing establishment, leadership in policing and the implications of this occupational context for subsequent chapters. These implications include the style of leadership under study, the nature of the empirical samples and the concepts addressed within this research. Policing in the United Kingdom, including England, Wales, and Northern Ireland<sup>3</sup>, consists of over 40 independent organisations, each of which polices all types of crime within a specific geographical area. Although they are independent entities, each of these organisations follows the same legal system, has broadly similar organisational structures

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<sup>3</sup> HMICFRS inspects in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, but does not undertake inspections in Scotland. Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland (HMICS) provides independent scrutiny for policing in Scotland, including both Police Scotland and the Scottish Policing Authority (SPA).

and comparable demands on resources. Each policing organisation also functions under the same regulatory body, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (subsequently referred to as HMICFRS). They also receive resources and guidance from the same advisory body, the College of Policing. These commonalities in structure, function and governance contribute to a holistic perspective on policing in the United Kingdom. This research takes inspiration, in part, from this organisational context, uses data collection from three of the police forces within this context and provides practical implications for policing in each empirical study.

Within this context, leadership gains a significant amount of attention from a variety of stakeholders, from those individuals within each police force alongside external stakeholders such as Policing and Crime Commissioners, HMICFRS and the College of Policing. Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (now known as HMICFRS), completed its first inspection of leadership in 2015 (HMIC, 2016), gathering evidence as to both the role of culture in policing leadership and the types of activities embedded within each force to support leadership development. HMICFRS continues to invest considerable time and resource into gaining a greater depth of understanding as to what good leadership looks like within policing. They also consider what police forces are doing to improve internal leadership capability and individuals' perceptions of the leadership they experience in their day-to-day working environment. Annual inspections of leadership are now undertaken from the perspective that a force's internal leadership capability underpins many other aspects of policing, extending as far as to contribute towards service quality for members of the public. With the goal of providing a quality service to members of the public, both the HMICFRS and senior police leaders agree that the development of leadership capability at all levels of the policing establishment should be a priority (HMIC, 2016, 2017).

Alongside comments on the need for increasing attention to be placed on leadership development, many documents from practitioner organisations comment on a dominant and

well-established leadership style in policing that should be addressed. An example of this is seen in the College of Policing's *Leadership Review* (2015), wherein the prevalence of an autocratic leadership style across policing is highlighted. This *command and control* approach to people management is proposed as the greatest obstacle to positive working environments in policing organisations. Furthermore, it is deemed to represent a culture which risks the disempowerment of the people working under it. This review identifies further limitations of this style and proposes that a different approach to leadership is required within policing to meet its future demands. It underlines the need for a more collective, empowering and supportive leadership style. Mirrored by comments from the HMIC as to the need for leaders to engage in 'softer' skills, for example empathy and emotional intelligence (HMIC, 2016, 2017), this thesis proposes servant leadership as an alternative to the dominant leadership model, representing a more collective, supportive approach to leadership within policing in the United Kingdom. However, robust research of the impact of leadership in policing on employee attitudes, motivation and wellbeing is very limited (Dobby, Anscombe & Tuffin, 2004; Neyroud, 2011) and the need for further research has been identified (Pearson-Goff & Herrington, 2014).

Rigorous empirical research into policing in the United Kingdom is of increasing relevance for practitioners, policy-makers, and researchers alike. An indication of this is the recent co-operation of a wide pool of stakeholders, including the ICLF Policing Research Unit in which this thesis was constructed, to create the Home Office Front Line Review of Policing, (*for a discussion of the author's involvement in this Review, the reader is politely directed to **Section 1.1 : The Importance of the Topics and Context of this Research of this thesis***). This research project intended to generate an understanding of the lived working experience of police officers, police staff, and PCSOs in the United Kingdom. Although extensive qualitative reviews of policing, police leadership and police powers have been undertaken since 1829, empirical research into the nature, structure, function and legitimacy of policing within the United Kingdom has been very limited (Neyroud, 2011).

Within the broader context of European policing, however, more varied research into the internal capabilities, strengths examples of best practice across police forces has taken place. An exemplary research project in this area is seen in the project entitled Comparative Police Studies in the European Union, otherwise known as COMPOSITE (COMPOSITE, 2014). This research project drew attention to the structure, function and legitimacy or accountability of a variety of different police forces. In distinguishing orientation preferences across national and cultural contexts, involved policing organisations were placed along a continuum between command-control and discretionary-control approaches (COMPOSITE, 2014).

When considered within the topology applied, the distinct profile of policing within the United Kingdom is highlighted as possessing more inherently community-oriented characteristics than many of the other forces against which it was compared. This includes significant emphasis on legitimacy being gained through partnership working, neighbourhood policing and associated interventions, and general community engagement. The frequency of activities related to local knowledge and community relations being considered core to the organisation were higher in the police force from the United Kingdom than in any other policing organisation assessed in the COMPOSITE project (COMPOSITE, 2014). Policing within the United Kingdom is considered to be characterised by the term policing by consent, a characteristic that is supported by the aforementioned dominance of community engagement in core activities, and in the much lower rating of law enforcement as a core activity than all but one of the other police forces in the comparative assessment (COMPOSITE, 2014). These other organisations who prioritise law and order are also seen to emphasise a command orientation enforced through a militaristic operational style, rather than a more relational approach which emphasises the development of relationships with citizens as an avenue through which peace and order can be maintained.

The COMPOSITE project, however, takes place at the organisational level and, as a result, does not make explicit enquiry into influence, operational style and strategic priorities identified within each individual police forces. Although the level of analysis differs to the present

research, focusing on the organisational level to develop case-studies, it provides some interesting comments as to the importance of leadership in an organisation that prioritise partnership working, neighbourhood policing, and community engagement against a backdrop of finance and resource deficit (COMPOSITE, 2014). These considerations are held constant throughout the subsequent chapters, as each empirical study within this thesis explores the implications of supportive leadership in policing. Study 1 addresses the impact that a servant leader has on an individual's proactive behaviour through the use of relevant motivational mechanisms, proposed to be especially relevant in an organisation that prioritises partnership working, neighbourhood policing, and community engagement. Study 2 assesses the resources servant leaders provide to their followers both as a means of protecting their well-being and supporting ethical behaviours at work, highlighted as being of importance due to the stressors their followers encounter in their lived experience in times of public sector austerity and resource deficits. Study 3 identifies the impact of servant leadership on follower's attitudes towards members of the public through influencing follower self-identity.

Situating the studies in the policing context is a strength, meeting calls to examine the effectiveness of servant leadership in a different organisational and occupational contexts (*e.g.*, Hu & Liden, 2011; Liden et al., 2015; Mittal & Dorfman, 2012; Sun & Wang, 2009). Departing from studies in student and on-line samples (Grisaffe et al., 2016; Joseph & Winston, 2005), the service sector (Chan & Mak, 2014; Chen et al., 2015), and in a sales environment (Jaramillo et al., 2015; Schwepker Jr, 2016), this study proposes policing as a novel and salient organisational context for the study of servant leadership effectiveness. Not only are police officers and police staff held to high ethical standards by an institutionalised Code of Ethics (College of Policing, 2014), mirroring the *behaving ethically* dimension of servant leadership (Liden et al., 2008), but they are also significantly oriented towards *creating value for the community* (Liden et al., 2008) due to the nature of their role as public servants (HMIC, 2017).



Behaviours relating to positive ethical standards are highly valued, often advocated and salient to those working within policing, a claim supported by both the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 and the Code of Ethics (College of Policing, 2014). The significance of ethics in the workplace presents both a strength and a limitation of this study. As a strength, police officers and staff are thought to be more likely to behave in highly ethical ways, therein rendering policing samples potentially sensitive to all matters related to ethical and moral standards. However, as a limitation, it may be the case that findings in these samples lack generalisability to other working contexts. The limitations of this ethical orientation are elaborated in the Discussion section of Study 2, which assesses follower ethical voice behaviours, and Study 3, which includes a consideration of follower moral disengagement in the workplace.

Another aspect which functions as both a strength and a weakness of this occupational context is the purported prevalence of a highly structured, command and control approach to leadership (College of Policing, 2015; HMIC, 2016). The prevalence of this approach, alongside a purportedly dominant leadership schema within this setting, presents a compelling call from the practitioner as to the role of an alternative leadership style in the workplace. Therefore this subject has the potential to provide useful practical implications of this research in informing organisational policy changes. However, a potential limitation arises in this same schema, in that individuals' prior experiences from working within policing are thought to align with the command and control approach to leadership (College of Policing, 2015), and that their pre-established cognitive prototypes may influence perceptions of divergent leadership behaviours. Following work initiated by Lord's categorisation theory (Lord et al., 1984), the prototypical policing leader may indeed be challenged by the more supportive, communicative approach proposed within this thesis, i.e., servant leadership. Although examining the leadership schema held by individuals within the policing establishment is beyond the scope of this research, it is an interesting area of future research, extending both the servant leadership literature and

responding to long-held calls for the application of the categorisation model in real-world contexts (Lord & Maher, 1990).

### 3.2.4 Measures

When considering human factors in the working environment, psychometric instruments are often developed to evaluate the attitudes and behaviours of individuals (Aiken, 1996). These measurement scales are designed to assess an individual's perspective on a concept of interest (Aiken, 1996). The accuracy of measurement is of paramount importance in determining whether or not data will yield valid and reliable findings. Content validity, or the ability to justify making inferences based upon scores for hypothetical constructs, was considered for measures within this thesis at the design stage of each study. Established measures were available for the variables of interest. Meeting recommendations as to the selection of appropriate scales for construct testing (Kline, 1990), measurement scales that demonstrated content, construct and criterion-related validity from other peer-reviewed sources were chosen from the extant literature.

**Measurement of servant leadership.** Multiple servant leadership measurement scales have been developed. Early approaches to measurement including Laub's *Servant Organizational Leadership Scale* (1999) and Page and Wong's *Servant Leadership Profile* (2000) represent initial attempts to operationalise the servant leadership construct. These measures were used in early empirical work and initial tests of relationships with other variables such as organisational trust and trust in leader (Joseph & Winston, 2005). However they were quickly subsumed by measures that had a broader range of dimensions, for example, Ehrhart's (2004) measure, which has subsequently been used to test relationships of servant leadership dimensions with a variety of attitudes and behaviours (e.g., Schneider & George, 2011, Chan & Mak, 2014; Wu et al., 2013).

Informed by several pre-existing measures, Liden and colleagues developed the *Servant Leadership Scale* (2008) as a multi-dimensional approach to the assessment of servant

leadership by followers. This scale has received significant attention in the literature and has been used across a variety of occupational contexts, from market research firms (Goh & Low, 2013) to the hospitality industry (Huang et al., 2016). Conceptually, the seven dimensions of servant leadership examined by Liden and colleagues (2008) present a holistic approach to measuring this leadership style, representing the servant leadership characteristics that have been highlighted throughout the development of the field (*e.g.*, Greenleaf, 1977; Spears, 1995; van Dierendonck, 2011). Liden and colleagues published a short scale version of their original 28-item scale, known as the SL-7 (Liden et al., 2015). Alongside the seven-factor model having been validated in several other studies (Liden et al., 2015; Liden et al., 2014a), the short scale demonstrates high internal consistency (Liden et al., 2015). This operationalisation of servant leadership captures the seven dimensions of conceptual skills and ethical behaviour of the leader, considers the positive treatment of followers by putting them first, encourages emotional healing, empowers, helps subordinates grow and succeed and addresses the role of the servant leader in creating value for the community. The SL-7 is also recommended as a useful tool in applied research settings for the assessment of a generalised, global rating of servant leadership due to its brevity (Liden et al., 2015). As the data for this thesis were collected from employees in an occupational setting, the SL-7 measure was considered to be the most practical approach to assessing the overall experience of servant leadership behaviours from one's supervisor at work, a choice which was informed by its' well-established validity.

### **3.2.5 Common Method Variance (CMV)**

One of the most widely discussed issues in the behavioural sciences is common method variance (CMV) (Malhotra, Kim, & Patil, 2006; Ostroff, Kinicki, & Clark, 2002; Podsakoff et al., 2003; 2012). CMV is a bias in the estimation of relationships between variables that originates from aspects of the measurement approach used to collect data rather than the true relationships between psychological constructs (*e.g.*, Ostroff et al., 2002; Podsakoff et al., 2003, 2012; Richardson, Simmering, & Sturman, 2009). Podsakoff and colleagues (2003) provide a

comprehensive and critical review of this source of systematic measurement error, arguing that CMV is “a particularly serious problem because it provides an alternative explanation for the observed relationships between measures of different constructs that is independent of the ones hypothesised” (Podsakoff et al., 2003, p. 879). When researchers interested in the relationship between two constructs uses the same measurement method for both, the shared approach to measurement may have a systematic biasing effect on observed correlations. Findings may therefore be influenced by the conflation, attenuation or altering of relationships between variables (*e.g.*, Conway & Lance, 2010; Harrison & McLaughlin, 1993; Lindell & Whitney, 2001; Malhotra et al., 2006; Ostroff et al., 2002; Podsakoff et al., 2003). Argued to be particularly prevalent for perceptual or attitudinal constructs (Chang, van Witteloostuijn, & Eden, 2010; Feldman & Lynch, 1988; Podsakoff et al., 2003, 2012; Richardson et al., 2009), CMV is posited to substantially influence the estimates of relationships between constructs, such as those adopted in this thesis.

Podsakoff and colleagues (2003; 2012) identify the most prevalent sources of CMV in research. They are classified into four broad categories, namely; (1), *common rater effects*, or the artificial covariance that originates from raters themselves; (2) *item characteristic effects*, or the artificial covariance due to aspects of the items, (3) *item context effects*, or the context in which the items are presented, and (4) *measurement context effects*, or the broader research context within which the measures are collected (*measurement context effects*). A definition of each of these types of CMV effects is included in Table 3.4, alongside some salient examples.

Several procedural remedies are recommended to mitigate the influence of common method bias on study findings. Examples of these remedies are collecting data from different sources so that the same rater is not reporting on both predictor and criterion variables, instating some form of separation between the measurement of the predictor and criterion variables to reduce common method effects, and reducing evaluation apprehension by informing respondents of their anonymity in completing the survey (*e.g.*, Feldman & Lynch, 1988; Podsakoff et al., 2003).

The most effective procedural approach to limit CMV due to common rater effects is to have different respondents complete measures of the predictor and criterion variables (Conway & Lance, 2010; Jakobsen & Jensen, 2015; Podsakoff et al., 2003). However, due to the security restrictions presented by the occupational context, it was not possible to collect and match data from two different raters. Instead, the recommendations of Chang and colleagues (2010), and Podsakoff and colleagues (2003) to use a time lag to redress this concern were followed. Specifically, each study design had a temporal separation between the collection of the predictor and criterion variables. Time lags address methodological concerns such as consistency motifs, implicit theories and illusory correlations by reducing respondents' ability or tendency to recall their answers to the first survey when completing the second. This temporal separation also partially reduces measurement context effects, because the contexts for the measurement of predictors and criteria are less similar. The separation of measurement of predictor and criterion variables was designed to be relatively short, approximately one week in length, heeding warnings from Podsakoff and colleagues (2003, 2012) to avoid an inordinately long gap that would challenge the theoretical relationship under consideration.

Another common rater effect is social desirability (Jakobsen & Jensen, 2015; Podsakoff et al., 2003; Podsakoff & Organ, 1986), or the artificial covariation caused when raters respond in ways they think are more acceptable within a given social context, rather than giving their genuine response. Podsakoff and colleagues (2003, 2012) comment on the usefulness of multi-source data in reducing the potential impacts of social desirability on study findings, an impact that is especially useful in the measurement of more objective follower behaviours. Again, because the research context meant the collection of multi-rater data was not possible, additional procedural remedies were instated to redress these concerns. Specifically, respondents were assured of their confidentiality and anonymity both on the first page of each survey and through internal communications campaigns carried out by the relevant organisations throughout the survey process.

**Table 3-4: An Overview of Sources of Common Method Variance**

<b>Causes</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Examples</b>
<b>Common rater effects</b>	Any artificial covariance between the predictor and criterion variables produced by the fact that the respondent attesting to both variables is the same	Consistency motifs, implicit theories and illusory correlations, social desirability, lenience and acquiescence biases, mood state (affectivity, emotionality and transient mood states)
<b>Item characteristic effects</b>	Any artificial covariance that is caused by the influence or interpretation that a respondent might ascribe to an item solely because of specific properties or characteristics the item possesses	Item social desirability, item demand characteristics, item ambiguity, common scale formats and scale anchor labels, positive and negative item wording
<b>Item context effects</b>	Any influence or interpretation that a respondent might ascribe to an item solely because of its relation to the other items making up an instrument	Priming effects, item embeddedness, context-induced mood, scale length, intermixing of items or constructs within a questionnaire
<b>Measurement context effects</b>	Any artificial covariation produced from the context in which the measured are obtained	Predictor and criterion variables measured at the same point in time, in the same location or using the same medium

*Table adapted from Podsakoff et al., 2003*

Another common rater effect is consistency motifs (Jakobsen & Jensen, 2015; Podsakoff et al., 2003), an effect arising from respondents wanting to respond in a logical, uniform manner across a scale or a survey. To mitigate these concerns, respondents were provided with clear instructions for completing the survey, which included being informed that they were able to leave items blank if they did not feel comfortable or capable to answer them. Following recommendations from Chang and colleagues (2010) as to providing reassurance to respondents, these instructions were provided to alleviate the need to respond consistently across different measures. Moreover, Podsakoff and colleagues (2003, 2012) suggest that clear instructions should reduce participants' apprehension during the survey process, resulting in responses that are less likely to be influenced by social desirability.

Item characteristic effects occur when ambiguous and overly complex scale items increase measurement error. An ambiguous or complex item places a significant cognitive demand upon respondents (Feldman & Lynch, 1988; Jakobsen & Jensen, 2015; Podsakoff et al., 2003), leading them to rely on other information, implicit theories or consistency in order to generate their responses (Chang et al., 2010; Podsakoff et al., 2003, 2012). To minimise this problem, recommendations from Podsakoff and colleagues (2003) were followed. For example, each study employed well-established measures of key constructs to ensure survey items were well composed and clear to respondents. To reduce the ambiguity of certain scales for respondents, some items were also adapted slightly to be more salient within the respondents' occupational context.

Scale anchors with shared properties also can contribute to item characteristic effects. Common anchor labels across different scales can influence retrieval processes such that responses to previous items are used - consciously or subconsciously - to inform responses to subsequent questions (Podsakoff et al., 2012). Having different scale anchors decreases respondents' tendency to respond stylistically, or based upon the aforementioned retrieval processes (Podsakoff et al., 2012). Although some writers recommend that different scale anchors for predictor and criterion variables can act as a procedural remedy against common method variance (*e.g.*, Podsakoff et al., 2003, 2012), others caution against it. For example, Hartley and Betts (2010) caution that the order of scale anchor descriptors, *i.e.*, whether positive labels are to the right or to the left, and the order of scale numbers, with high rating either to the right or to the left, influences the values of ratings. To address this concern, the order of positive or negative valence of scale anchor label descriptors and the order of scale numbers were kept consistent throughout, with negative labels and low numeric values to the left and positive labels and high numeric values to the right. Most measures were assessed using seven-point Likert scales with agreement scale anchor labels (1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*). However, to mitigate the potential influence of common method bias at the response

selection stage, several other forms of seven-point Likert scale anchors were used in the data collection for this thesis. This can be seen in Study 2, with hindrance stressors being measured with frequency scale anchors (1 = *never* to 7 = *extremely often*), and ego depletion being measured with likelihood anchors (1 = *not at all true* to 7 = *completely true*). Also, in Study 3, commitment to the public was measured with different likelihood anchors (1 = *not at all* to 7 = *completely*). All scale items and scale anchors are included in the Appendix of this thesis.

Item context effects were also considered in the survey design process. These occur when respondents interpret an item in relation to other items within a shared instrument, rather than considering it independently. One approach taken to reduce item context effects was to consider scale length, with all reasonable attempts being made to use brief but well-established response scales throughout. An example of this is seen in the use of the SL-7 for the measurement of servant leadership (Liden et al., 2015), rather than the original 28-item measure (Liden et al., 2014a; Liden et al., 2008). As data collection for each empirical study was undertaken as part of a larger, organisation-wide survey in a collaborative research project, the study variables were included amongst much longer surveys (approximately 140 items for Time 1 surveys and approximately 40 items for Time 2 surveys). Potential impacts of response fatigue and increased cognitive load on respondents may therefore be present in study findings. This potential influence is discussed in the Limitations and Future Research Directions section of the Summary & Conclusions chapter of this thesis (Chapter 7).

Despite several procedures being implemented to mitigate the influence of CMV on study findings, the independent variable, mediating variables and statistical control variables were all collected at the same time point and from the same rater. This leaves the potential for common method bias to affect hypothesis testing, alongside concerns addressing causality which are further discussed in Section 3.2.6. Although a significant limitation is evident in the lack of multi-source rating to redress concerns of common method variance (Podsakoff et al., 2003, 2012), confirmatory factor analyses were undertaken to generate comparative models of study



variables. In assessing the proposed theoretical model against a one-factor model, concerns about the impact of very high levels of common method variance on study findings can be reduced. In each study the model fit of each proposed theoretical model was compared against alternatives, including a one-factor model. The proposed theoretical model fit was superior to the respective one-factor model in all three studies.

### 3.2.6 Causality and Causal Interpretation

Extant research within the social sciences contends that three conditions must exist to determine causality between an assumed cause ( $x$ ) and an effect ( $y$ ): (1) temporally,  $x$  must come before  $y$ ; (2)  $x$  and  $y$  must be reliably correlated; and (3) the relation between  $x$  and  $y$  must not be explained by other causes (*e.g.*, Antonakis, Bendahan, Jacquart & Lalive, 2014; Martin, Epitropaki & O'Broin, 2018; Pearl, 2009). Although difficult to achieve all three conditions, especially condition three, certain study designs and approaches to data collection are available to support claims as to the causal link between an assumed independent variable and proposed dependent variables. The strongest claims of causality come from randomised experiments, including laboratory experiments, as variables of interest to causal claims are manipulated by the researcher, therein minimising threats to the validity of results (*e.g.*, Martin et al., 2018; Podsakoff & Podsakoff, 2019; Antonakis et al., 2014). Similarly, field experiments and quasi-experiments also present compelling means through which to draw causal inference which in applied settings where complete randomisation of variables is not practical (Podsakoff & Podsakoff, 2019; Martin et al., 2018).

It may also be the case that experimental research design is not feasible. Research in applied contexts often results in multiple trade-offs between a researcher and the organisation from which they are gathering data, resulting in non-experimental research and data collection. The difficulties of attempting to claim causality in non-experimental research are often found in endogeneity (Antonakis, 2010). These issues can be related to: (1) omitted variable bias; (2)

simultaneity; and (3) self-selection biases (Antonakis, 2010; Antonakis et al., 2017), each of which is discussed, where relevant, in subsequent empirical study chapters.

Due to the cross-sectional nature of the empirical studies within this thesis, causal inference cannot be claimed. Although all hypotheses are underpinned by the relevant theory, potential alternative direction, sign or magnitude of all evidenced effects are susceptible to the influence of endogeneity. As is well-established (Antonakis, 2010; Antonakis et al., 2017), many safeguards as to endogeneity biases originate in the research design stage. From this perspective, each empirical study includes appropriate suggestions for research in the future to redress these concerns.

### **3.3 Statistical Approaches Adopted within this Thesis**

#### **3.3.1 Normality Testing**

Cohen, Cohen, West and Aiken (2003) emphasise that assessing normality includes the assumption that residuals will be normally distributed when multiple regression analysis is undertaken. However, they comment that assumptions are not made about the normal distribution of independent or dependent variables in the analyses. In spite of this, Hair and colleagues (2006) indicate that, in sample sizes of less than 20, non-normality of data can have serious implications for the confidence a researcher can have in results of statistical testing. This negative impact is considered to lessen significantly when sample size exceeds 200 (Hair et al., 2006).

**Graphical analysis of normality.** Histograms and normal probability plots were generated for the purpose of assessing normality. The normal probability plot presents the cumulative distribution of the actual variable against the cumulative distribution of a theoretical normal distribution. Normality can be assumed if the plot is roughly linear (Hair et al., 2006). The generated graphs are available in the thesis Appendix.

Servant leadership, the focal variable of interest throughout this thesis, was slightly negatively skewed in all samples, with a mean score varying between 3.96 ( $SD = .68$ ) and 4.92 ( $SD = 1.27$ .) Unsurprisingly, variables that related to members of the public and ethics, which were measured on positive scales, were showed significant negative skewness. This is seen in public service motivation (Study 1), ethical voice behaviour (Study 2), and commitment to the public (Study 3).

**Table 3-5: Statistical analysis of normality for study variables**

Variable	Skewness	Kurtosis	K-S* Statistic	Sig. of K-S* statistic
<b>Study 1</b>				
Servant leadership	-.72 (.08)	.13 (.16)	.08	<.001
Public service motivation	-.74 (.08)	.87 (.16)	.09	<.001
Organisational vision clarity	-1.02 (.08)	.51 (.16)	.17	<.001
Taking charge	-.48 (.08)	.20 (.16)	.06	<.001
<b>Study 2</b>				
Servant leadership	-.69 (.09)	-.11 (.19)	.10	<.001
Hindrance stressors	.27 (.09)	.004 (.19)	.07	<.001
Ego depletion	.29 (.09)	-.45 (.19)	.08	<.001
Ethical Voice	-1.50 (.09)	4.60 (.19)	.18	<.001
<b>Study 3</b>				
Servant leadership	-.66 (.05)	-.15 (.10)	.09	<.001
Individual identity	.17 (.05)	-.67 (.10)	.09	<.001
Relational identity	-.95 (.05)	2.32 (.10)	.11	<.001
Collective identity	-1.14 (.05)	2.10 (.10)	.12	<.001
Commitment to the public	-1.15 (.10)	1.20 (.21)	.20	<.001
Moral disengagement	1.01 (.10)	1.62 (.21)	.11	<.001

Note: Standard deviation of skewness and kurtosis is included in parentheses;

\*K-S = Kolmogorov-Smirnov statistic

**Statistical analysis of normality.** In addition to graphical analysis, statistical analysis of normality is also considered to be relevant in considering the distribution of variables to be included in multiple regression analyses (Hair et al., 2006).

Based upon the statistical analysis of normality using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov statistic, all study variables violate the assumption of normality. However, due to the fact that samples across all three empirical studies are much larger than the 200 asserted by Hair and colleagues

(2006), normality testing is argued to be of less importance than for smaller samples. From this, study hypotheses were tested with the data without being transformed.

### **3.3.2 Reliability Testing**

Measurement items for all study variables are included in the Appendix section of this thesis, including citations, measurement items and Likert-style response rating scales. Following an increasing debate around the choice of tests of internal reliability measurement (*e.g.*, Dunn, Baguley & Brundsen, 2014; Peters, 2014; Padilla & Divers, 2013), each study within this thesis assesses the reliability of each measurement scale using omega (McDonald, 1970). In spite of its' popularity across the field of psychology, Cronbach's alpha (Cronbach, 1959) has been evidenced to have numerous deficiencies (Dunn et al., 2014) which are addressed, in part, through the use of omega. Cronbach's alpha relies upon the assumption that all indicators contribute equally to the factor of interest, as well as the assumption that error variances are uncorrelated. Due to these assumptions, which are rarely met in practice for psychological scales (Green & Yang, 2009), alpha scores are vulnerable to under- or overestimated reliability in testing psychological constructs (Dunn et al., 2014). Cronbach himself concluded that, in questions where the target is related to different areas or processes, that the alpha formula is not appropriate (Cronbach & Shavelson, 2004). Omega is argued to represent a more intuitive measure of reliability than other, more frequently applied assessments of reliability, including alpha (Peters, 2014; Padilla & Divers, 2013). In light of these recommendations, omega was calculated as an estimate of scale reliability and validity, in addition to the calculation of Cronbach's alpha. The value should exceed .7 for omega (Viladrich, Angulo-Brunet & Doval, 2017), and .7 for alpha (Kline, 1990). All study variables within this thesis exceed the recommended value and are reported in the relevant study chapter.

### 3.3.3 Structural Equation Modelling and Confirmatory Factor Analysis

This thesis applies confirmatory factor analyses and structural equation modelling to assess measurement models and to test hypothesised relationships. Argued to extend academic rigour beyond more traditionally employed statistical methods (*e.g.*, Brown & Moore, 2012; Gefen, Rigdon, & Straub, 2011; Marsh, Morin, Parker, & Kaur, 2014), confirmatory factor analyses were conducted to establish both the dimensionality and discriminant validity of each measure included within the hypothesised models.

Structural equation modelling is the broad category of analytical approaches used to test theoretical models and resultant hypotheses through the use of measured or latent variables (Flora & Curran, 2004; Schreiber, Nora, Stage, Barlow, 2006). Adopting a latent variable approach is argued to fully or partially remove measurement error from estimates of relationships that are addressed in hypothesis testing (Gefen et al., 2011; Marsh et al., 2014). Nested within this category is confirmatory factor analysis (*subsequently referred to as CFA*), a specific type of structural model which is used to operationalise a measurement model (Kelloway, 2015; Schreiber et al., 2006). CFAs are applied to consider the reliability of observed measures and to assess the extent of interrelatedness between measures of interest (Schreiber et al., 2006). Within this analysis, only non-directional assumptions are held between model latent variables (Geiser, 2013).

In the process of conducting a CFA, a variety of important tests and indices are available to assess goodness of fit in structural equation models. Held as the foundation of structural equation modelling, confirmatory factor analysis is fundamental in establishing a sound measurement model, a premise upon which all subsequent latent variable analyses rely (Brown & Moore, 2012). As is often advised (*e.g.*, Brown & Moore, 2012; Marsh et al., 2014; Schreiber et al., 2006), each study included within this thesis undertakes confirmatory factor analyses prior to hypothesis testing. In each of these studies the absolute fit of each measurement model was assessed by the chi-squared test, also referred to as a “goodness of fit” statistic. The chi-square

test measures how well the observed data are distributed compared to the distribution that was expected from independent variables. Alongside this measurement of goodness of fit, both the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) and the standardised root mean residual (SRMR) were assessed. As per convention, a RMSEA value of below .08 and a SRMR value of less than .08 represent a model that shows good fit to the data (Gefen et al., 2011; Hu & Bentler, 1999; Schmitt, 2011). Moreover, the comparative fit indices (CFI) were considered as additional indicators of fit. Ideally, these indices are higher than .95, but are acceptable when above .90 (*e.g.*, Gefen et al., 2011; Hu & Bentler, 1999; Schmitt, 2011). The measurement model in each empirical study follows the aforementioned recommended values, indicating that each model consists of distinct measures throughout.

#### **3.3.4 Testing Indirect Effects with Structural Equation Modelling and Bootstrapping Procedures**

Each empirical study of this thesis tests for proposed mediating mechanisms, or indirect effects, through which servant leadership influences follower outcomes. A mediator variable transmits the effect of an antecedent onto a dependent variable, therein identifying the mechanism through which influence between variables is realised (Baron & Kenny, 1986; Gunzler, Chen, Wu, & Zhang, 2013; MacKinnon & Fairchild, 2009; MacKinnon & Luecken, 2008). Linear structural equation modelling using Mplus (Muthén & Muthén, 2015) is used to test mediational hypotheses throughout this thesis, where hypotheses are oriented around developing an understanding of the psychological processes through which servant leadership is related to follower behaviours and outcomes.

Values of indirect effects are the products two or more regression coefficients. To determine the statistical significance of an indirect effect using standard errors calculated from formulas such as the Sobel test can be problematic (Geiser, 2013; Kline, 2017; MacKinnon & Fairchild, 2009), as such approaches assume that the sampling distribution of the indirect effect is normal. Lack of adequate sample size may also pose problems for significance testing for indirect effects.

These assumptions are suggested to influence results and threaten biased findings in analysing indirect effects (Geiser, 2013; Kline, 2017; MacKinnon & Fairchild, 2009; Mackinnon & Luecken, 2008). To address the problems arising from the non-normal sampling distribution of indirect effects, bootstrapping procedures are often advocated as a more appropriate alternative to assessing the significance of indirect effects with greater reliability (Geiser, 2013; Kline, 2017).

Bootstrapping procedures involve drawing a large number of random samples with replacement from the observed data set, calculating the statistic of interest (for example, an indirect effect) in each sample, and using those results to generate an empirically derived sampling distribution (Kline, 2017). The bootstrapping approach does not require any assumptions as to the shape of the sampling distribution (Geiser, 2013; Kline, 2017; MacKinnon & Fairchild, 2009). Confidence intervals are then determined based upon the resampled distribution, an approach which is seen to result in more accurate assessments of indirect effects than if they were assessed from conventional testing based upon the assumption of normal distribution (Mackinnon, Lockwood, & Williams, 2004). This thesis adopts the use of confidence intervals at the 95% level as the recommended alternative approach to assessing the statistical significance of the indirect effects hypothesised within each empirical study.

### **3.3.5 Moderation Analyses and Mean Centring**

An often-discussed topic in hypothesis tests involving interaction effects is the practice of mean centring the components of a product term created to test an interaction, when those components are continuous (rather than categorical) measures. Mean centring is applied in Study 1 of this thesis. This procedure involves subtracting the sample mean from each value observed within the data set prior to the creation of an interaction term, wherein the variable's mean across the observed dataset will be zero (Iacobucci, Schneider, Popovich, & Bakamitsos, 2016; Kromrey & Foster-Johnson, 1998; Shieh, 2011). This approach has been both advocated and discouraged across the literature (Dalal & Zickar, 2012; Iacobucci et al., 2016; Kromrey & Foster-Johnson, 1998; Shieh, 2011). Those advocating its usefulness often state the importance

of mean centring in reducing multicollinearity in a regression model (Dalal & Zickar, 2012; Iacobucci et al., 2016; Kromrey & Foster-Johnson, 1998; Shieh, 2011) and for the improved interpretation of results in regression equations after the procedure has been undertaken (Dalal & Zickar, 2012; Kromrey & Foster-Johnson, 1998). Those who discourage the mean centring argue that mean centring only reduces the ill-conditioning of data that researchers would consider as nonessential. From this, it is contended that mean centring has neither the ability to impact power in detecting moderating effects nor to alter product term reliability (Dalal & Zickar, 2012; Iacobucci et al., 2016). Despite the much-debated nature of this topic, it is argued that mean centring should be applied under certain circumstances. In the first instance, mean centring is proposed to improve the interpretability of results (Dalal & Zickar, 2012; Iacobucci et al., 2016; Kromrey & Foster-Johnson, 1998). This improvement is especially salient in applied organisational and psychological research as many measurement approaches do not contain zero as a meaningful point of reference (Dalal & Zickar, 2012). As Study 1 variables were measured along a Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*), mean centring was undertaken prior to analysis to facilitate the interpretation of results of testing the interaction effect between perceptions of supervisory servant leadership, organisational vision clarity and follower public service motivation. Secondly, mean centring is also recommended in moderated structural equation modelling to alleviate convergence issues (*e.g.*, Dawson, 2014; Iacobucci, 2010). In undertaking moderation analysis in structural equation modelling as is tested in Study 1, mean centring was undertaken to alleviate potential convergence issues in modelling hypotheses, as is recommended (Dalal & Zickar, 2012).

### **3.4 Ethical considerations**

Researchers are expected to consistently abide by ethical standards throughout their research (Israel & Hay, 2006). In research projects involving human participants, these ethical behaviours are particularly salient as each participant faces potential risk at both the point of the research interaction (Israel & Hay, 2006) and when research findings are disseminated (Ross,



Loup, Nelson, Botkin, Korst, Smith & Gehlert, 2010). Ethical approval for the research included within this thesis was sought from Durham University and each of the three policing organisations where the data were collected. Durham University's expectations for doctoral students involve the submission and approval of ethics forms, alongside training in research ethics in advance of the collection of any data. The *Durham University Research Integrity Policy & Code of Good Practice* ("Durham University Research Integrity Policy & Code of Good Practice," 2017) was used by the author as the ethical standards which were strictly followed throughout the data collection, analysis and composition of this thesis. From the outset, the author respected and protected the rights of all participants, the following paragraph addresses the tactics employed to maintain such ethical standards. Additionally, in relation to the nature of the policing establishment, the author also underwent security vetting to NPPV Level 2, a security vetting process which is a mandatory requirement before involvement in the collection of data and analysis within a policing organisation due to considerations of data security and confidentiality of respondents. (Fowler Jr., 2013; Israel & Hay, 2006), in that respondents must have substantial understanding of all relevant information about potential outcomes of their participation, both harmful and beneficial, before completing any survey. Table 3.4 provides the reader with an overview of the key terms related to the ethical standards of informed consent.

To comply with this ethical standard, material information was provided to participants, seen in the instructions that were provided to each respondent on their computer screen before entering the on-line survey. These instructions, included in the Appendix section of this thesis, informed respondents as to their confidentiality and anonymity in the survey process, alongside providing them with their organisation's rationale for engaging in survey research.

Informed consent is a fundamental component of ethical research with human subjects The author neither intended nor knowingly caused harm to any respondent. Furthermore, all component parts of the survey, including but not limited to demographic information, were gathered solely for the accuracy and reliability of each empirical study. To further support the

autonomous action of participants, all survey items and demographic questions were voluntary, with no forced-response questions being included. The researcher sought to mitigate controlling influences on participants as far as possible, in that penalties were not put in place for non-participation. To the best of the researcher’s knowledge, participants were neither harassed nor coerced into taking part in the research in any of the three partner organisations.

**Table 3-6: An Overview of Terms Related to Informed Consent**

<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>Substantial understanding</b>	Someone has substantial and meaningful understanding of an action if they have an adequate apprehension of all information that is <i>material</i> or important to a decision
<b>Autonomous action</b>	Acts committed intentionally, with understanding and without <i>controlling influences</i>
<b>Informed consent</b>	Acts of informed authorising of a professional to involve the participant in the research
<b>Controlling influences</b>	Influences that stop independent or self-directed actions – may result from <i>coercion</i> or <i>manipulation</i> by others
<b>Coercion</b>	One person’s <i>controlling influence</i> over another by presenting an irresistible and credible threat of unwanted and avoidable harm
<b>Manipulation</b>	Intentional <i>controlling influence</i> of someone by non-coercively altering the actual choices available or non-persuasively altering the person’s perceptions of these choices
<b>Material information</b>	All information that, according to the participant, is germane to his or her decision whether to consent, including the nature of the action and the foreseeable consequences and outcomes of consenting or not consenting
<b>Effective communication</b>	Communication that leads to both parties having justified beliefs about the other’s statements and intentions

*Table encompassing terms developed in Faden and Beauchamp’s A History and Theory of Informed Consent (1986), adapted from Israel & Hay, 2006.*

Confidentiality for participants is also an ethical focus for social science researchers (Israel & Hay, 2006). Several strategies are recommended to minimise the risk of causing harm to participants in protecting confidentiality (Fink, 2003; Fowler Jr., 2013; Israel & Hay, 2006). Following these recommendations, the researcher did not collect respondent names, employee

identification codes, nor log-in details used on the computer upon which the survey was completed. Respondents generated their own anonymous code based upon memorable letters and numbers that would most likely only be known by the individual. This self-generated code allows greater levels of confidentiality to be assured to respondents during the survey process. Furthermore, all data was collected and stored on a secure web-host, which is held by a police force, throughout the data collection stage of each study. When each survey was closed it was downloaded onto a secure, encrypted hard drive to which only the researcher had access. The author did not profit in any way from this research, nor were there any other biases from said author in study design, data collection procedures, analysis of data, or presentation of findings.

## Chapter 4. Study 1:

### *If I Serve You, Will You Serve the Public?*

#### **A Moderated Mediation Model of Servant Leadership, Organisational Vision Clarity, Public Service Motivation and Proactive Behaviour**

##### **4.1 Introduction**

In recent years, empirical research has responded to calls for more people-oriented, prosocial approaches to leadership in organisations. An example of such a prosocial alternative is seen in the philosophy of servant leadership (Greenleaf, 1977). As has been previously discussed, servant leadership is a leadership approach that encourages the empowerment, development and personal growth of followers in a supportive working environment (Liden et al., 2008; van Dierendonck, 2011).

Existing research supports both the utility and the conceptual distinctness of the servant leadership construct (Hoch et al., 2018). There is empirical evidence of associations of higher levels of servant leadership with the increased enactment of positive outcomes. These include positive follower behaviours such as (a) organisational citizenship behaviours (*e.g.*, Bobbio et al., 2012; Brubaker et al., 2015; Panaccio et al., 2015); (b) in-role performance (*e.g.*, Chiniara & Bentein, 2016; Grisaffe et al., 2016; Jaramillo et al., 2015), and (c) improved customer-facing behaviours (*e.g.*, Chen et al., 2015; Grisaffe et al., 2016; Schwepker, 2016). The current study builds upon this foundation by investigating another potential outcome of servant leadership, namely follower taking charge behaviours (Morrison & Phelps, 1999).

Leaders are thought to contribute a great deal to sense-making at work for followers (Lord et al., 2016), and it is from the leader's pivotal role within an individual's working environment that influence can be exerted (Lord & Brown, 2001). Servant leaders' focus on communicating values and a sense of responsibility (Dennis & Bocarnea, 2005; van Dierendonck & Patterson, 2015). From this focus, this study proposes that a servant leader signals the importance of

prosocial behaviour and public service to their followers within the work context, therein creating and maintaining social norms which support these types of behaviours, a perspective that is informed by work from Lord and colleagues (Lord & Brown, 2003; Lord et al., 2016). Taking charge behaviours are conceptualised as a form of positive workplace behaviour that is both discretionary and intended to result in constructive change (Morrison & Phelps, 1999). As a result of the communication of social norms from a servant leader, subordinates whose supervisors are higher in servant leadership are expected to be more motivated to enact positive change for the benefit of their organisation and the communities served.

Works seeking to differentiate servant leadership from other positive leadership styles have emphasised the role of servant leadership in creating value for the community (*e.g.* Grisaffe et al., 2016; Hoch et al., 2018; van Dierendonck et al., 2014). The current study therefore proposes that having a supervisor who is perceived as high in servant leadership reinforces a subordinate's desire to add value for the community and, as a result, increases their public service motivation. Public service motivation (Perry & Wise, 1990) is conceptualised as an individual's predisposition or motive to behave in ways that go beyond self-interest, therein acting in ways that benefit the public and respond to broader societal issues (Kroll & Vogel, 2014; Moynihan & Pandey, 2007b; Perry & Wise, 1990). Alongside previous research that has linked public service motivation to many salient outcomes in public sector organisations (*e.g.*, Bellé, 2013; Kroll & Vogel, 2014; Ritz, 2009; Wright, Pandey & Donald, 2012), the targeted nature of this type of motivation suggests it might be an important mechanism through which the experience of supervisory servant leadership can motivate followers' engagement in discretionary behaviour.

The first contribution of this study, in keeping with several calls from the extant literature (*e.g.*, Feldman, 2014; Mayer, 2010), is the elaboration of an argument which proposes a positive relationship between servant leadership and the proactive outcome of taking charge behaviour. To the author's knowledge, the relationship of servant leadership with taking charge behaviours, a non-traditional form of discretionary effort (Morrison & Phelps, 1999), has not previously been

investigated. In consideration of the emphasis that servant leaders place on empowering their followers and sharing decision making with them, these core components suggest that increased follower taking charge behaviours are a logical outcome of this form of leadership, an argument that is developed in more detail shortly.

In the current study, engagement in proactive behaviours is not only highly consistent with servant leaders' goals and behaviours (Greenleaf, 1977), but also provide a contextually relevant behavioural outcome for the population being studied. More specifically, data were collected from a police force in the United Kingdom in which, due to the conditions of austerity imposed upon the public sector over the past decade, there has been an impetus to "*do more with less*" (May, 2014). With this need for proactivity and change-oriented approaches to work in mind, the elaboration, development and understanding of a broad range of influenceable discretionary efforts warrants attention.

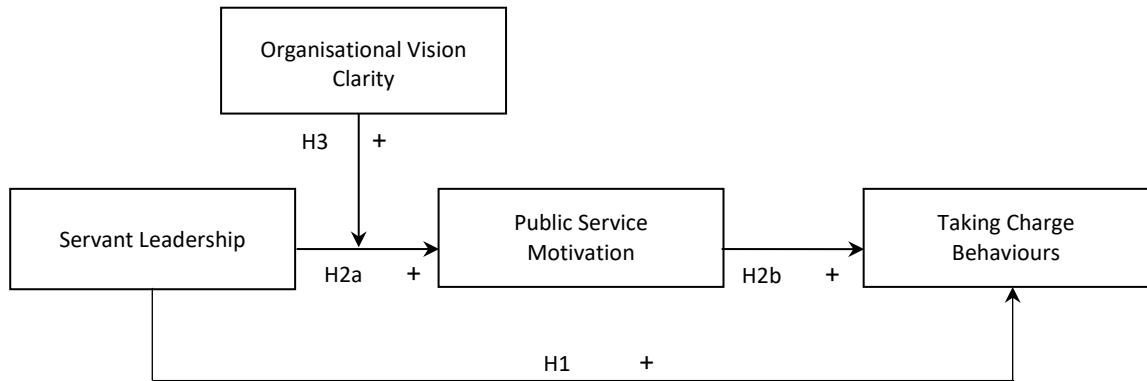
This study also represents a second contribution to servant leadership theory by highlighting an additional mechanism through which servant leaders might influence follower discretionary behaviours. To date, concepts such as trust (Chan & Mak, 2014), individual self-efficacy beliefs (Chen et al., 2015), and psychological need satisfaction (Chiniara & Bentein, 2016), have been proposed as mediators of the relationship between servant leadership and follower behaviour. However, to further understanding of the role that leaders play in influencing the values and social identities of their followers (Lord & Brown, 2001, 2003), this study highlights public service motivation and its related norms and motives as a potential motivational mechanism through which servant leaders influence followers. In considering values as the theoretical mechanism through which servant leaders influence their followers, this study responds to calls in the extant research to further examine not only the relationship between values and leadership (Stone et al., 2004; Wright et al., 2012), but also to develop a deeper understanding of the processes through which servant leadership influences follower behaviour (*e.g.*, Chiniara & Bentein, 2016; Feldman, 2014; van Dierendonck et al., 2014).

The third contribution of this study is an examination of a boundary condition of the impact of servant leadership on follower outcomes. It is broadly acknowledged that a more extensive examination of the boundaries that constrain servant leadership effectiveness represents a major task for contemporary researchers (Chiniara & Bentein, 2016; Feldman, 2014; Wu et al., 2013). Drawing upon the expectancy theory of work motivation (Vroom, 1964), this study investigates the moderating effect of organisational vision clarity on servant leadership effectiveness. Previous research in the servant leadership field has highlighted a specific need to understand the influence of constraints on servant leadership from the organisational environment. This study begins to address this gap by testing the moderating effect of organisational vision clarity, conceived as an individual-level workplace factor reflecting an individual's perception of the organisation's vision. It is expected that higher levels of servant leadership will result in higher levels of public service motivation especially when vision clarity is high. This is expected to occur because, under joint conditions of high servant leadership and high vision clarity, followers will experience both greater normative and affective emphasis on engaging in behaviours of value to their communities. This interaction should also be seen in an increased valence or understanding of what their public sector organisation wishes to accomplish or achieve.

## **4.2 Theory and Hypothesis Development**

This section reviews the literature relevant to this study, namely servant leadership and taking charge behaviours, the mediating role of public service motivation and the moderating role of organisational vision clarity. Focal relationships between these variables are then presented, alongside formal hypotheses, in keeping with social identity and social categorisation theories (Engle & Lord, 1997; Lord & Brown, 2001, 2003). The proposed moderating role of organisational vision clarity is then argued from the perspective of Vroom's expectancy theory (1964). Figure 4.1 depicts the hypothesised model.

**Figure 4-1: Hypothesised Moderated Mediation Model of Study 1**



#### 4.2.1 Servant Leadership and Taking Charge Behaviour

Empowering and helping followers grow and succeed, core components of Liden’s conceptualisation of the servant leader (2008), provide a basis for arguing that servant leadership should relate positively to taking charge behaviour. Servant leaders seek to empower followers, encouraging and facilitating them to take more control at work (Liden et al., 2008; Peterson et al., 2012; van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2011). Servant leaders believe in the intrinsic value of each of their followers (van Dierendonck, 2011; van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2011), and are willing to incorporate follower input into the decisions they make (Dennis & Bocarnea, 2005; Hunter et al., 2013). If this belief in the intrinsic value of the follower is communicated by the servant leader, said follower is thought to feel increasingly motivated and, as a result, should perceive themselves as more effective in their role (Farling et al., 1999). The servant leader empowers followers by allowing them relative autonomy in identifying and solving problems, in determining how and when specific work tasks could be carried out (Liden et al., 2008), and encourages and facilitates them in taking responsibility for their work (Bobbio et al., 2012; Chiniara & Bentein, 2016; Dennis & Bocarnea, 2005). Another broader facet of empowerment associated with servant leadership is the creation of working climates that are perceived as both positive and psychologically safe (Jaramillo et al., 2015; Liden et al., 2014a; Schwepker Jr, 2016), and that stress empowerment and the freedom to express one’s views. Therefore, through a combination of a psychologically safe climate and a follower’s perception of feeling valued, the



empowering and developmental values of the servant leader are communicated (Russell, 2001; van Dierendonck, 2011). Servant leaders are therefore expected to provide a working environment that is conducive to, and encouraging of, the enactment of taking charge behaviours from followers in their work domain.

Helping followers to grow and succeed is another component of servant leadership (Liden et al., 2008) that is considered as contributing to the effects of this leadership approach on taking charge behaviours in the workplace. An often-stated priority for the servant leader, helping followers grow and succeed is an enabling approach (van Dierendonck, 2011). It consists of the extent to which a servant leader demonstrates genuine concern for the development and growth of their followers (Liden et al., 2008; Tang et al., 2016). Servant leaders are attentive to the aspirations and goals of followers and strive to help them achieve those goals through the provision of support and opportunities for skill development (Chiniara & Bentein, 2016; Liden et al., 2008; Panaccio et al., 2015). Followers are thought to develop a sense of confidence in their own abilities under the mentoring of a servant leader and are therefore more inclined to fulfil their potential at work (Liden et al., 2015; van Dierendonck, 2011). By stressing the importance of followers' personal development and encouraging followers to reach their full potential, the working environment facilitated by a servant leader (*e.g.*, Jaramillo et al., 2015; Liden et al., 2014a; Schwepker Jr, 2016) is therefore conducive to the enactment of non-traditional forms of discretionary effort. This represents an opportunity for individuals to behave in innovative and change-oriented ways at work.

Based on a consideration of these core aspects of servant leadership, followers are expected to feel more comfortable with, and to be more disposed to, engaging in discretionary efforts at work under the guidance of a servant leader. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

*Hypothesis 1: Supervisory servant leadership is positively related to follower taking charge behaviours.*

#### **4.2.2 The Mediating Role of Public Service Motivation in the Relationship between Servant Leadership and Taking Charge Behaviour**

Alongside the direct influence of supervisory servant leadership on follower taking charge behaviour, this study proposes a motivational mechanism through which this leadership philosophy indirectly influences follower discretionary effort. The motivational impact of positive leadership has been well established, with several studies proposing leadership as reinforcing and augmenting follower motivation, for example through public service motivation (Perry & Hondeghem, 2008; Wright et al., 2012). Defined as “an individual’s predisposition to respond to motives grounded primarily or uniquely in public institutions and organisations” (Perry & Wise, 1990: 368), public service motivation is posited as a partial mediator of the relationship between supervisory servant leadership and follower taking charge behaviour. Partial mediation is proposed in this study as additional mediators of the relationship between servant leadership and follower discretionary effort exist within the servant leadership literature (*e.g.*, Brubaker et al., 2015; Chiniara & Bentein, 2016; Jaramillo et al., 2015).

In keeping with social identity and social categorisation theories, this study follows work by Lord and colleagues (Engle & Lord, 1997; Lord & Brown, 2001, 2003) in the assertion that leadership plays a vital role in embedding values and interrelated self-identities in the broader cultural framework of an organisation. Leaders are a major contributing factor to the management of meaning and communication of social norms at work (Lord & Brown, 2003), a perspective that has been extended to address the values mechanism through which leaders exert their influence. Values are conceptualised in this study as latent constructs which provide a reference framework for individuals within a social system. As values represent standards or norms within a specific context, they provide stability and a sense of purpose from which individual behaviours can be generated in that specific context (Lord & Brown, 2001, 2003). Within the public sector, the social values emphasised by the organisation prioritise public service. If such prosocial values are therein considered as normative standards that provide a

basis for subsequent follower behaviours, the prosocial values expressed by a leader are expected to influence follower values. This is proposed to result in a state of public service motivation, which should partially mediate the effects of this leadership approach on follower behaviours.

The concept of public service motivation is held to represent an unobserved latent variable with several dimensions (Kim, 2010). Perry (1996) and Kim and colleagues (Kim, 2009; 2010; Kim, Vandenberg, Wright, Andersen, Ceraso, Christensen & De Vivo, 2012) conceptualise public service motivation as having four dimensions, namely attraction to public policy making, commitment to the public interest, compassion and self-sacrifice. Three motives are included in common conceptualisations of public service motivation, namely normative, affective and rational motives (Kim, 2009; Kim et al., 2012; Perry, 1996), each of which represents a psychological deficiency or need that an individual feels as though they have to address (Perry, 1996). The first established motive, those that are normative and generated by efforts to conform to contextual norms, is seen in (1) *commitment to the public interest* (Kim, 2009; Perry, 1996). An individual is thought to have a desire to serve others or act altruistically to meet the best interests of the public (Perry, 1996). The second motive, based in affectivity and triggers of behaviour that are grounded in an emotional response to other people, is evident in both public service motivation dimensions of (2) *compassion* and *self-sacrifice* (Kim, 2009; Perry, 1996). *Compassion* (3) is posited as an emotional response to other people (Perry, 1996), emphasising a concern for the needs of others (Kim et al., 2012). *Self-sacrifice* (4) is also an affective motive underlying public service motivation, wherein an individual puts the needs of others first, being willing to forego certain personal rewards to support the development of others (Perry, 1996).

Rational motives are the third group of motives considered to underlie public service motivation. They are said to originate in certain utility maximisation behaviours which are evident in *attraction to public policy making* dimension of public service motivation (Kim, 2009; Perry, 1996). Attraction to public policy making is proposed to represent a desire to be involved

in the creation and formation of public policy or the opportunity to pursue personal interests in that way (Ritz, 2011). This rational motive and the dimension of attraction to public motivation, however, has received criticism within the extant public service motivation literature (*e.g.*, Kim, 2009; Ritz, Brewer, & Neumann, 2016; Wright et al., 2012). This criticism results from concerns about face and content validity (Kim, 2009; Ritz et al., 2016), evident in the potential contradictions it presents by emphasising personal interest and a power-orientation (Ritz, 2011) against the compassionate and self-sacrificing dimensions that are central to public service motivation (Kim et al., 2012; Perry, 1996; Ritz et al., 2016). This criticism is also supported by statistical results that find attraction to public policy making to be only weakly correlated with the other three dimensions of public service motivation (Camilleri, 2006; Wright et al., 2012). Due to these criticisms, the rational motives and attraction to public policy dimension of public service motivation is not conceptualised or measured within this study.

Extending the concept of the prosocial nature of public sector organisations, public service motivation has, in empirical work extending beyond measurement and dimensionality inquiries, begun to be recognised as possessing more dynamic, state-like qualities that extend beyond its initial trait-like characterisation (Bellé, 2013; Moynihan & Pandey, 2007a; Quratulain & Khan, 2015; Stazyk & Davis, 2015). An example of this is seen as Bellé refers to public service motivation as a ‘dynamic state or at least a trait showing significant within-person variability’ (Bellé, 2013:150). Wright and colleagues also attest to the potential of leadership to influence public service motivation, referring to it as ‘a lever that can be used to shape organisational outcomes’ (Wright et al., 2012:208). In keeping with this dynamic, state-based perspective, this study conceptualises public service motivation as a state that is influenced, at least in part, by both social context and workplace factors (Moynihan & Pandey, 2007a). Considered as a workplace factor, a leader’s role is to increase the salience of context-relevant values for their followers. Leadership is therefore proposed as a social influence which contributes to the internalisation of context-relevant values for followers (Lord & Brown, 2003). This study

proposes that, in meeting the normative and affective motives that underlie public service motivation, the experience of servant leadership at work will be positively related to follower public service motivation.

Servant leaders are presented as having conceptual skills, they possess knowledge about their organisation which they use to provide information, feedback and resources to those around them (Liden et al., 2008). These conceptual skills allow the leader to support and help others in achieving their goals. From these conceptual skills, this study contends that servant leaders contribute to the fulfilment of the normative motives of their followers, supporting them in activities that they will perceive to be in the interest of the public. It is also well established that the servant leader places a heavy emphasis on the creation of value for the community (Liden et al., 2008; van Dierendonck, 2011). The servant leader therefore exhibits a genuine and authentic sense of concern for helping members of the community in which the organisation is placed. In emphasising this concern for the community, this study proposes that servant leaders contribute to the fulfilment of the follower normative motives that underlie public service motivation. They highlight the importance of community members, therein communicating the salience of altruism and authenticity in serving the community, an orientation that should be seen in the aspect of public service motivation referred to as *commitment to the public interest*.

Servant leaders also emphasise emotional healing to those closest to them by acting in ways that respond to others personal concerns with sensitivity (Liden et al., 2008). This study proposes that sensitivity to others, as a core component of servant leadership, will relate to the affective motives that underlie follower public service motivation. This emotion-based supervisory attitude should positively influence follower public service motivation through the affectively motivated dimension of *compassion*. Servant leaders are also proposed to fulfil the follower affective motive with the dimension of public service motivation named *self-sacrifice* through their emphasis on putting subordinates first and helping followers grow and succeed. This study proposes that, in experiencing the self-sacrificing behaviour of their servant leader,

followers will be motivated to engage in comparative self-sacrificing acts. Given the emphasis on conceptual skills, community involvement, supporting others and acting with sensitivity, this leadership philosophy is posited as being of particular interest within public sector organisations.

Additionally, as servant leaders are known to behave ethically (Liden et al., 2008); they communicate the importance of ethical standards to their followers. This facet of servant leadership is considered to be especially important in fostering public service motivation as followers know that a servant leader can be trusted not to take advantage of them. In applying this values-based leadership approach in relation to public service motivation, this study redresses concerns from Wright and colleagues (2012) that public service motivation might be taken advantage of to attain organisational performance goals. The servant leader, in being oriented towards other-serving values (van Dierendonck, 2011), they protect individual's public service motivation and emphasise the values underpinning work in the public sector.

In contributing to the normative and affective motives that underpin follower public service motivation, alongside safeguarding follower interests, this study therefore contends that servant leaders will increase the values and motivations that underlie a desire to engage in public service. With public service motivation considered to have a dynamic component that can be influenced by one's environment, a positive relationship between the experience of supervisory servant leadership and follower public service motivation is proposed:

*Hypothesis 2a: Supervisory servant leadership is positively related to follower public service motivation.*

Public service motivation has been studied in a great deal of empirical research over the past 25 years or so (Ritz et al., 2016). In a recent research synthesis of the public service motivation literature, Ritz and colleagues (2016) found 173 papers including correlations between public service motivation and both individual and organisational outcomes, alongside a further 88 papers correlating public service motivation with various antecedents (34.1% and 17.3%

respectively of the 323 publications included in their review). Several attitudinal outcomes of public service motivation appear repeatedly in the extant literature, for example job satisfaction (Caillier, 2015; Liu & Perry, 2016; Quratulain & Khan, 2015), turnover intentions (Caillier, 2015), and commitment (Park & Rainey, 2007; Wright et al., 2012). Several behavioural outcomes of public service motivation also receive empirical support, including task and job performance (Bellé, 2013; Ritz, 2009; Wright et al., 2012), and forms of discretionary effort such as organisational citizenship behaviours (Ritz, 2009), extra-role behaviours (Caillier, 2015; Kroll & Vogel, 2014), and pro-social behaviours (Liu & Perry, 2016; Piatak, 2016). Research into an increasingly diverse range of public service motivation outcomes is also growing, demonstrated in the examination of a positive relationship with high ethical standards in decision-making for professionalised employees (Stazyk & Davis, 2015). Additionally, viewed as a behavioural outcome of public service motivation, a study by Caillier (2017) found a positive relationship between public service motivation and general, internal and external whistle-blowing. From the perspective of the taxonomy of extra-role behaviours proposed by van Dyne and colleagues (van Dyne, Cummings, & McLean Parks, 1995), the whistle-blowing behaviour examined by Caillier (2017) may be categorised as a challenging / prohibitive behaviour. Drawing from the same taxonomy (van Dyne et al., 1995), the current study proposes taking charge as a challenging/promotive behaviour as an additional outcome of public service motivation. Taking charge behaviours are conceptualised as being inherently change-oriented and being aimed at improving current organisational practices (Morrison & Phelps, 1999). From this position of improvement, they are considered to be behaviours that are especially important for individuals with high public service motivation seeking to create value for and safeguard the wellbeing of wider society.

This study contends that, when in a state of high public service motivation, follower normative and affective motives will encourage followers to engage in taking charge behaviours. Conceptualised as being aimed at improving working practices and policies (Morrison & Phelps,

1999), taking charge behaviours are therefore proposed in this study as a positive outcome of servant leadership via the mediating mechanism of follower public service motivation. With followers in a state of high public service motivation exhibiting commitment to the public interest (Perry, 1996), followers are thought to be more proactive and feel an increased desire to create value for the communities they serve. This proactivity from a normative motive, combined with a feeling of responsibility towards the wellbeing of others from an affective motive, should result in followers taking charge as behaviours which are intended to effect organisationally functional change.

When followers are in a state of high public service motivation, they are expected to want to do more for the good of society (Perry & Wise, 1990) through a variety of underlying normative and affective motives (Kim et al., 2012; Perry, 1996). When working within an organisation that interfaces with the public and wider community stakeholders, individuals with high public service motivation have increased opportunities to act upon this motivational force (Brewer & Selden, 1998). With increased opportunities to act combined with the guidance of a servant leader placing increased emphasis on values and a community-centric approach to work, this study hypothesises that individuals will engage more in discretionary effort. From this perspective followers who experience servant leadership, and as a result are in a state of high public service motivation, are therefore expected to engage in higher levels of taking charge behaviours in the workplace. The following hypothesis is therefore proposed:

*Hypothesis 2b: Follower public service motivation mediates the relationship between supervisory servant leadership and follower taking charge behaviours.*

#### **4.2.3 The Moderating Role of Organisational Vision Clarity**

This study argues that servant leadership increases public service motivation which, in turn, encourages taking charge behaviours. Although the relationship between servant leadership and discretionary effort has been highlighted in the extant literature, little attention has been



paid to boundary conditions of this effect. Drawing upon Vroom's valence-instrumentality-expectancy theory of work motivation (van Eerde & Thierry, 1996; Vroom, 1964), organisational vision clarity is proposed as moderating the relationship between supervisory servant leadership and follower taking charge behaviours through the mechanism of follower public service motivation.

According to valence-instrumentality-expectancy theory, valence represents the importance, attractiveness, desirability or anticipated satisfaction that an individual attributes to a particular outcome (van Eerde & Thierry, 1996; Vroom, 1964). Often assumed to have a moderating influence on performance-related outcomes (van Eerde & Thierry, 1996), valences are argued as the affective reactions or preferences an individual might hold for certain outcomes (Lord et al., 2003). If an individual does indeed have a preference or positive affective reaction towards a particular outcome, the outcome will have valence and the individual will be motivated towards achieving said desirable outcome (Lord et al., 2003; van Eerde & Thierry, 1996). In consideration, then, of an individual's propensity to be motivated towards public service, this study argues that an organisation's vision can contribute to the valence of activities related to public service for an individual within a relevant occupational context.

It has been established that an organisation's vision is a functional component of one's working environment, providing direction, justification and purpose behind individual's cooperative workplace behaviour. This influence is achieved through the communication of desirability, feasibility and centrality of certain behaviours (Rainey & Steinbauer, 1999; Vroom, 1964; Wright & Pandey, 2011). As symbols or indicators of what is valued, an organisation's vision informs individuals about the meaning of daily work-life, providing a guide as to what behaviours will lead to valued, desired outcomes within that work context (*e.g.*, Dvir, Kass, & Shamir, 2004; Pandey & Wright, 2006; Sun, Peng, & Pandey, 2014). The vision, if communicated appropriately, therein acts as a unifying force behind follower activity (Foster & Akdere, 2007), motivating individuals to behave in ways which will help them reach desired outcomes. That

same individual's motivation, directing both individual and collective efforts towards the desired future state of the organisation (Kantabutra & Avery, 2007, 2010; Stam, Lord, Knippenberg & Wisse, 2014), should then arise as a function of the valence of public service activities in a salient occupational environment.

The importance of organisational vision is well established, however several key attributes must be aligned in order for the vision to be claimed, internalised and implemented by organisational members in pursuit of a shared goal (Dvir et al., 2004; Foster & Akdere, 2007; Kantabutra & Avery, 2007; Kohles, Bligh, & Carsten, 2012). One vision attribute is highlighted in this study, organisational vision clarity, or a vision that points directly and plainly at a prime goal without the need for extended explanation (Kantabutra & Avery, 2010). From this, to be both compelling and effective, clarity is highlighted as an essential attribute of an organisation's vision (Kantabutra, 2009; Testa, 2003; Wright & Pandey, 2011). This attribute should be especially important in developing valence as a precursor of motivation (van Eerde & Thierry, 1996; Vroom, 1964). Individuals need a clear understanding of the importance, attractiveness and desirability of anticipated outcomes of potential future behaviours to facilitate work motivation (van Eerde & Thierry, 1996; Vroom, 1964).

In keeping with this theoretical perspective, when organisational vision is clear to individuals, they should be more inclined to develop a connection between and an affective orientation towards the values that the organisation prioritises (Wright & Pandey, 2011), in this instance public service. The motivational context of the workplace is more explicit for the individual when shared values are made clear (Perry, 2000), resulting in increasing valence of public sector activities. From this connection, values should be absorbed more readily into that individual's sense of self (Wright & Pandey, 2011; Lord & Brown, 2001). Consequently, shared values allow the organisation's vision to become a positive, meaningful and motivational influence on organisational members' affective orientations towards desired outcomes (van Eerde & Thierry, 1996). This should therefore inspire and motivate followers into channelling their efforts

towards the attainment of that visionary organisational future (*e.g.*, Gonzalez-Mulé, Courtright, DeGeest, Seong, & Hong, 2016; Kantabutra & Avery, 2010; Wright & Pandey, 2011; Wright et al., 2012).

On the other hand, no matter how admirable the vision of the organisation's future, the influence it has on individuals' values will only be realised, and valence achieved, if it is successfully communicated (Kohles et al., 2012). The individual must be aware of that vision, must internalise it and needs to ascribe meaning to it for its influence to take effect (Dvir et al., 2004; Foster & Akdere, 2007; Wright et al., 2012). When organisational goals are not clear, an individual's place within the organisation, including both job and performance expectations, is less clear to them and has a lesser influence on how they behave (Caillier, 2016; Stam et al., 2014). Work-related attitudes will also suffer (Sun et al., 2014). Therefore, when such clarity is lacking, organisational goals will have reduced valence (Pandey & Wright, 2006; Wright & Pandey, 2011). An individual's purpose and the meaning of their work role is expected to be negatively impacted by this lack of clarity (Rainey, 1993; Wright & Pandey, 2011).

When individuals experience servant leadership, the prevailing organisational context is expected to either suppress or multiply its positive influence on their workplace attitudes. As organisational vision clarity highlights exactly how an individual and their efforts contribute to the organisation's future, clarity in a public sector organisation is expected to influence follower affective reactions towards behaviours that benefit the public. With a clear organisational vision highlighting the importance, attractiveness and desirability of public service, individuals should experience an increase in valence. In turn, this should motivate followers further towards public service behaviours. In testing public service motivation, this study argues that organisational vision clarity will strengthen the influence of supervisory servant leadership on follower public service motivation. The following hypothesis is proposed:

*Hypothesis 3: Organisational vision clarity moderates the effect of servant leadership on taking charge behaviors through public service motivation, such that when vision clarity is higher, the indirect effect is stronger.*

### **4.3 Methodology**

#### **4.3.1 Sample & Procedure**

The data for this study were collected in a police force in the United Kingdom as part of a larger collaborative research project, discussed in more detail in Section 3.2.2 of this thesis. At the time of the Time 1 survey, the total number of employees within the organisation was 5,169. The response rate for Time 1 was 66.9% and 35.4% for Time 2 ( $n = 3459$  and  $1831$  respectively). Responses to both surveys were matched using an anonymous identification code. In total, there were 979 usable matched questionnaires, i.e., a response rate of 28.3% using those persons who returned Time 1 as a base or a response rate of 18.9% using the whole organisation as a base. Within this matched sample, 52.25% of respondents were male ( $n = 511$ ), 61.9% were police officers ( $n = 606$ ), and 55.6% of respondents were police constables or staff equivalents, who are those at the lowest position in the organisational hierarchy ( $n = 544$ ).

In the Time 1 survey, respondents rated their immediate supervisor's servant leadership, followed by self-rating vision clarity and public service motivation. One month later respondents self-reported their level of taking charge behaviours in the Time 2 survey. All employees were given the opportunity to respond to each survey. Instructions provided to respondents are included in the Appendix section of this thesis.

#### **4.3.2 Measures**

Please note that short forms of the measurement instruments were used when possible to increase the likelihood of responding. All item-level responses were made on a seven-point Likert scale, with response anchors of 1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*. All survey items including questions and response scales are included in the Appendix section of this thesis.

*Servant Leadership.* Respondents assessed their immediate supervisor's level of servant leadership using Liden and colleagues' SL-7 scale (2015). A sample item is, "My supervisor puts my best interests ahead of his/her own". McDonald's omega for this scale was .90, and Cronbach's alpha was .90, indicating good scale reliability and validity.

*Organisational Vision Clarity.* Organisational vision clarity was an adapted measure of organisational goal clarity from Wright and Pandey (2011). A sample item is "This organisation has clearly defined objectives". McDonald's omega for this scale was .93, and Cronbach's alpha was .93.

*Public Service Motivation.* Public service motivation was measured using a five-item scale (Graham, & Plater, 2016; adapted from Kim et al., 2012; Perry, 1996; Wright et al., 2012). The items included in this measure capture the two dimension public service motivation, namely commitment to the public interest ("*Meaningful public service is very important to me*" and "*I am prepared to stand up for the rights of others even if it means that I will be criticised*") and self-sacrifice ("*Making a difference in society means more to me than personal achievements*" and "*I am prepared to make enormous sacrifices for the good of society*"). These aforementioned survey items have been previously tested and established as a validated, global measure of public service motivation (Wright et al., 2012). Differing from the fifth item used by Wright and colleagues (2012) to measure the same compassion dimension, which was "*I am often reminded by daily events about how dependent we are on one another*", the item used within this survey was "*I feel sympathetic to the plight of the vulnerable*". This item was taken from Perry's (1996) original measure of public service motivation, and was a substitution which was considered to be a more appropriate and salient for the applied occupational context of this study. The fourth dimension of public service motivation, *attraction to public policy making*, was not included in measurement within this study. As this dimension is conceptualised as being founded in power and a self-interested motive (Ritz, 2011) rather than public sector values, combined with the weak correlations it has exhibited with other dimensions (e.g., Camilleri, 2006; Wright et al.,

2012), this dimension was omitted. McDonald's omega for this adapted scale was .89, and Cronbach's alpha was .89.

*Taking Charge.* Taking charge was measured using an a ten-item measure (Morrison & Phelps, 1999) adapted slightly for the policing context . A sample item is "*I often try to institute new work methods that are more effective for my organisation*". McDonald's omega for this scale was .95, and Cronbach's alpha was .95.

*Control Variables.* Demographic variables and follower characteristics have been highlighted in several instances across prior research as having an influence on an individual's experience at work (Epitropaki & Martin, 2005; van Knippenberg & van Knippenberg, 2005). To address potential confounds, several self-reported demographic variables were incorporated into subsequent hypothesis testing. Role is especially salient in this organisational context, as warranted police officers and members of the police staff hold distinct roles and have different responsibilities (coded as 0 = *officer*, 1 = *staff*). A respondent's hierarchical position within their organisation was also included in analyses as a statistical control variable. Hierarchical position was considered to be salient due to the increasing access to and involvement in the creation of vision statements that individuals at higher positions in the hierarchy will hold, representing an occupationally relevant statistical control for this study. Respondents selected one of the following five categories; 1 = *constable or staff equivalent* (practitioner), 2 = *sergeant / staff equivalent* (supervisory manager), 3 = *inspector / staff equivalent* (middle manager), 4 = *chief inspector / staff equivalent* (senior manager), 5 = *superintendent and above / staff equivalent* (senior manager).

The respondent's organisational tenure was also included as a control variable in statistical analyses. It was included due to its long-established influence on leadership perceptions, including in research addressing servant leadership (Brubaker et al., 2015; Chan & Mak, 2014), and on the follower outcomes associated with leadership influence in the workplace (de Poel, Stoker, & Van der Zee, 2014; Schriesheim, Neider, & Scandura, 1998). Respondents selected one

of the following five categories to report their organisational tenure; 1 = *less than one year*, 2 = *1 to 5 years*, 3 = *6 to 10 years*, 4 = *11 to 20 years*, 5 = *over 20 years*.

Several studies, including those addressing positive leadership, have established the relevance of respondent gender as influencing leadership perceptions, experiences and preferences in the workplace (*e.g.*, Brubaker et al., 2015; Ehrhart & Klein, 2001). Hogue (2016) found female respondents to have higher expectations of servant leadership than their male counterparts. Following further servant leadership studies (Chan & Mak, 2014; Chiniara & Bentein, 2016; Yoshida et al., 2014), respondent gender was used as a control variable, alongside supervisor gender (both coded as 0 = *male*, 1 = *female*).

Drawing from the service literature that indicates that customer contact frequency is strongly related to positive attitudes and outcomes in service interactions (Dagger, Danaher, & Gibbs, 2009), a respondent's contact frequency with the public was considered to be an additional, occupationally relevant statistical control. Respondents selected one of the following ten categories to report their contact frequency with the public; 1 = *0 to 10%*, 2 = *11 to 20%*, 3 = *21 to 30%*, 4 = *31 to 40%*, 5 = *41 to 50%*, 6 = *51 to 60%*, 7 = *61 to 70%*, 8 = *71 to 80%*, 9 = *81 to 90%*, 10 = *91 to 100%*.

## **4.4 Results**

### **4.4.1 Preliminary Results**

Descriptive statistics and correlations among the study variables are presented in Table 4.1. Means, standard deviations, correlations and *t*-tests were produced using SPSS 24. Servant leadership had a mean score, above the scale mid-point, of 4.92 ( $n = 954$ ,  $SD = 1.27$ ). Organisational vision clarity and public service motivation both had relatively high mean scores, with followers on average reporting a mean score of 5.18 ( $n = 976$ ,  $SD = 1.38$ ) for organisational vision clarity and a mean score of 5.27 ( $n = 948$ ,  $SD = .99$ ) for public service motivation. The outcome variable, taking charge behaviours had a relatively high mean score of 5.17 ( $n = 955$ ,

$SD = 1.11$ ). The correlations allowed a preliminary assessment of the research hypotheses. As expected based on Hypothesis 1, servant leadership was significantly, positively correlated with taking charge ( $r = .12, p < .001$ ). Consistent with Hypothesis 2a, servant leadership was also significantly, positively related to public service motivation ( $r = .18, p < .001$ ). As expected, public service motivation was found to be positively correlated with taking charge behaviour ( $r = .35, p < .001$ ).

Independent samples  $t$ -tests were conducted to compare the scores across the four focal variables to assess whether there were significant differences between gender and role. All significance tests are two-tailed unless otherwise indicated. For  $t$ -tests showing statistically significant differences, eta squared was calculated and assessed using values recommended by Cohen (1988). For gender, there was no significant difference for servant leadership,  $t(854) = -1.70, p = .09$ , (male  $M = 4.87, SD = 1.29$ ; female  $M = 5.02, SD = 1.25$ ), public service motivation,  $t(832) = -.38, p = .72$ , (male  $M = 5.10, SD = .91$ ; female  $M = 5.12, SD = .82$ ), and taking charge behaviours,  $t(859) = .96, p = .34$ , (male  $M = 5.19, SD = 1.15$ ; female  $M = 5.11, SD = 1.07$ ). There was a significant difference, ( $t(873) = -.256$ ), in scores for males ( $M = 5.07, SD = 1.43$ ) and females ( $M = 5.31, SD = 1.28$ ) for vision clarity. The magnitude of the differences in these means (mean difference =  $-.24$ , 95% CI:  $-.45$  to  $-.06$ ) was small (eta squared =  $.01$ ).

For role (police officer or police staff), there was no significant difference for servant leadership,  $t(952) = -1.48, p = .14$ , (officer  $M = 4.89, SD = 1.29$ ; staff  $M = 5.00, SD = 1.23$ ), public service motivation,  $t(927) = -.95, p = .34$ , (officer  $M = 5.10, SD = .92$ ; staff  $M = 5.14, SD = .79$ ), and taking charge behaviours,  $t(953) = -1.40, p = .16$ , (officer  $M = 5.13, SD = 1.13$ ; staff  $M = 5.23, SD = 1.08$ ). There was a significant difference in scores,  $t(974) = -2.88$ , for officers ( $M = 5.08, SD = 1.46$ ) and staff ( $M = 5.33, SD = 1.22$ ) for vision clarity. The magnitude of the differences in these means (mean difference =  $-.25$ , 95% CI:  $-.42$  to  $-.08$ ) was small (eta squared =  $.01$ ).



**Table 4-1: Means, Standard Deviations and Correlations for Study 1 Variables**

Variables	Mean	S.D.	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.
1. Role	.62	.49											
2. Position in org. hierarchy	1.72	1.04	-.35**										
3. Org. tenure	3.92	.95	.25**	.06									
4. Respondent gender	.42	.49	-.33**	.05	-.14**								
5. Supervisor gender	.36	.48	-.30**	.03	-.05	.24**							
6. Contact frequency w/public	4.24	3.15	.21**	-.37**	-.09**	-.09**	-.08*						
7. Servant leadership	4.92	1.27	-.05	-.01	-.12**	.06	-.02	.05	<i>(.90)</i>				
8. Public service motivation	5.27	.99	.05	.20**	.01	-.04	-0.01	.00	.18**	<i>(.89)</i>			
9. Organisational vision clarity	5.18	1.38	-.09**	.22**	-.11**	.09*	0.05	-.04	.30**	.33**	<i>(.93)</i>		
10. Interaction term	.52	2.13	.01	.00	.07*	-.02	0.01	-.06	-.20**	-.01	-.26**	-	
11. Taking charge behaviour	5.17	1.11	-.05	.33**	.07*	-.03	-0.01	-.14**	.12**	.35**	.28**	-0.00	<i>(.95)</i>

Notes:  $n = 878-979$ ; Interaction term = servant leadership x organisational vision clarity; \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ ; Where relevant, McDonald's omega for scale variables is included in italics on the matrix diagonal.. Respondent role was coded as 0 = officer, 1 = staff; respondent position in organisational hierarchy was measured across five categories; 1 = constable or staff equivalent, 2 = sergeant / staff equivalent, 3 = inspector / staff equivalent, 4 = chief inspector / staff equivalent, 5 = superintendent and above / staff equivalent. Respondent organisational tenure was measured across five categories; 1 = less than one year, 2 = 1 to 5 years, 3 = 6 to 10 years, 4 = 11 to 20 years, 5 = over 20 years. Respondent gender and supervisor gender were coded as 0 = male, 1 = female. Respondent contact frequency with the public was measured across ten categories; 1 = 0 to 10%, 2 = 11 to 20%, 3 = 21 to 30%, 4 = 31 to 40%, 5 = 41 to 50%, 6 = 51 to 60%, 7 = 61 to 70%, 8 = 71 to 80%, 9 = 81 to 90%, 10 = 91 to 100%.

Comparative analyses across demographic characteristics using independent sample *t*-tests indicate that there are several statistical differences in responses across control variables. For gender, statistical difference was found between male and female respondents for perceptions of organisational vision clarity. For role, responses for police officers and police staff members were also statistically different for organisational vision clarity. These control variables were therefore included in subsequent hypothesis testing to determine more accurately the proposed study relationships.

#### **4.4.2 Confirmatory Factor Analysis**

Before testing study hypotheses, a series of confirmatory factor analyses was undertaken to confirm the distinctiveness of the four variables of interest in this study and are reported in Table 4.2. The hypothesised measurement model with four factors, namely servant leadership, public service motivation, organisational vision clarity and taking charge, was tested. The original model fit was ( $\chi^2$  (269) = 1833.62, CFI = .91, TFI = .89, RMSEA = .08, SRMR = .05). Disturbances were then correlated between certain item pairs, using the model modification index, when they shared a modification value over 100. These disturbance correlations were deemed appropriate due to the perceived redundancy in item content (Hystad, Eid, Johnsen, Laberg, & Bartone, 2010), included below. Within taking charge, item one *“I often try to adopt improved procedures for doing my job”* was correlated with item two *“I often try to change how my job is executed in order to be more effective”* due to the conceptual similarity between these items in relation improvement and change in how one’s job is performed. Item three *“I often try to bring about improved procedures for my work unit or department”* was allowed to correlate with item four *“I often try to institute new work methods that are more effective for my organisation”* due to the conceptual similarity between these items in relation to the respondent instating new methods or policies at work. The modified model was found to fit well, ( $\chi^2$  (267) = 1115.97, CFI = .95, TFI = .94, RMSEA = .06, SRMR = .05). All factor loadings were significant.

This model is better than the alternative models, including the single factor model ( $\chi^2$  (273) = 7897.71, CFI = .54, TFI = .49, RMSEA = .17, SRMR = .12); a two-factor model in which servant leadership was influenced by all remaining study variables ( $\chi^2$  (272) = 4622.17, CFI = .74, TFI = .71, RMSEA = .13; SRMR = .12); an alternative two-factor model in which servant leadership, public service motivation and organisational vision clarity were combined into one factor ( $\chi^2$  (272) = 4739.75, CFI = .73, TFI = .70; RMSEA = .13; SRMR = .14), a three factor model which treated public service motivation and vision clarity as one factor ( $\chi^2$  (270) = 2338.76, CFI = .86, TFI = .86, RMSEA = .09, SRMR = .09), and an alternative three factor model which combined servant leadership and public service motivation as one factor ( $\chi^2$  (270) = 2614.38, CFI = .86, TFI = .84, RMSEA = .09, SRMR = .12). These findings support the discriminant validity of the research variables included within this study.

**Table 4-2: Fit Comparisons of Alternative Factor Models for Study 1 Variables**

Models	$\chi^2$	df	$\Delta \chi^2$	$\Delta df$	RMSEA	CFI	SRMR
Hypothesised model	1115.97	267	-	-	.06	.95	.05
Model A	2614.38	270	1498.41	3	.09	.86	.12
Model B	2338.76	270	1222.79	3	.09	.86	.09
Model C	4622.17	272	3506.20	5	.13	.74	.12
Model D	4739.75	272	3623.78	5	.13	.73	.14
Model E	7897.73	273	6781.76	6	.17	.54	.17

*Notes: n = 979. Model A: 3 - factor model combining servant leadership and public service motivation as one factor; Model B: 3 - factor model combining public service motivation and vision clarity as one factor; Model C: 2 - factor model combining public service motivation, vision clarity and taking charge as one factor; Model D: 2 - factor model combining servant leadership, public service motivation and vision clarity as one factor; Model E: 1-factor model combining all study variables*

#### 4.4.3 Hypothesis Testing

Hypotheses were examined using the path analysis analytic approach in Mplus 7.3 (Muthén & Muthén, 2015). Table 4.3 presents the direct effect of servant leadership on taking charge, the indirect effect of servant leadership on taking charge via public service motivation and the

conditional indirect effects of servant leadership on taking charge via public service motivation under conditions of high organisational vision clarity and low organisational vision clarity.

**Table 4-3: Unstandardised Estimates (Standard Error) of Study 1 Path Models**

	Mediation model		Moderated mediation model	
	Public service motivation	Taking charge	Public service motivation	Taking charge
<b>Control variables</b>				
Role	.37*** (.08)	-.04 (.10)	.35*** (.08)	-.04 (.10)
Position in org. hierarchy	.27*** (.04)	.27*** (.04)	.19*** (.04)	.28*** (.04)
Org. tenure	-.06 (.04)	.07 (.05)	-.06 (.04)	.07 (.05)
Respondent gender	-.02 (.07)	-.09 (.08)	-.04 (.07)	-.09 (.08)
Supervisor gender	.10 (.07)	-.02 (.08)	.04 (.07)	-.02 (.08)
Respondent age	.04 (.05)	-.04 (.05)	.09* (.04)	-.04 (.05)
Contact frequency w/public	.01 (.01)	-.01 (.01)	.02 (.01)	-.01 (.02)
<b>Independent variable</b>				
Servant leadership	.14*** (.03)	.08** (.03)	.08** (.03)	.08** (.03)
<b>Moderator</b>				
Organisational vision clarity			.23*** (.03)	
<b>Interaction term</b>				
Servant leadership x Organisational vision clarity			.05* (.02)	
<b>Mediator</b>				
Public service motivation		.32*** (.04)		.32*** (.04)
<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	.10	.20	.18	.20

Notes: Standard error of unstandardised estimates included in parentheses; All coefficients are unstandardized coefficients; all estimates were tested for significance using 95% bootstrap confidence intervals by 1000 resampling; \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$ ;

In the first instance, a path model was estimated to test the proposed mediational path with composite scores of the study variables. Servant leadership, public service motivation and taking charge were included in the estimated model, alongside the variables of respondent role, respondent position in the organisational hierarchy, respondent organisational tenure, respondent gender, supervisor gender and respondent contact frequency with the public being specified as control variables for hypothesis testing. The model allowed freely estimated effects of the specified control variables on all mediators and both dependent variables. This was found

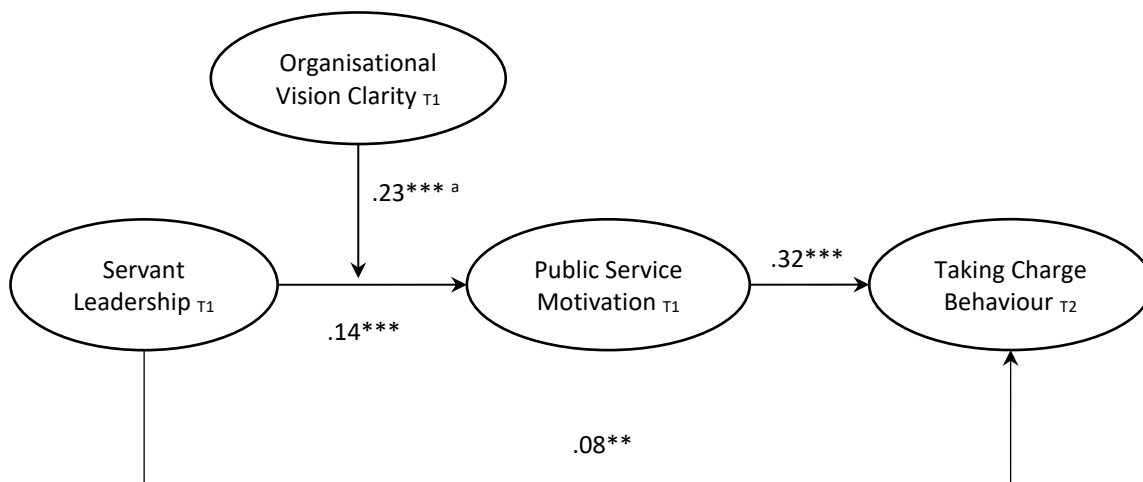
to be a saturated model. In this model, supporting Hypothesis 1, servant leadership was positively related to taking charge ( $b = .08, SE = .03; 95\% CI = .02 \text{ to } .14$ ).

Supporting Hypothesis 2a, servant leadership was positively related to public service motivation ( $b = .14, SE = .03; 95\% CI = .08 \text{ to } .20$ ). Supporting Hypothesis 2b, the relationship between servant leadership and taking charge was partially mediated by public service motivation (indirect effect =  $.04, SE = .01; 95\% CI = .03 \text{ to } .07$ ). The direct effect remained significant ( $b = .08, SE = .03; 95\% CI = .02 \text{ to } .14$ ). Direct and indirect effects of servant leadership on taking charge via public service motivation are included in Table 4.4.

Organisational vision clarity was then included in the second estimated model, introducing an interaction effect between supervisory servant leadership and organisational vision clarity to predict public service motivation. The model was again found to fit well, ( $\chi^2 (2) = 15.93, CFI = .96, RMSEA = .09, SRMR = .01$ ). Table 4.3 presents unstandardised estimates of the model. In this model, a positive interaction effect between servant leadership and organisational vision clarity in predicting public service motivation was found ( $b = .05, SE = .02; 95\% CI = .01 \text{ to } .09$ ).

Figure 4.2 displays the estimated path coefficients of the hypothesised model.

**Figure 4-2: Estimated Path Coefficients of the Hypothesised Model**



*Note: All coefficients are unstandardized coefficients; all estimates were tested for significance using 95% bootstrap confidence intervals by 1000 resampling; <sup>a</sup> coefficient as a result of moderating effects from the conditional indirect effects examination. \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$ ; Servant leadership, public service motivation, and organisational vision clarity were measured at Time 1 (denoted as T1), and taking charge behaviours were measured at Time 2 (denoted as T2). Demographic controls included in this model were respondent role, respondent position in organisational hierarchy, respondent organisational tenure, respondent and supervisor gender, respondent age, and respondent contact frequency with the public.*

The conditional indirect effects of supervisory servant leadership on follower taking charge behaviours through the mediating mechanism of public service motivation at high and low values of the moderator are included in Table 4.4. The conditional indirect effect of servant leadership on taking charge behaviours via the mediating mechanism of public service motivation is found to be dependent upon the level of the moderator, with a positive conditional indirect effect being evident at the high value of the moderator, but a non-significant indirect effect being found at the low value of the moderator. These findings provide support for Hypothesis 3.

**Table 4-4: Direct, Indirect and Conditional Indirect Effects of Servant Leadership on Follower Taking Charge Behaviour**

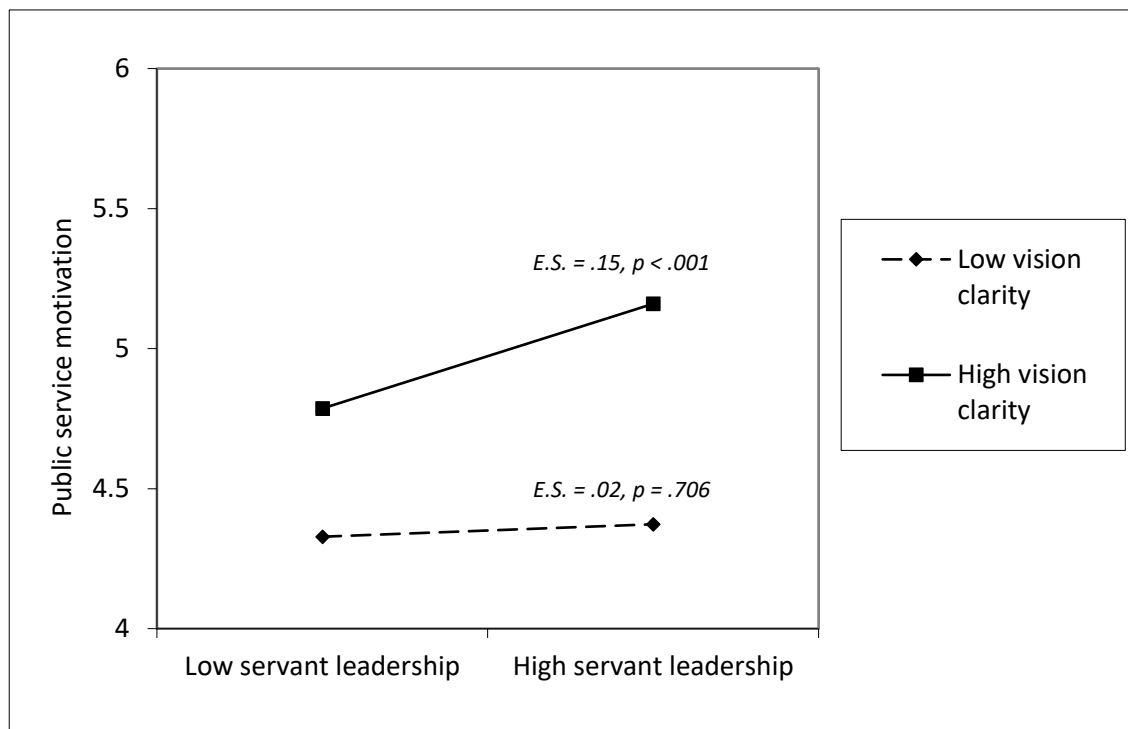
	Estimate	Bootstrap 95% confidence interval	
		LLCI	ULCI
<b>Direct effect</b>			
Servant leadership → taking charge	.08	.02	.14
<b>Indirect effect</b>			
Servant leadership → public service motivation → taking charge	.04	.03	.07
<b>Conditional indirect effect at values of the moderator</b>			
Servant leadership → public service motivation → taking charge			
<i>Organisational vision clarity</i>			
High	.05	.03	.07
Low	.01	-.02	.03
<i>Difference</i>	.04	.01	.08

*Notes: n = 811. Unstandardised estimates are reported, all estimates were tested for significance using 95% bootstrap confidence intervals by 1000 resampling.*

In addition, Figure 4.3 displays the interaction plot based on values plus and minus one standard deviation from the means of the moderating variable (i.e., organisational vision clarity). The plot shows that servant leadership had a positive association with public service motivation when organisational vision clarity was high (simple slope = .15, *SE* = .04; 95% CI = .08 to .22), but this association was not significant when organisational vision clarity was low (simple slope = .01, *SE* = .04; 95% CI = -.07 to .10), providing further support for Hypothesis 3.

Moreover, findings also position public service motivation as a mediator of the effects of follower-perceived supervisory servant leadership on follower taking charge behaviours. In addition, this study found that supervisory servant leadership only has this positive impact on taking charge behaviours through the mediating mechanism of public service motivation when organisational vision clarity is high.

**Figure 4-3: Interactive Effects of Servant Leadership and High and Low Levels of Organisational Vision Clarity (1 SD above/below the mean value) on Public Service Motivation**



## 4.5 Discussion

The primary focus of this study was to examine how, and under what conditions, supervisory servant leadership encourages follower engagement in taking charge behaviours, a proactive form of discretionary effort. Findings show that supervisory servant leadership is positively related to both follower public service motivation and follower taking charge behaviours.

### 4.5.1 Theoretical Implications

This study makes several contributions. Firstly, evidence was found for a positive relationship between supervisory servant leadership and the previously unexplored outcome of follower

taking charge behaviours. When considering taking charge behaviours as instances of proactivity and making small changes or innovations at work (Morrison & Phelps, 1999), this study departs from previously tested outcomes (*e.g.*, Bobbio et al., 2012; Grisaffe et al., 2016) and highlights the influence of servant leadership on non-traditional, proactive discretionary effort at work. This study suggests that servant leadership is positively related to follower taking charge behaviours which may be due, at least in part, to core aspects of the servant leader, helping followers grow and succeed, emphasising a focus on the importance of those outside of the organisation, and caring for the well-being of their people.

By providing follower with relative autonomy and a psychologically safe environment, they should feel capable and motivated to take the initiative in their working lives. By helping their followers grow and succeed, servant leaders encourage their followers to develop confidence in their own abilities. These qualities imply that servant leaders will facilitate and encourage their followers in taking charge at work. Highlighting taking charge as a behavioural outcome responds to calls in the literature as to how non-traditional forms of discretionary effort can be influenced by this leadership style (*e.g.*, Brubaker et al., 2015; Feldman, 2014), therein extending the servant leadership literature.

Secondly, contributing to the servant leadership literature, study findings identify motivation as an important process through which servant leadership is likely to influence follower discretionary effort in the form of taking charge behaviours. Extending beyond other mediating variables that exist within the servant leadership field, for example psychological need satisfaction (Chiniara & Bentein, 2016) or trust in supervisor (Goh & Low, 2013), this study investigates public service motivation as a mechanism through which leadership influence is realised on follower behaviour. Building upon social identity and social categorisation theories (Engle & Lord, 1997; Lord & Brown, 2001, 2003), this study suggests that the drive to act in ways which protect the public interest and benefit organisational stakeholders which subsequently encourages follower discretionary effort. In terms of this mechanism, several servant leadership



attributes are likely to contribute to the public service motivation of their followers. In particular, servant leaders place a heavy emphasis on creating value for the community. This emphasis implies that servant leaders are clearly supportive of other-serving, community-oriented behaviours, communicating these same values. Other servant leadership behaviours that are likely to enhance follower public service motivation are empowering followers and behaving ethically. Theoretically, this suggests that servant leaders have an influence on the values that followers consider salient in their working context. It also suggests that value communication from servant leaders results in desirable, proactive behaviours from their followers that extend beyond their job role, indicating the positive motivational impact of this values-driven leadership approach. Responding to calls for a deeper understanding of the processes through which servant leadership influences follower behaviour (*e.g.*, Feldman, 2014; Hunter et al., 2013; Mayer, 2010), this study enriches the existing empirical base of servant leadership.

Thirdly, this study extends recent research into the boundary conditions of servant leadership by taking into account the impact of organisational vision clarity on the relationship between servant leadership and public service motivation. This responds to several calls within the extant literature as to the need for a more extensive examination of the boundaries that constrain servant leadership effectiveness (Chiniara & Bentein, 2016; Feldman, 2014; Wu et al., 2013). Drawing upon the expectancy theory of work motivation (Vroom, 1964), this study investigates the moderating effect of organisational vision clarity on servant leadership effectiveness in increasing follower public service motivation. This study suggests that organisational variables may have a role in employee motivation and behaviour through employee understanding or awareness of a shared vision. The extent to which high levels of supervisory servant leadership leads to increasing follower motivation and subsequent positive behaviours are contingent upon the perception followers have of the organisational vision.

Theoretically, this suggests that the occupational environment plays a significant role in the relationship between the effectiveness of a values-based leadership approach, follower

motivation and positive follower behaviour. Specifically, these findings demonstrate that the relationship between servant leadership and taking charge behaviours through the mechanism of public service motivation is only evident when individuals have a clear understanding of the organisation's vision. This may occur as servant leaders are likely to rely upon value communication to contribute to an increase in the public service motivation of followers. If the prosocial values of the organisation are not clear the individual, they may subsequently lack the information about the organisation's valued social norms and integrate them into their day-to-day work.

#### **4.5.2 Practical Implications**

The findings of this study have several practical implications. First, the significant relationship between servant leadership, public service motivation and taking charge behaviours suggests that one way in which servant leadership influences follower discretionary effort is through a motivational mechanism. In this sense, supervisors in public sector organisations are well advised to reinforce the public service motivation of their followers, emphasising the contribution they can make to the public good by behaving proactively at work.

In consideration of the boundary condition of organisational vision clarity in this study, the influence of servant leaders on follower motivation is only found to be present when followers have a clear sense of the vision and the desired future that the organisation wishes to achieve. Practically speaking, given the importance of the valence of public service and a clear organisational vision underlined by these findings, organisations should put effort into explaining and embedding the core of their vision whenever possible. In the first instance, senior organisational leaders are advised to put effort into the development, explanation and dissemination of a clear and concise organisational vision. Secondly, from an organisational development perspective, those involved in internal engagement and communication programmes should consider the public service motivation and servanthood value held by organisational actors, ensuring that programmes integrate this value communication at their

core. This might involve communication around the importance, desirability and attractiveness of outcomes that might arise from engaging in public service behaviours. In aligning organisational systems with the vision, for example human resources systems and targeted interventions (Foster & Akdere, 2007; Kohles et al., 2012), individuals would be provided with increased opportunities to better understand and internalise that vision (Kantabutra & Avery, 2010). In doing so, organisations can provide support for supervisors in communicating the organisational vision more clearly to strengthen leader effectiveness, alongside harnessing the motivation of their people towards public service. Follower motivation should be supported by these activities, fostering discretionary effort so that individuals take charge in their work role to the benefit of co-workers, the organisation and members of the public.

Finally, considering the interaction effect between servant leadership and organisational vision clarity from a supervisory perspective, results suggest that there are potentially positive outcomes of follower behaviour if supervisory behaviour is consistent with the messages the wider organisation communicates to their people. From this, organisations should consider aligning supervisor training closely with the development and dissemination of organisational vision. Those in a supervisory position should be regularly refreshed and updated as to the vision that the organisation has for future organisational development and, in the public-sector context of policing, the investment that the organisation aspires to in terms of providing high quality public service, protecting public safety and in reducing crime.

#### **4.5.3 Limitations and Future Research Directions**

This study has several limitations. First, the potential for common method variance effects in the results is evident (Podsakoff et al., 2003) as the independent variable, mediator, and moderator were all collected via survey methods at the same time point from the same respondent. In keeping with suggestions pertaining to temporal separation from Podsakoff and colleagues (2003), the dependent variable, taking charge behaviour, was collected at a second time point to mitigate these concerns to an extent. Future research should consider data

collection from different sources, for example supervisors rating an individual's taking charge behaviours, or obtaining a more objective performance indicator.

A second limitation relating to measurement within this study is the fact that taking charge behaviours were self-reported by followers in the second survey wave. Although self-report approaches of this sort are common, they leave findings susceptible to the influence of social desirability effects. In consideration of the occupational context, initiative taking and discretionary effort behaviours are held in high regard, so it is reasonable to assume that individuals may be inclined to overestimate their own behaviours. With this limitation in mind, a beneficial area for future research in this area would be the collection of data from a third party such as co-workers or supervisors to redress this concern.

Thirdly, an issue highlighted as a limitation is the inability to draw causal conclusions due to the cross-sectional nature of the presented data. Although the dependent variable was collected at a second-time point, causal inference cannot be claimed within this study. Drawing from work by Antonakis and colleagues (Antonakis et al., 2010; Antonakis, 2017), remedies to deal with endogeneity concerns in study findings. Future research may consider the use of an experimental design to more robustly test whether or not servant leadership is the true source of influence in the proposed motivational process of this study.

Additionally, simultaneity (Antonakis et al., 2010) also presents a viable alternative to the process proposed here. It is reasonable to assume a bidirectional influence between leaders and followers may also occur, with the public service motivation of followers influencing the way in which their leader behaves. It may be the case that, in demonstrating a strong orientation towards serving the public to a high standard, followers may inspire or influence leaders or supervisors to place increased attention towards creating value for the community. From this perspective of bi-directional influence, testing a cross-lagged model considering three or more time-points (e.g., Meier & Spector, 2013; Selig & Preacher, 2009) also presents an interesting area for future research within the servant leadership field. It is suggested that the impact of

servant leadership on followers' well-being and performance may change over time (van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2011), and that it represents a cycle of benefit (Russell, 2016) rather than a static process. From this proposed research design, a consideration of servant leadership influence over time represents an opportunity for interesting future research, both in considering causality and the potential for bi-directional influence between a leader and their followers.

It would also be remiss not to acknowledge the potential for omitted variable bias (Antonakis et al., 2014). The estimates generated as results of hypothesis testing may be biased by variables which have not been included within the statistical model (Antonakis et al., 2010). An example of a potentially omitted variable within this study, activated follower identity level at either the relational or collective level (*e.g.* Lord & Brown, 2001), may indeed account for a proportion of the effects found in this study. Future research may therefore benefit from re-testing the proposed study hypotheses within a larger conceptual model to assess the relative importance and more comprehensive understanding of the nature of effect when considering the influence of servant leadership.

A further limitation of this study is the organisational sample from which the data were collected. Taken from one police force in the United Kingdom, it may be the case that public service motivation is of greater importance to respondents than those employed in other organisations. These respondents may therefore be more susceptible to the influence of a servant leader and values communication within this work context. The higher-order needs of followers who work within the policing establishment may be more easily activated than their private sector counterparts, especially relevant in calling upon their inherent interest in serving, or trait-based public service motivation, and protecting the wider community when influencing proactive behaviours (Wright et al., 2012). Similarly, as indicated in research from the COMPOSITE project (COMPOSITE, 2014), UK policing places community-oriented characteristics at the core of operational functioning. With partnership working, neighbourhood policing and

community engagement as focal priority, it may also be the case that these same influence may function differently in a policing context where law enforcement and a more militaristic operational style is prevalent (COMPOSITE, 2014). From both of these perspectives and the highlighted limitation of this study, additional research may consider replicating these relationships in different employee groups, both within the public sector and within the private sector, to ensure their generalisability to other occupational contexts. Further examination of this proposed influence in different cultural contexts may also provide additional detail as to the nuanced nature of servant leadership in applied contexts.

The mediational mechanism of public service motivation was proposed and tested within this study. However, this mediator was not tested in a more complex model that incorporates other mediators that are evident in extant servant leadership research, for example psychological need satisfaction (Chiniara & Bentein, 2016) or trust in supervisor (Goh & Low, 2013). This therefore represents an additional limitation of the study. Responses rating additional mediating variables of the servant leadership to follower behavioural outcomes were not collected due to the already lengthy survey that contained variables included within this study alongside variables of interest to the collaborative partner organisation. To redress this limitation, future research would benefit from a comparison of the mediating mechanism of public service motivation with other mediators to assess whether it represents an incremental effect over and above other mediators.

This study addresses the moderating role of organisational vision clarity and its influence on public service motivation at work. Servant leadership is seen to influence taking charge behaviours through the mediating mechanism of public service motivation only in instances of high vision clarity. Future research should examine alternative attributes of a vision that are salient to both the effectiveness of vision communication and to vision implementation (Stam et al., 2014). From this, a more cohesive perspective of how vision might influence the transmission of meaning and self-identities in the workplace would be beneficial.

Finally, an additional area for future research is in the creation of working climates, a potential alternative explanation as to how servant leadership functions in the workplace. Previous research has found evidence of servant leadership influencing pervasive working climates that are ethical (e.g., Jaramillo et al., 2015), or that prioritise high quality service (e.g., Liden et al., 2014; Huang et al., 2016). Similarly, it may be the case that the effects commented upon in this study are explained, at least in part, through the safe, ethical, and serving-oriented workplace climates. Future research may consider incorporating climate measures into servant leadership research to better capture the complexity of servant leadership influence in the workplace. If possible, the collection of multi-level data incorporating unit- or team-level data to assess climate effects would be beneficial. This would be especially interesting within smaller policing teams, for example neighbourhood policing units nested within larger geographic groupings and the organisation as a whole. Additionally, police forces within the United Kingdom are required to submit quarterly data to the Home Office<sup>4</sup> as to levels of victim satisfaction. Future research may benefit from including external sources of data such as victim satisfaction or other metrics of community engagement or public perceptions of policing, crime, and community safety when considering potential serving climates under the influence of servant leadership.

#### **4.5.4 Conclusion**

In conclusion, as public sector organisations seek to develop proactivity and change-oriented approaches to work in the face of austerity, this study illustrates the importance of servant leadership in the workplace and elaborates a motivational mechanism through which leaders can influence follower proactive behaviours. Study findings suggest that servant leadership is

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<sup>4</sup>The reader is politely directed to the following government website (The Office of National Statistics), which regularly publishes crime and satisfaction statistics across the public sector for additional information as to the data gathered and the way in which this information is made available to the public: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/compendium/crimestatisticsfocusonpublicperceptionsofcrimeandthepoliceandthepersonalwellbeingofvictims/2015-03-26>

positively related to taking charge behaviours. A direct effect was found between servant leadership and taking charge behaviours, and a further indirect path through the proposed mediating mechanism of public service motivation was found. Moreover, findings suggest that these influences can only be achieved when the organisation's vision is clear to those working within it. Taken together, the present study offers some interesting insights into the influence of servant leadership, both into how and when it is likely to garner more positive outcomes in the workplace.



## Chapter 5. Study 2:

### *Serving Others through Removing Impediments:*

### **An Internal Resource Perspective on Servant Leadership, Hindrance Stressors, Ego Depletion and Ethical Voice Behaviour**

#### 5.1 Introduction

Leading with integrity and leading ethically are at the core of multiple definitions of servant leadership (e.g., Greenleaf, 1977; Laub, 1999; Liden et al., 2008; van Dierendonck, 2011). Greenleaf himself emphasises ethical characteristics, stating that the servant leader will have “*taken their firm stand against injustice and hypocrisy*” (1977:20). Moral and ethical approaches to leadership are also prevalent in current trends across the leadership field, as emphasised by several recent reviews (e.g., Dinh et al., 2014; Lord et al., 2017). In spite of the central position of ethics and integrity within this conceptualisation of leadership, alongside its popularity, it is surprising that such limited research into ethical outcomes is evident within the servant leadership field, with calls in the extant literature to understand the role that specific leadership styles have in achieving high levels of ethics in different organisations (Jaramillo et al., 2015). The present study contributes to the literature by testing an ethical outcome of servant leadership. The ethical outcome explored in this study is ethical voice behaviour. This specific form of individual voice refers to an individual’s expression of opinions or perspectives that challenges the current practices, behaviours, and policies in the workplace which they do not consider to be normatively appropriate (Huang & Patterson, 2017). This study meets specific calls for further research into the breadth of discretionary effort behaviours that arise as a result of supervisory servant leadership (e.g., Brubaker et al., 2015; Wu et al., 2013).

Several studies have also tested the mediating mechanisms through which servant leadership influences follower outcomes. A social learning-based of influence is often adopted to understand this influence (e.g., Grisaffe et al., 2016; Tang et al., 2016; Tuan, 2016). Authors suggest that, as servant leaders exhibit selfless concern for their followers, those followers will

be more inclined to model those other-serving behaviours towards proximal co-workers and, by extension, to those outside of the organisation (Grisaffe et al., 2016). This social learning mechanism presents a valid account of the positive consequences of servant leadership and has received much empirical support (*e.g.*, Grisaffe et al., 2016; Tuan, 2017; Tang et al., 2016). Further to the social learning perspective, several alternative mechanisms have been tested to unpack the association between servant leadership and follower behaviours. This can be seen in the application of social exchange theory (*e.g.*, Schwepker, 2016; Liden et al., 2008; Panaccio et al., 2015) and a self-determination theory (*e.g.*, Chiniara & Bentein, 2016; de Clercq et al., 2014; Mayer, 2010; van Dierendonck et al., 2014). Although these studies provide useful perspectives on the servant leader's influence, this study contends that alternative theoretical perspectives, which return to the original conceptualisation of the leader as servant (Greenleaf, 1977), can add depth to these underlying processes. The core components highlighted are serving others by putting their needs and interests first, behaving ethically and with humility, and being conscious of an organisation's impact on wider society.

This study draws upon conservation of resource theory (Hobfoll, 1989) to emphasise the role of the servant leader in caring for the well-being of their followers through the removal of impediments which hinder follower's autonomous action. This study therefore responds to calls in the extant literature for the need to elaborate additional mediating mechanisms through which servant leadership influences follower behaviours (*e.g.*, Feldman, 2014; Liden et al., 2015; Peterson, Galvin & Lange, 2012). Furthermore, meeting calls for the elucidation of the relative importance of mediators within the servant leadership field (de Clercq et al., 2014; Liden et al., 2014), this study compares the resource mechanism with an existing engagement mechanism. The challenge-hindrances framework (Cavanaugh, Boswell, Roehling & Boudreau, 2000) is integrated with conservation of resource theory, to contend that internal resources provided by the leader are an important mechanism in the process of followers engaging in ethical voice behaviours. To date, several studies indicate that positive leadership and individual resources

are essential in supporting follower ethical attitudes and behaviours (*e.g.*, Giessner & van Quaquebeke, 2010; Bedi, Alpaslan & Green, 2016). Prior research in servant leadership has also characterised this approach as a positive leadership style which prioritises a supportive working environment (van Dierendonck, 2011) through an emphasis on caring for followers' well-being. In spite of the fact the care and welfare of followers is central to the construct (*e.g.*, Greenleaf, 1977; Liden et al., 2008; Van Dierendonck, 2011), there is a limited literature exploring the impact of servant leadership on follower well-being. In investigating an internal resources perspective of leadership influence, this study meets calls for future research into servant leadership influence on employee well-being and growth (Parris & Peachey, 2013).

As ethical voice behaviours are risky, challenging, and difficult, this study contends that servant leaders positively contribute to an individual follower's internal resources which, in reducing forms of depletion, will enable them to behave proactively and ethically. When drained, or in a state of ego depletion (Baumeister, Bratslavsky, Muraven & Tice, 1998), individuals are thought to reduce their tendency to engage in discretionary effort at work, especially in a risky behaviour such as ethical voice behaviour, as a means of self-protection. Servant leaders are posited to counteract the mechanism of resource drain, reducing hindrance stressors for their people by engaging in acts of service for them (Greenleaf, 1977). Moreover, servant leaders are contended to counteract this process by engaging in acts of service for their followers, as suggested by Greenleaf's work (1977).

This study proposes one way in which servant leaders are proposed to counteract this process, through the removal of impediments in an individual's working environment. These impediments, operationalised as hindrance stressors (Cavanaugh et al., 2000), that a follower encounters in their working life, are known to be negatively related to follower well-being and internal resources (Webster, Beehr & Christiansen, 2010; Tuckey, Searle, Boyd, Winefield & Winefield, 2015). Examples of hindrance stressors are role ambiguity, role conflict and red-tape in the workplace (Cavanaugh et al., 2000).

## 5.2 Theory and Hypothesis Development

### 5.2.1 The Relationship between Servant Leadership and Ethical Voice Behaviour

As previously discussed, servant leaders prioritise ethical behaviour, other-oriented behaviour and engaging in acts of service for organisational stakeholders (Liden et al., 2008). While servant leadership has been established to be positively related to ethical working climates (Jaramillo et al., 2015), there is however a lack of research studying the link between servant leadership and ethical outcomes in the extant literature (Jaramillo et al., 2015). This study focuses on follower voice behaviour, with a specific emphasis on voice behaviour connected to concerns about ethics and integrity.

Situated within Van Dyne and colleagues' (1995) typology of extra-role behaviour, voice behaviour is conceptualised as a challenging, but promotive behaviour in the workplace (Van Dyne et al., 1995). In the form of change-oriented communication, voice behaviour represents a constructive challenge to the conventional working environment (LePine & Van Dyne, 1998; Van Dyne & LePine, 1998). With contemporary organisations requiring increasing employee initiative under dynamic pressures from their environment, voice behaviours are especially important (LePine & Van Dyne, 1998, 2001). They are necessary in both maintaining and developing organisational infrastructure and effecting responses to changing situational demands (LePine & Van Dyne, 2001). As communication around ethics and integrity are especially salient in many organisations, including the occupational context of this research, voice behaviours directed towards ethics are operationalised in this study. When directed specifically towards ethics, ethical voice behaviours represent a form of individual expression which both challenges and attempts to change standards, behaviours and procedures which are deemed to be normatively appropriate. Voicing this sense of concern for ethics involves high personal risk (Lind, 2001). These risks include an individual being vulnerable to social sanction from others due to the challenging expressions being made, conflict with peers who may feel criticised, alongside the violation of interpersonal relationships (Huang & Patterson, 2017). In

spite of these risks, the followers of servant leaders are proposed, in this study, to be more inclined to engage in ethical voice behaviours due to the positive, ethical and other-oriented environment instated by their leader. This study therefore hypothesises a positive relationship between supervisory servant leadership and follower ethical voice behaviour:

*Hypothesis 1: Supervisory servant leadership is positively related to follower ethical voice behaviour.*

### **5.2.2 Follower Hindrance Stressors and Ego Depletion as Serial Mediators of the Relationship between Servant Leadership and Ethical Voice Behaviour**

Hindrance stressors refer to workplace demands on an individual that are perceived to constrain them or interfere with their performance (Podsakoff, Lepine, & Lepine, 2007; Tuckey et al., 2015; Zhang, Lepine, Buckman & Wei, 2014). Common examples are seen in red tape, role ambiguity and role conflict, organisational politics and daily workplace hassles. These demands attest to the individual's perception that components of their workplace environment threaten or block opportunities for personal advancement or growth (Podsakoff et al., 2007; Zhang et al., 2014). Cavanaugh and colleagues (2000) emphasised the importance of reducing or eliminating individuals' experience of hindrance stressors in the workplace. This perspective is especially important considering the detrimental impact that hindrance stressors have been found to exert on follower work attitudes, for example being negatively related to job satisfaction and justice perceptions (Podsakoff et al., 2007; Zhang et al., 2014). Hindrance stressors were also found to be positively related to undesirable follower behaviours such as voluntary turnover and withdrawal behaviours (Cavanaugh et al., 2000; Podsakoff et al., 2007). Due to these negative outcomes, this study places a specific emphasis on hindrance stressors. This study contends that servant leaders should reduce the hindrance stressors their followers' experience, in part through putting their followers first and actively working to reduce their experience of hindrance stressors. Moreover, in being concerned about the welfare and well-being of their followers

(*e.g.*, Liden et al., 2008; van Dierendonck, 2011), this study also contends that servant leaders are a form of social support for their followers in the face of daily impediments to work.

This study further argues that the experience of hindrance stressors will be positively related to levels of follower ego depletion in the workplace. The conservation of resource model contends that individuals have a reserve from which they can draw specific resources in the face of stressors and demands. These demands can be both perceived threat of loss or actual loss of valued resources (Hobfoll, Freedy, Lane, & Geller, 1990). As demands are made or valuable resources are threatened, individuals expend their internal resources in protecting them (Hobfoll, 2002). This expenditure of internal resources is thought to leave an individual lacking in the mental capacity required to control or alter their own subsequent behaviours (Inzlicht & Schmeichel, 2012). From this, self-control is a finite resource which, when drained or lacking, can lead to a variety of workplace outcomes such as increased follower passivity (Baumeister et al., 1998; Hagger, Wood, Stiff, & Chatzisarantis, 2010). LePine and colleagues (2005) contend that hindrance stressors were associated with low motivation due to their inhibitive nature (LePine, Podsakoff, & LePine, 2005). Stressors therefore reduce motivation, being perceived as factors that thwart proactive behaviour (LePine et al., 2005). Posited as obstacles which are appraised as insurmountable due to their origins in organisational politics (Pearsall, Ellis, & Stein, 2009), hindrance stressors can also be perceived as requiring an inequitable expenditure of personal resources in relation to the potential associated returns (Zhang et al., 2014). From this, the current study proposes that individuals will enter into a state of ego depletion, conceptualised as the experience of a temporary reduction of one's resources following the exertion of self-control or willingness to initiate action (Baumeister et al., 1998; Baumeister, Vohs, & Tice, 2007). The prohibitive cost of dealing with hindrance stressors is therefore proposed as resulting in ego depletion for followers due to the drain it places on their internal resources.

When in possession of self-control, individuals have the internal resources required to engage in volitional acts and responsible decision-making (Baumeister et al., 1998). After expending self-control, the resultant state of ego depletion leads to reduced task performance and shifts in cognitive processing (Hagger et al., 2010). An example of this is seen in early work by Baumeister and colleagues (1998), whose findings suggest that ego depletion leads to increased passivity in followers. As both actively making choices and the achievement of high levels of workplace effort require self-control resources (DeWall, Baumeister, Mead, & Vohs, 2011), depleted self-control is proposed to result in reduced performance (Hagger et al., 2010) and fewer volitional acts (Baumeister et al., 1998). When in a state of ego depletion, individuals are also thought to engage more in impulsive acts, rather than enacting more long-term, planned behaviours (Hagger et al., 2010). Once depleted, individuals therefore rely upon automatic processing, conserving their resources for future activity (Baumeister et al., 1998), behaving in impulsive ways that lack regulation and control (Hagger et al., 2010; Lin, Ma, & Johnson, 2016). Subsequent decision-making will therefore be made based upon previous experience and impulsivity (Lin et al., 2016). In making impulsive and automatic decisions, individuals in a state of ego depletion are therefore proposed as demonstrating lower levels of discretionary effort at work.

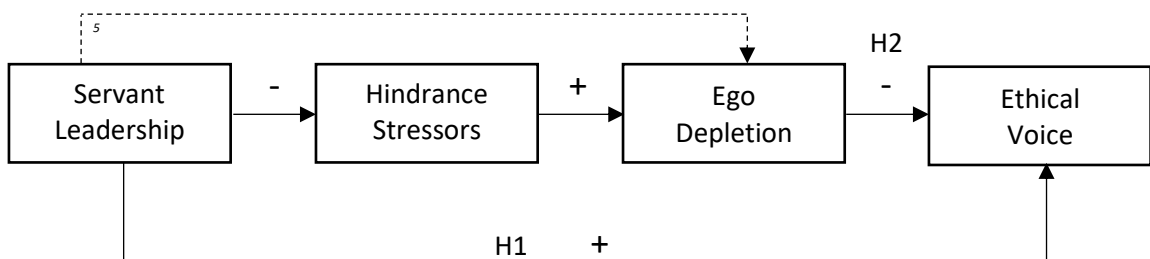
This study proposes that ethical voice behaviours require considerable internal resources, especially as they are behaviours which are both risky and challenging. It has been established that individuals require internal resources to engage in difficult and challenging cognitive processing (Hagger et al., 2010). Complex cognitive processes are central to understanding the way in which self-control resources relate the abstract, for example principles, standards, social expectations and values, to concrete behaviours (Baumeister et al., 1998; Baumeister et al., 2007). To engage in ethical voice behaviours individuals must consider context-specific values, relying upon internal cognitive processes to do so. As a complex set of cognitive decisions must be made before engaging in ethical voice behaviours, for example raising concerns about a co-

worker's unethical behaviour at work, individuals in a state of ego depletion are proposed as demonstrating lower levels of discretionary effort in the workplace.

In summary, the current study also proposes that the experience of hindrance stressors in the workplace will incite a state of ego depletion in followers, which in turn will lead to a reduction in their ethical voice behaviours. From this, the following hypothesis is proposed:

*Hypothesis 2: Follower hindrance stressors and follower ego depletion will sequentially mediate the relationship between supervisory servant leadership and follower ethical voice behaviour.*

**Figure 5-1: Hypothesised Serial Mediation Model for Study 2**



## 5.3 Methodology

### 5.3.1 Sample & Procedure

The data for this study were collected as part of a larger collaborative research project, discussed in more detail in Section 3.2.2 of this thesis, across two police forces in the United Kingdom that share several operational and administrative functions. At the time of the Time 1 survey, the total number of employees across the two organisations was 8477. The response rate was 26.2% for Time 1 and 15.8% for Time 2 ( $n = 2218$  and  $1336$  respectively). Responses to both surveys were matched using an anonymous identification code. In total, there were 701

<sup>5</sup> Please note that, although not hypothesised, the path between servant leadership and ego depletion was included in path analysis to test the proposed serial mediation within this study.



usable matched questionnaires, i.e., a response rate of 31.6% using those persons who returned Time 1 as a base or a response rate of 8.3% using the whole organisation as a base. Within this matched sample, 53.4% of respondents were male ( $n = 374$ ), 61.8% were police staff ( $n = 433$ ), 41.2% were in the lowest rank or grade in the organisational hierarchy ( $n = 289$ ), and 44.2% of respondents worked on a shift rota ( $n = 309$ ).

In the Time 1 survey, respondents rated their immediate supervisor's servant leadership, followed by self-rating the frequency of hindrance stressors in their daily work and ego depletion. Work engagement was also rated by respondents at Time 1, a variable which was included in the study as an alternative mediation path to the hypothesised model. One month later respondents self-reported their level of ethical voice behaviours in the Time 2 survey. All employees were given the opportunity to respond to each survey. Instructions provided to respondents are included in the Appendix section of this thesis.

### 5.3.2 Measures

Please note that short forms of the measurement instruments were used when possible to increase the likelihood of responding. Unless otherwise noted, all item-level responses were made on a seven-point Likert scale, with response anchors of 1 = *strongly disagree* and 7 = *strongly agree*. All survey items, including questions and response scales, are included in the thesis Appendix.

*Servant Leadership.* Respondents assessed their immediate supervisor's level of servant leadership using Liden and colleagues' SL-7 scale (2015). A sample item is, "*My supervisor puts my best interests ahead of his/her own*". McDonald's omega for this scale was .91, and Cronbach's alpha was .91, indicating good internal consistency reliability.

*Hindrance Stressors.* Respondents rated the frequency of hindrance stressors in their daily work using a seven-item scale by Zhang and colleagues (2014). A sample item is, "*administrative*

*hassles*", measured on a five-point Likert scale, with response anchors of 1 = *never* to 5 = *extremely often*). McDonald's omega for this scale was .83, and Cronbach's alpha was .82.

*Ego Depletion.* Ego depletion was measured using ten items from research by Ciarocco and colleagues (2016). A sample item is, "*I am having a hard time controlling my urges*", measured on a seven-point Likert scale, with response anchors of 1 = *not at all true* to 7 = *completely true*. The reliability of this scale was assessed with McDonald's omega, the result of which was .91. Cronbach's alpha was also assessed, the result of which was .88.

*Ethical Voice Behaviour.* Ethical voice behaviour was measured using a four-item measure from research by Graham & Zheng (2016), which was adapted from work by Tucker and colleagues (Tucker, Chimel, Turner, Hershcovis & Stride, 2008) on employee safety voice. Items were adapted to address ethical issues in the workplace, a sample item is, "*I am prepared to talk to co-workers who fail to behave ethically*", and the McDonald's omega for this scale was .89, and Cronbach's alpha for this scale was .89.

*Engagement.* To test an alternative competing mediation mechanism, engagement was included in the measures for this study. As engagement has already been highlighted as a mechanism through which servant leadership influences follower performance (*e.g.*, Xanthopoulou et al., 2009), it was tested in this study as a competing mechanism of servant leadership influence. Engagement was measured using a nine item measure adapted from a 15-item scale from Rich and colleagues (2010). Following Kahn's model of engagement (1990), Rich and colleagues (2010) propose three sub-dimensions of engagement, namely physical, emotional, and cognitive engagement. The adapted measure for this study includes three items from each sub-dimension, which was reduced in size for inclusion in larger organisational surveys. A sample item for physical engagement is "*I exert my full effort to my job*", a sample item for emotional engagement is "*I am enthusiastic in my job*", and a sample item for cognitive engagement is "*At work, I focus a great deal of attention on my job*". McDonald's omega for this scale was .94, and the Cronbach's alpha was .93.

*Control Variables.* Across prior research, demographic variables and follower characteristics have been highlighted as influencing both an individual's experience of the workplace and their perceptions of leadership (Epitropaki & Martin, 2005; van Knippenberg & van Knippenberg, 2005). In the first instance, respondents' organisation was controlled for. Although the two organisations included in this sample work share many collaborative functions, they do have different organisational environments. To address potential confounds that might arise from these different organisations; they were included in analyses and coded as 1 and 2. Gender was also controlled for throughout the analyses in this study, including both respondent and supervisor gender. Gender was considered to be an important characteristic to be included as a control due to multiple studies across positive leadership research which establish the relevance of gender on perceptions of leadership, preferences and experiences in the workplace (Barbuto, Fritz, Matkin, & Marx, 2007; Brubaker et al., 2015; Ehrhart & Klein, 2001). Studies specific to servant leadership also make explicit comment on the role of gender, (Chan & Mak, 2014; Chiniara & Bentein, 2016; Yoshida et al., 2014), with one study finding that female respondents had higher expectations of servant leadership than male respondents (Hogue, 2016). Gender was dummy coded as 0 = *male*, 1 = *female*. Age and the respondent's organisational tenure were also included as control variables in statistical analyses. These variables were included due to their long-established influence on leadership perceptions and on the follower outcomes associated with leadership influence in the workplace (de Poel et al., 2014; Schriesheim et al., 1998). For age, respondents selected one of the following five categories: 1 = *16 to 24 years*, 2 = *25 to 34 years*, 3 = *35 to 44 years*, 4 = *45 to 54 years*, 5 = *55 years or over*. For organisational tenure, respondents selected one of the following five categories: 1 = *less than one year*, 2 = *1 to 5 years*, 3 = *6 to 10 years*, 4 = *11 to 20 years*, 5 = *over 20 years*.

Respondents were also asked if their role included shift work. This refers to individuals who routinely work a pattern of shifts which include rotating between working during the day (*the day shift*), through the night (*the night shift*), and shifts that cover periods of high demand such

as evenings (*the late shift*). As this study addresses workplace stressors and resultant states, considered from an ego depletion perspective, shift work was considered to be a salient control variable. It is well-established that shift work, in its disruptive nature for sleep quality and the work-family interface, impacts upon individuals' workplace attitudes and their mental and physical resources (Dall'Ora, Griffiths, Ball, Simon, & Aiken, 2015; Ganster, Rosen, & Fisher, 2018; James, Honn, Gaddameedhi, & Van Dongen, 2017). From this, shift work was included as a statistical control variable (dummy coded 0 = *no, doesn't work shifts*, 1 = *yes, works shifts*). Respondent role, either police officer (coded as 0) or police staff member (coded as 1), was also included as a control variable. It is well-established in the policing practitioner environment that the roles, responsibilities and experiences of police officers and staff members vary quite significantly, and this difference represents an occupationally relevant statistical control for this study. A respondent's hierarchical position within their organisation was also included in analyses as a statistical control variable. As hindrance stressors often include concepts such as red tape, bureaucracy and role ambiguity (Cavanaugh et al., 2000), hierarchical position was considered to be salient due to the different roles that individuals hold across the organisational hierarchy. Respondents selected one of the following five categories; 1 = *constable or staff equivalent* (practitioner), 2 = *sergeant / staff equivalent* (supervisory manager), 3 = *inspector / staff equivalent* (middle manager), 4 = *chief inspector / staff equivalent* (senior manager), 5 = *superintendent and above / staff equivalent* (senior manager).

Challenge stressors were the final statistical control variable included in this study. Research to date on the challenge-hindrance stressor framework (Cavanaugh et al., 2000) highlights that, although challenges and hindrances are distinct forms of workplace stressors with broad evidence of the differentiated outcomes they are related to (LePine et al., 2005; Podsakoff et al., 2007; Zhang et al., 2014), they still share the same core of being an environmental stressor (Webster et al., 2010). Due to this commonality, challenge stressors are included as a control variable in subsequent analyses. Respondents rated the frequency of challenge stressors in their

daily work using a six-item scale by Zhang and colleagues (2014). A sample item is, “*having high levels of responsibility*”, measured on a five-point Likert scale, with response anchors of 1 = *never* to 5 = *extremely often*). McDonald’s omega for this scale was .89, and the Cronbach’s alpha was .88.

## 5.4 Results

### 5.4.1 Preliminary Results

Descriptive statistics and correlations among the study variables are presented in Table 5.1. Means, standard deviations, correlations, *t*-tests and ANOVA were produced using SPSS 24. Servant leadership had a mean score, slightly above the scale mid-point, of 4.91 ( $n = 682$ ,  $SD = 1.33$ ). When measured on a five-point scale, hindrance stressors had a mean score, slightly about the mid-point, of 2.88 (measured on a five-point scale,  $n = 692$ ,  $SD = .72$ ). Positively, ego depletion had a relatively low mean score of 3.23 ( $n = 669$ ,  $SD = 1.20$ ), and ethical voice had a relatively high mean score of 5.86 ( $n = 694$ ,  $SD = .91$ ). Work engagement had a mean score of 5.39 ( $n = 693$ ,  $SD = 1.12$ ).

As expected, servant leadership was significantly, negatively correlated with hindrance stressors ( $r = -.43$ ,  $p < .001$ ), and hindrance stressors were significantly, positively correlated with ego depletion ( $r = .51$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Servant leadership was also significantly negatively correlated with ego depletion ( $r = -.46$ ,  $p < .001$ ), and ego depletion was significantly, negatively correlated with ethical voice ( $r = -.18$ ,  $p < .001$ ).

Independent samples *t*-tests were conducted to compare the scores across the four focal variables to assess whether there were significant differences between the two organisations, respondent gender, shift work and role. All significance tests are two-tailed unless otherwise indicated. For *t*-tests showing statistically significant differences, eta squared was calculated and assessed using values recommended by Cohen (1988). There was a significant difference,  $t(680) = -2.04$ , in scores for Organisation 1 members ( $M = 4.84$ ,  $SD = 1.34$ ) and Organisation 2 members

( $M = 5.06$ ,  $SD = 1.28$ ) for servant leadership. The magnitude of the differences in these means (mean difference =  $-.22$ , 95% CI:  $-.44$  to  $-.01$ ) was small ( $\eta^2 = .01$ ). There was also a significant difference for hindrance stressors,  $t(690) = 2.96$ ,  $p = .003$ , (Organisation 1  $M = 2.93$ ,  $SD = .72$ ; Organisation 2  $M = 2.76$ ,  $SD = .70$ ). The magnitude of the differences in these means (mean difference =  $.17$ , 95% CI:  $.06$  to  $.29$ ) was small ( $\eta^2 = .01$ ). There was also a significant difference for ethical voice behaviours,  $t(692) = 2.56$ ,  $p = .011$ , (Organisation 1  $M = 5.92$ ,  $SD = .86$ ; Organisation 2  $M = 5.73$ ,  $SD = 1.01$ ). The magnitude of the differences in these means (mean difference =  $.19$ , 95% CI:  $.03$  to  $.35$ ) was small ( $\eta^2 = .01$ ). There was no significant difference for ego depletion,  $t(667) = 1.30$ ,  $p = .193$ , (Organisation 1  $M = 3.27$ ,  $SD = 1.21$ ; Organisation 2  $M = 5.06$ ,  $SD = 1.28$ ).

For gender, there was no significant difference for servant leadership,  $t(674) = -.15$ ,  $p = .889$ , (male  $M = 4.91$ ,  $SD = 1.31$ ; female  $M = 4.92$ ,  $SD = 1.35$ ), and ego depletion,  $t(686) = -.19$ ,  $p = .85$ , (male  $M = 3.22$ ,  $SD = 1.21$ ; female  $M = 3.24$ ,  $SD = 1.18$ ). There was a significant difference,  $t(684) = 2.41$ , in scores for males ( $M = 2.94$ ,  $SD = .71$ ) and females ( $M = 2.81$ ,  $SD = .72$ ) for hindrance stressors. The magnitude of the differences in these means (mean difference =  $.13$ , 95% CI:  $.02$  to  $.24$ ) was small ( $\eta^2 = .01$ ). There was a significant difference,  $t(686) = 2.16$ , in scores for males ( $M = 5.93$ ,  $SD = .88$ ) and females ( $M = 5.78$ ,  $SD = .95$ ) for ethical voice behaviour. The magnitude of the differences in these means (mean difference =  $.15$ , 95% CI:  $.01$  to  $.29$ ) was small ( $\eta^2 = .01$ ).

**Table 5-1:-Means, Standard Deviations and Correlations for Study 2 Variables**

	Mean	S.D.	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.	14.
1. Organisation	1.32	.47														
2. Respondent gender	.46	.50	.03													
3. Supervisor gender	.36	.48	.01	.13**												
4. Age	3.58	1.02	-.10**	-.11**	-.07											
5. Tenure in policing	3.82	1.14	-.11**	-.18***	-.18***	.56***										
6. Shift work	.44	.50	-.15***	-.22***	-.21***	-.05	.10*									
7. Role	.63	.48	.17***	.24***	.27***	.08*	-.24***	-.46***								
8. Position in org. hierarchy	1.83	.91	.04	.07	.01	.13***	.13**	-.40***	.27***							
9. Challenge stressors	3.98	.68	-.08*	-.02	-.10**	-.04	.11**	.04	-.14***	.20***	<i>(.89)</i>					
10. Servant leadership	4.91	1.33	.08*	.00	.11**	-.13**	-.24***	-.05	.05	.06	-.02	<i>(.91)</i>				
11. Hindrance stressors	2.88	.72	-.11**	-.09*	-.14***	.05	.21***	.19***	-.25***	-.02	.45***	-.43***	<i>(.83)</i>			
12. Ego depletion	3.23	1.20	-.05	.01	-.15***	.06	.20***	.18***	-.16***	-.15***	.17***	-.46***	.51***	<i>(.91)</i>		
13. Engagement	5.39	1.12	.01	.09*	.11**	-.02	-.15***	-.19***	.09*	.21***	.21***	.38***	-.29***	-.63***	<i>(.94)</i>	
14. Ethical Voice	5.86	.91	-.10*	-.09*	-.06	.05	.14***	.02	-.20***	.19***	.22***	.10*	.06	-.18***	.21***	<i>(.89)</i>

Note: n = 645-701; \*p < .05; \*\*p < .01; \*\*\*p < .001; Where relevant, McDonald's omega for scale variables is included in italics on the matrix diagonal. Respondent organisation was coded as 1, 2. Respondent gender and supervisor gender were coded as 0 = male, 1 = female. Age was measured across five categories: 1 = 16 to 24 years, 2 = 25 to 34 years, 3 = 35 to 44 years, 4 = 45 to 54 years, 5 = 55 years or over. Respondent organisational tenure was measured across five categories; 1 = less than one year, 2 = 1 to 5 years, 3 = 6 to 10 years, 4 = 11 to 20 years, 5 = over 20 years. Respondent working shifts was coded 0 = no, doesn't work shifts, 1 = yes, works shifts. Respondent role was coded as 0 = officer, 1 = staff. Respondent position in organisational hierarchy was measured across five categories; 1 = constable or staff equivalent, 2 = sergeant / staff equivalent, 3 = inspector / staff equivalent, 4 = chief inspector / staff equivalent, 5 = superintendent and above / staff equivalent.

For shift work (those who work traditional office hours of 9-5 and do not routinely work shifts, and those who routinely work shifts on a rotating pattern between day, late, and night shifts), there was no significant difference for servant leadership,  $t(678) = 1.25, p = .21$ , (does not work shifts = 4.97,  $SD = 1.33$ ; does work shifts = 4.83,  $SD = 1.32$ );) or for ethical voice behaviour,  $t(690) = -.55, p = .58$ , (does not work shifts  $M = 5.84, SD = .96$ ; does work shifts  $M = 5.88, SD = .85$ ). There was a significant difference,  $t(688) = -5.14$ , in scores for those who do not routinely work shifts ( $M = 2.76, SD = .70$ ) and those who routinely work shifts ( $M = 3.04, SD = .71$ ) for hindrance stressors. The magnitude of the differences in these means (mean difference =  $-.28$ , 95% CI:  $-.38$  to  $-.17$ ) was medium (eta squared =  $.04$ ). There was also a significant difference,  $t(665) = -4.61$ , in scores for those who do not routinely work shifts ( $M = 3.04, SD = 1.17$ ) and those who routinely work shifts ( $M = 3.47, SD = 1.20$ ) for ego depletion. The magnitude of the differences in these means (mean difference =  $-.42$ , 95% CI:  $-.61$  to  $-.24$ ) was small to medium (eta squared =  $.03$ ).

For role (police officer or police staff), there was no significant difference,  $t(666) = -1.39, p = .17$ , for servant leadership (officer  $M = 4.81, SD = 1.31$ ; staff  $M = 4.96, SD = 1.33$ ). There was a significant difference,  $t(675) = 6.58$ , in scores for officers ( $M = 3.12, SD = .67$ ) and staff ( $M = 2.76, SD = .69$ ) for hindrance stressors. The magnitude of the differences in these means (mean difference =  $.36$ , 95% CI:  $.25$  to  $.47$ ) was medium (eta squared =  $.06$ ). There was also a significant difference in scores for officers ( $M = 3.50, SD = 1.17$ ) and staff ( $M = 3.10, SD = 1.19$ ) for ego depletion,  $t(652) = 4.23$ . The magnitude of the differences in these means (mean difference =  $.41$ , 95% CI:  $.22$  to  $.59$ ) was small to medium (eta squared =  $.03$ ). There was also a significant difference,  $t(677) = 5.29$ , in scores for officers ( $M = 6.10, SD = .81$ ) and staff ( $M = 5.73, SD = .94$ ) for ethical voice behaviour. The magnitude of the differences in these means (mean difference =  $.38$ , 95% CI:  $.24$  to  $.52$ ) was medium (eta squared =  $.04$ ).



#### 5.4.2 Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Before testing study hypotheses, a series of confirmatory factor analyses was undertaken to confirm the distinctiveness of the variables of interest in this study. The hypothesised measurement model with five factors, namely servant leadership, hindrance stressors, challenge stressors, ego depletion, and ethical voice was tested. As previously discussed, for certain pairs of items with a modification index of 100 or higher (Hystad et al., 2010), error disturbance correlations were instated. Conceptual similarity could be seen between the following items; for the engagement measure, items two and three, and items seven and eight, for hindrance stressors, items one and two, and items six and seven, for ego depletion items eight and nine and items one and two for ethical voice behaviours. These items are included in the Appendix of this thesis.

The resultant modified model fit was good ( $\chi^2$  (512) = 1552.76, CFI = .92, TFI = .92; RMSEA = .05; SRMR = .07). All factor loadings were significant. This model is better than the alternative models. Fit statistics for the alternative models, along with comparisons to the baseline model are included in Table 5.2, as the alternative models include the single factor model ( $\chi^2$  (522) = 6483.74, CFI = .56, TFI = .53; RMSEA = .13; SRMR = .14); a two-factor model which servant leadership was influenced by all remaining study variables ( $\chi^2$  (521) = 4973, CFI = .67, TFI = .65; RMSEA = .13; SRMR = .14); a three-factor model which combined both proposed mediators ( $\chi^2$  (519) = 3934.63, CFI = .75, TFI = .73; RMSEA = .10; SRMR = .12); and a four-factor model where hindrance stressors and challenge stressors were held as one factor ( $\chi^2$  (516) = 2769.16, CFI = .84, TFI = .82; RMSEA = .08; SRMR = .11). These findings support the discriminant validity of the research variables included within this study.

As the competing alternative mediating mechanism was of interest in this study, an alternative modified model fit was calculated including the engagement variable. Although the resultant model fit was not as good as the model excluding this variable (model fit =  $\chi^2$  (839) = 3230.29, CFI = .88, TFI = .87; RMSEA = .06; SRMR = .08), this model was considered adequate to

test study hypotheses, especially in facilitating the comparative assessment of the relative importance of different mediators.

**Table 5-2: Fit Comparisons of Alternative Factor Models for Study 2 Variables**

Models	$\chi^2$	df	$\Delta \chi^2$	$\Delta df$	RMSEA	CFI	SRMR
Hypothesised model	1552.76	512	-		.05	.92	.07
Model A	2769.16	516	1216.4	4	.08	.84	.11
Model B	3934.63	519	2381.87	7	.10	.75	.12
Model C	4973.19	521	3420.43	9	.11	.67	.13
Model D	6483.74	522	4930.98	10	.13	.56	.14

*Note. n = 701; Model A: 4 - factor model combining hindrance stressors and challenge stressors as one factor; Model B: 3 - factor model combining hindrance stressors, challenge stressors and ego depletion as one factor; Model C: 2 - factor model combining hindrance stressors, challenge stressors, ego depletion, and ethical voice as one factor; Model D: 1-factor model combining all study variables.*

### 5.4.3 Hypothesis Testing

Hypotheses were examined using a latent variable path analysis analytic approach in Mplus 7.3 (Muthén & Muthén, 2015). Table 5.3 presents the tests of indirect effects based on the hypothesised model. A path model was estimated with the composite scores of the study variables. In the model testing mediating effects, both the direct and indirect effects of servant leadership on ethical voice via the hypothesised resource model, alongside the additional mediating mechanism of engagement was considered. As all three mediators were measured at the same time, their residual variances were allowed to correlate. Finally, for control variables, the direct effects of challenge stressors, organisation, respondent and supervisor gender, age, tenure in policing, shift work, role and position within the organisational hierarchy were specified. The model allowed freely estimated effects of the specified control variables on all mediators and the dependent variable. This was found to be a saturated model. In this model, supporting Hypothesis 1, there was a significant, positive total effect between servant leadership and follower ethical voice behaviour (total effect = .08, SE = .03, CI = .02 to .13).

Supporting Hypothesis 2, servant leadership was negatively related to hindrance stressors with an unstandardized coefficient of  $b = -.22$  ( $SE = .02, p < .001$ ), hindrance stressors were positively related to ego depletion ( $b = .57, SE = .08, p < .001$ ), and ego depletion was negatively related to ethical voice in Time 2 ( $b = -.15, SE = .05, p = .001$ ). In support of this hypothesis, results of indirect effect tests indicated that the proposed sequential mediation of hindrance stressors and ego depletion had significant mediation effects on the links of between servant leadership and ethical voice in Time 2 (indirect effect = .02,  $SE = .01, CI = .01$  to .03).

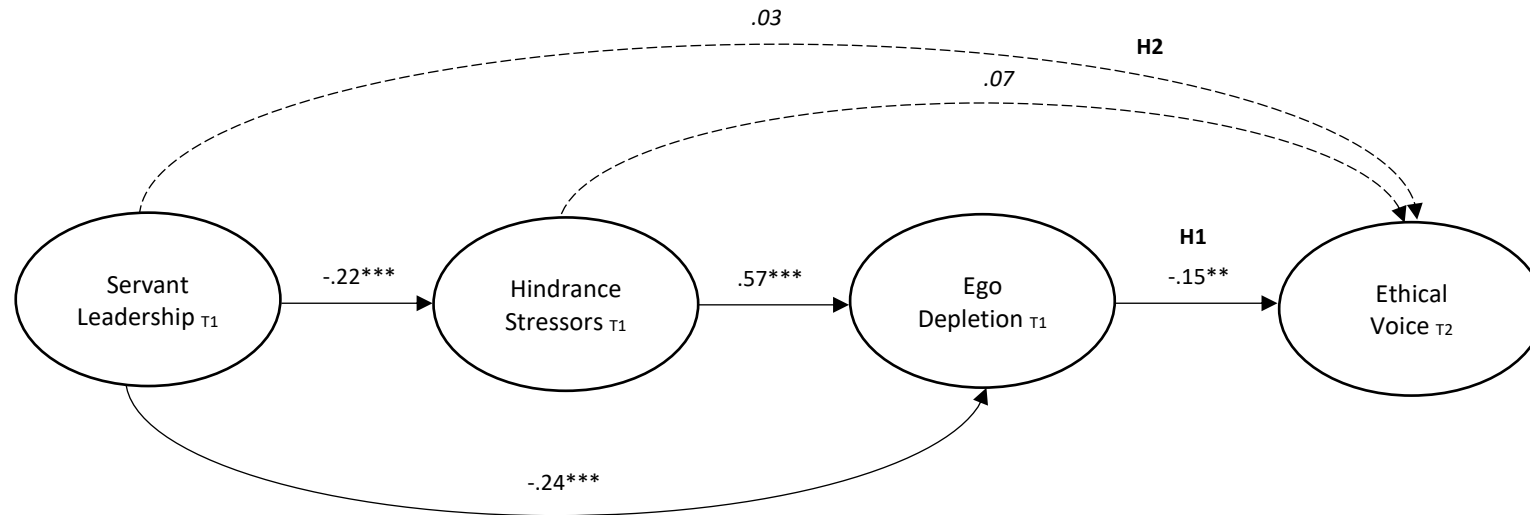
Additional indirect effect tests were also completed to strengthen support for Hypothesis 2. Indirect effects indicated that hindrance stressors did not have a significant mediation effects on the links of servant leadership and ethical voice when ego depletion was not included ( $b = -.02, SE = .02, CI = -.05$  to .01). Furthermore, indirect effects indicated that engagement did not have significant mediation effects on the relationship between servant leadership and ethical voice ( $b = .02, SE = .01, CI = -.01$  to .04). Overall, these findings provide support for the resource model hypothesised in the present study.

**Table 5-3: Tests of Indirect Effects Based on the Hypothesized Model for Study 2**

Indirect effects	Estimate	S.E.	95% confidence interval
Servant leadership → hindrance stressors → ego depletion	-.13	.02	[-.17, -.08]
Servant leadership → hindrance stressors → ethical voice	-.02	.02	[-.05, .01]
Servant leadership → ego depletion → ethical voice	.04	.01	[.01, .06]
Servant leadership → engagement → ethical voice	.02	.01	[-.01, .04]
Servant leadership → hindrance stressors → ego depletion → ethical voice	.02	.01	[.01, .03]

*Note: n = 618; Unstandardised estimates are reported; all estimates were tested for significance using 95% bootstrap confidence intervals by 1000 resampling.*

**Figure 5-2: Unstandardised Path Coefficients of Hypothesised Model for Study 2**



Note: All coefficients are unstandardized coefficients; all estimates were tested for significance using 95% bootstrap confidence intervals by 1000 resampling;  $*p < .05$ ,  $**p < .01$ ,  $***p < .001$ ; Servant leadership, hindrance stressors and ego depletion were measured at Time 1 (denoted as T1), and ethical voice behaviours were measured at Time 2 (denoted as T2). Demographic controls included in this model were organisation, respondent and supervisor gender, respondent age and tenure in policing, whether or not an individual routinely works shifts, respondent role as police officer or police staff member, and respondent position in organisational hierarchy, and challenge stressors. Engagement was also included to test the aforementioned competing mediational path; covariance between variance of the mediators: hindrance stressors with engagement =  $-.14^{***}$ , ego depletion with engagement =  $-.52^{***}$

## 5.5 Discussion

The primary focus of this study was to examine the underlying psychological mechanisms through which supervisory servant leadership encourages followers' ethical voice. A resource model of this leadership influence was hypothesised and supported by study findings. This study specifically tested a sequential mediation model examining the effects of servant leadership on ethical voice via hindrance stressors and ego depletion. Empirical support was found for this hypothesised serial mediating model. The aforementioned sequential mediation was also tested against the alternative mediating mechanism of follower work engagement was not found to be significant.

### 5.5.1 Theoretical Implications

This study has several theoretical implications. Firstly, although past research has explored several follower outcomes of supervisory servant leadership in the workplace, an understanding of the breadth of behaviours that result remains unclear (Brubaker et al., 2015; Wu et al., 2013). This study elaborates a previously unexplored area of ethical behaviour, operationalised using ethical voice behaviour. Departing from past studies that employ organisational citizenship behaviours (Chiniara & Bentein, 2016; Grisaffe et al., 2016; Wu et al., 2013) and task performance (Chiniara & Bentein, 2016; Liden et al., 2014a) as outcomes, ethical voice behaviour represents a novel form of discretionary effort that addresses both employee voice and an active involvement in and consideration of ethical standards at work. This study therefore attests to both the conceptual underpinnings of this leadership approach, alongside suggesting communicative behaviours and ethical outcomes as an avenue for further development of the servant leadership field.

Secondly, this study demonstrates that an individual's internal resources function as a central mechanism that links the experience of servant leadership to proposed outcomes. Researchers to date have often emphasised social learning mechanisms, alongside others such as social

exchange mechanisms, through which servant leadership influences outcomes of interest (*e.g.*, Grisaffe et al., 2016; Tuan 2016; Tang et al., 2016). This study extends this line of inquiry, providing an alternative perspective as to how servant leaders support follower engagement in ethical outcomes by removing impediments to these behaviours and contributing to follower internal resources. Moreover, this finding is strengthened by testing a competing engagement mechanism. The non-significant engagement path provides support for understanding the influence of servant leadership from a resource perspective. These findings address the gap in theoretical and empirical practices of a lack of clarity as to the processes that underlie the relationship between servant leadership and follower behaviours (Feldman, 2014; Liden et al., 2015; Peterson et al., 2012). The original conceptualisation of servant leadership (Greenleaf, 1977), argued that a leader's approach to their position should be to serve followers, as well as advocating the needs of their people (Farling et al., 1999) This study therefore seeks to emphasise the conceptual foundations of this leadership approach In doing so, this study encourages further research into a more nuanced understanding of the magnitude and nature of resources given by servant leaders to their followers.

### **5.5.2 Practical Implications**

The findings of this study have several salient practical implications in an organisational setting. They offer an insight into the influence that supervisory servant leadership can have in increasing positive employee behaviours through their role in contributing to follower internal resources. In the first instance, findings highlight the importance of supportive supervisory leadership in fostering employee discretionary effort at work, with particular emphasis on ethical outcomes. Secondly, findings indicate that a servant leader will focus on the removal of frustrating, hindering impediments that a follower encounters in their daily life. Practically speaking then, organisations should seek to encourage servant leadership in the search for increased discretionary effort, engagement in ethical voice behaviours, and the management of stressors in the workplace. The findings of this study indicate that organisations may benefit

from both developing their existing supervisors into servant leaders through training programmes and aligning both promotion and recruitment processes with a servant leadership approach to people management.

Findings from indirect effect testing indicate that hindrance stressors increase ego depletion and reduce individuals' tendency to engage in forms of ethically-oriented voice behaviour. From this, organisations should seek to reduce the number and frequency of hindrance stressors their employees encounter at work. Organisations are encouraged to provide employees with the opportunity to make these stressors known to the organisation, alongside adopting a variety of workplace strategies to tackle them. Such initiatives should provide employees with signals of social support and certain physical resources required to maintain their internal resource levels and allow them to engage in risky communication behaviours addressing ethical concerns, a behaviour which is of primary importance in policing organisations (College of Policing, 2014; HMICFRS, 2017).

### **5.5.3 Limitations and Future Research Directions**

This study has several limitations that both warrant attention and highlight areas for future research. In the first instance a limitation arises as to the potential influence of common method variance on study findings (Podsakoff et al., 2003). In following recommendations from Podsakoff and colleagues (2003), several attempts were made to mitigate these potential influences on study findings. Initially, in attempt to reduce common method effects, a temporal separation was instated between the collection of the predictors and mediators (Time 1 survey) and the collection of the criterion variable (Time 2 survey). In addition to the temporal separation, assurances of confidentiality and anonymity were made to respondents and, to reduce evaluation apprehension, individuals were informed in both surveys that there were no right or wrong responses to survey items. In spite of these procedural remedies, the independent variable, servant leadership, and the mediators, engagement, hindrance stressors and ego depletion, were all collected at the same time. This aspect of data collection leaves

study findings susceptible to common method bias. This limitation presents a compelling area for future research studies, longitudinal data collection or the use of multi-sourced data that includes other-rating of the criterion measure of ethical voice behaviour. Of particular interest would be co-worker rating of voice behaviour, an approach that would take into account the often-informal channels through which voice behaviour is realised between colleagues, as well as more formal organisational channels in the workplace (Tucker et al., 2008).

Secondly, study findings were based on data collected from a policing sample, an occupational specificity which limits the generalisability of findings in other occupational contexts. Policing has a national professional code of ethics (College of Policing, 2014). This document and the ethical standards espoused within it are prioritised and emphasised throughout the policing establishment. With the prevalence of ethics in this working environment respondents may be more likely to be sensitive to ethical concerns. If indeed this ethical perspective is highlighted, study respondents may respond to workplace events more quickly, engaging in behaviours such as ethical voice. From this, future research would benefit from exploring the results of this study in a variety of organisational contexts to assess this potential influence on findings.

Similarly to the aforementioned limitation of generalisability of study findings to non-public sector occupational environments, it may also be the case that study findings lack generalisability to multiple police forces outside of the United Kingdom. A significant comparative study of policing within the EU (COMPOSITE, 2014), found policing within the United Kingdom to have a unique profile reporting high attention being paid to community involvement and policing by consent, and a lower emphasis being placed on law enforcement and more militaristic operational functioning as seen in other European forces (COMPOSITE, 2014). It may therefore be the case that, as servant leaders emphasise serving others, this leadership style may not translate effectively to a police force which stresses a control orientation in its police officers and how they interact with members of the public. In future



studies, researchers may consider undertaking a comparative study of this leadership style in a police force with more of a militaristic operational style. Understanding servant leadership within this different orientation may add useful additional detail to understanding the boundary conditions of servant leadership effectiveness.

An additional limitation of this study lies in an inability to make causal inferences. Time-lagged data was used in that the criterion measure was collected approximately one month after ratings of the predicting and mediating variables; however concrete causal conclusions cannot be drawn from these findings. Concerns in the extant literature addressing the potential influences of endogeneity in leadership and management research (Antonakis, 2017) may also be present in study findings. The inclusion of an instrumental variable in hypothesis testing presents an interesting avenue for future research. By selecting an exogenous variable, an entirely unrelated variable (Antonakis et al., 2010), for inclusion in statistical modelling, researchers may be able to remove or reduce the influence of endogeneity-related bias in hypothesis testing. For this study, instrumental variables may provide useful additions in future research. In addressing this potential bias at the research-design stage, causal conclusions may be drawn as to the influence of servant leadership on reducing a follower's experience of hindrances in the workplace. In future research the implementation of an experimental approach also presents an interesting opportunity to address concerns related to causal inference in study findings. Moreover, a cross-lagged or panel model (e.g., Meier & Spector, 2013; Selig & Preacher, 2009; Aguinis et al., 2017) to re-test the proposed model to ascertain the directionality of influence between servant leadership, workplace stressors and well-being, or indeed if bi-directionality explains the effects of servant leadership behaviour on follower discretionary effort in the workplace would be a useful addition to the extant literature.

An additional concern in relation to endogeneity is the potential for an omitted variable introducing additional bias into the calculation effects (Antonakis et al., 2010), including within this study. Similarly to Study 1, Study 2 is also susceptible to variables that may not have been

included in model testing. Follower identity level (Lord & Brown, 2001), may indeed also be relevant to the hypothesised model tested within this study. Further research into testing a more comprehensive model of servant leadership, follower resources, and follower discretionary effort may benefit the field by establishing a clearer image of cause-and-effect in servant leadership.

Further, servant leadership's relationship with ethical voice behaviour and resource provision for followers may also be attributable to the creation of pervasive ethical climates in the workplace (*e.g.*, Jaramillo et al., 2015). To further explore potential influences that servant leaders may have on the creation of desirable climates, or indeed that positive working climates have on positive leadership behaviours, future research may consider if workplace climates supported by a servant leader are related to any alternative or additional follower outcomes. This may be achieved through the use of cross-lagged models to establish directionality of leader to climate or climate to leader, or of multi-level modelling to assess unit-level outcomes in relation to climate and servant leadership.

#### **5.5.4 Conclusion**

In conclusion, supervisory servant leadership is found to be positively related to follower ethical voice behaviours. Such ethical outcomes are a priority for most practitioners, alongside being at the core of conceptualisations of servant leadership (*e.g.*, Greenleaf, 1977; Laub, 1999; Liden et al., 2008; van Dierendonck, 2011). The importance of leading with integrity and leading ethically are also a cornerstone of the UK policing establishment (College of Policing, 2014). This study explains the positive potential of servant leadership in encouraging follower ethical voice behaviour from a conservation of resource perspective. Servant leaders contribute to the internal well-being and resources of their followers. In part, this contribution is seen from the way in which servant leaders remove impediments that hinder follower proactive behaviours. Taken together, findings offer insights as to the role of servant leadership in contribution to a follower's internal resources and removing impediments, therein engendering future instances of positive, ethical discretionary effort at work.

**Chapter 6. Study 3:**  
***A Test of Greenleaf:***  
***Does Serving Others Allow Them to Serve Society?***  
**An Identity Perspective on Servant Leadership**

**6.1 Introduction**

*“Do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, and more likely to become servants?”*

(Greenleaf, 1977, p. 22)

From its inception, servant leadership has had an inherent prosocial emphasis (Greenleaf, 1977), grounded in creating value for the community and behaving ethically in the workplace (Liden et al., 2008). The current study responds to one of the questions posed by Greenleaf by testing the relationship between servant leadership and follower commitment to the public. This target-specific form of commitment is proposed as an additional, occupationally-relevant target of follower commitment in the workplace that has yet to be tested. To date, commitment as an outcome of servant leadership has been considered when directed towards the organisation (*e.g.*, Bobbio et al., 2012; van Dierendonck et al., 2014) or towards specific organisational actors such as supervisors (*e.g.*, Goh & Low, 2013; Sokoll, 2014). Alternatively, this study proposes investigating an external referent of commitment (*i.e.*, the public) as a timely and relevant extension of the servant leadership literature.

As previously discussed in Chapter 5, existing research in servant leadership has highlighted consistently positive relationships between servant leadership and several desirable follower attitudes and behaviours. However there is limited research into the relationship between servant leadership and ethical outcomes (Jaramillo et al., 2015). Study 3 addresses this deficiency by investigating whether servant leadership is associated with lower levels of an unethical follower outcome, namely, moral disengagement. Moral disengagement is conceptualised by Moore and colleagues (Moore, Detert, Trevino, Baker & Mayer, 2012) as a

social cognitive process through which individuals are able to act in negative ways without feeling cognitive distress about their unethical or socially unacceptable behaviour. Study 3 posits that, in spite of existing conceptualisations of servant leadership as targeting unethical behaviour (Greenleaf, 1977; Page & Wong, 2000; van Dierendonck, 2011), there is a significant lack of empirical research as to the influence of servant leaders on such outcomes. The current study contributes to the servant leadership literature by responding to calls for a deeper understanding of the impact of servant leadership on organisationally relevant outcomes (van Dierendonck, 2011). Moreover, it expands the breadth of follower outcomes that arise as a result of the experience of supervisory servant leadership, meeting further suggestions for future research in the field (*e.g.*, Brubaker et al., 2015; Wu et al., 2013).

In this study, I contend that the influence of servant leadership on follower outcomes is realised through processes involving follower self-identity and working self-concept, therein proposing a third mechanism through which servant leadership influences follower behaviour. Work by Lord and colleagues suggests that workplace leaders are integral to sense-making and identity work for their followers (*e.g.*, Lord & Brown, 2001, 2003; Lord, Brown, & Freiberg, 1999; Lord et al., 2016). One way in which leaders are seen to influence followers is through the activation of schema, *i.e.*, a series of emotional, motivational and cognitive structures that influence follower action and interpretation of events (Lord et al., 1999; 2016). Leaders are suggested to affect followers by priming different aspects of followers' self-concept, or identity levels, which changes the way followers view themselves in relation to their specific social context (Lord et al., 2016). Following the theory of Lord and colleagues, this study conceptualizes the mechanisms of different levels of self-concept (*i.e.*, individual, relational, collective identity levels) as enabling servant leaders to influence follower attitudes and behaviours. This process is proposed to take place as servant leaders care for followers' wellbeing, create value for the community and behaving ethically in the workplace (Liden et al., 2008). As a result, followers tend to perceive themselves as more psychologically bonded with the leader and committed

towards members of the public. Similarly, they are contended to morally disengage less whilst at work when under the ethical, prosocial influence of the servant leader. With these two outcomes in mind, the influence of servant leadership on followers should lead them to serve the public themselves.

The initial contributions of this study are to add two novel, salient follower outcomes of supervisory servant leadership to the extant literature, specifically follower commitment to the public and follower moral disengagement. In testing follower commitment to the public, this study explores how supervisory servant leadership can contribute to followers' attachment to external referents, rather than just to organisational referents as has been examined within the extant literature to date (*e.g.*, Bobbio et al., 2012; Goh & Low, 2013; Sokoll, 2014; van Dierendonck et al., 2014). Testing the second follower outcome, moral disengagement, represents a contribution to the literature by presenting a preliminary assessment of how this leadership style can reduce unethical behaviour in the workplace, an outcome that has received little attention within the academic field.

A further contribution of this study is to highlight an additional mediating mechanism through which servant leadership impacts followers. Several mediators of the relationship between servant leadership and follower in-role and contextual performance have been tested in the extant literature, for example psychological need satisfaction (Chiniara & Bentein, 2016) and trust (Chan & Mak, 2014). Furthermore, extant research often relies on social exchange or social learning perspectives as to how a servant leader influences their followers (Tang et al., 2016; Tuan, 2016; Wu et al., 2013). It is broadly acknowledged that a more comprehensive understanding of the mechanisms through which servant leadership influences followers would be beneficial to the field (*e.g.*, Chiniara & Bentein, 2016; Feldman, 2014; Hunter et al., 2013; Mayer, 2010; van Dierendonck et al., 2014). From this, the current study proposes an identity-level perspective of leadership influence. Servant leaders activate contextually-relevant identity levels which, in turn, influence follower attitudes.

In summary, this study proposes that servant leadership will be differentially related to two salient follower outcomes, commitment to the public and moral disengagement. This leadership style is proposed to have an impact on follower attitudes through the mediating mechanism of the activated identity level of their followers.

## **6.2 Theory and Hypothesis Development**

### **6.2.1 Servant Leadership, Commitment to the Public and Moral Disengagement**

In adopting the theoretical perspective of Lord and colleagues on follower working self-concept (Lord & Brown, 2003), this study contends that servant leaders activate certain identity levels in their followers which foster commitment and discourage moral disengagement.

Creating value for the community, a core aspect of Liden's conceptualisation of the servant leader (Liden et al., 2008) provides a basis for arguing that servant leadership should relate positively to follower commitment to the public. Commitment is defined as "*a volitional bond reflecting dedication and responsibility for a target*" (Klein, Molloy, & Brinsfield, 2012, p. 130). As a volitional bond, the individual must make a choice or a decision to commit to the relevant target. An individual should experience a feeling of dedication or a sense of responsibility towards the target which results in motivation or actions taken in the interest of that same target (Klein, Cooper, Molloy, & Swanson, 2014; Klein et al., 2012). Commitment is therefore dynamic, socially constructed and applicable to any meaningful target in the workplace (Klein et al., 2012). As this study took place within a police organisation within the United Kingdom, the public was chosen as a salient focus of follower commitment. This represents a target that is clear, compelling and favourable in this occupational environment. Servant leaders stress community involvement and emphasise a genuine concern for helping members of the community in which the organisation operates (Liden et al., 2008). Followers are also thought to develop a spirit of servanthood under the influence of a servant leader and are thought to be more likely to model their leader's interest in creating value for the community (Liden et al.,

2008). Leadership is understood to effect the cognitive and affective mental structures of their subordinates through identity processes (Lord & Brown, 2001, 2003). Alongside activating peripheral self-schema in their followers, leaders also play a role in the emergence and evolution of an individual's identity and organisational membership (Lord et al., 1999, 2016). As servant leaders emphasise the importance of community service (Liden et al., 2008), this study proposes that servant leaders will foster a serving, community-focused identity in their followers which will be seen in the attitudinal outcome of commitment to the public. From this, the following hypothesis is proposed:

*Hypothesis 1a: Supervisory servant leadership is positively related to follower commitment to the public.*

Behaving ethically, another central aspect of Liden and colleagues' conceptualisation of the servant leader (2008), provides a basis for arguing that servant leadership should relate negatively to follower moral disengagement. Moral disengagement describes an individual's propensity to engage in negative, unethical behaviours without the experience of resultant cognitive distress (Moore et al., 2012). Individuals in a state of moral disengagement engage in forms of cognitive self-justification to reduce the cognitive dissonance that is experienced as a result of moral self-sanction (Bandura, 1999), concluding that harming others is either not as negative as it feels or that it is socially acceptable (Lee, Kim, Bhave, & Duffy, 2016). Moral disengagement has been found to be a significant predictor of unethical organisational behaviours (Moore et al., 2012), and counterproductive workplace behaviours (Johnson & Saboe, 2010).

As moral disengagement is proposed to be a flexible cognitive orientation of an individual (Hystad, Mearns, & Eid, 2014), aspects of an individual's environment can impact upon an individual's propensity to morally disengage (Hystad et al., 2014; Moore et al., 2012). This study therefore proposes that leadership influence deters follower moral disengagement. Servant leaders behave ethically, emphasising the importance of interacting fairly, openly and honestly

with those around them (Liden et al., 2008), alongside creating ethical working environments for their followers (Jaramillo et al., 2015). Servant leaders are proposed to communicate social norms, reminding followers of acceptable behaviours and underlining the importance of ethical behaviour in this process. This study therefore proposes that servant leaders will discourage follower unethical behaviour. The following hypothesis is therefore proposed:

*Hypothesis 1b: Supervisory servant leadership is negatively related to follower moral disengagement.*

### **6.2.2 Servant Leadership, Follower Individual Identity Level, Commitment to the Public and Moral Disengagement**

In adopting a follower self-identity and working self-concept approach (Lord & Brown, 2003), this study contends that servant leaders realise their influence on follower attitudes through the activation of peripheral self-schema. In a framework proposed by Lord and colleagues (2016), leaders are argued to prime different aspects of followers' self-concept in relation to a specific social context. As a result, their attitudes and behaviours also change. For the purposes of this study, the self is proposed as a complex mental structure which contains sets of different identities.

Individuals are proposed to have several identity levels, each of which is activated at a different time, creating an active working self-concept or identity level (Lord & Brown, 2003; Lord et al., 2016). Three identity levels are reported in the literature, namely individual, relational and collective identity levels. Lord and colleagues contend that the activation of one of these identity levels allows individuals to engage in sense-making within their environment. In turn, the activated identity level informs the cognitions, affect and subsequent behaviours of that individual (Lord & Brown, 2001; Lord et al., 2016). As leaders are responsible for managing meaning for their followers (Lord & Brown, 2003), leadership is a social cue within a follower's environment acting to influence follower cognitive, affective and behavioural outcomes (Lord et al., 1999).



At the personal or individual identity level (Lord et al., 1999), dimensions or attributes that differentiate the self from others are emphasised (Lord & Brown, 2003; Lord et al., 2016). In defining oneself by uniqueness (Lord & Brown, 2003; Lord et al., 1999), interpersonal comparisons are oriented around self-interest, with self-worth being based upon how an individual sees themselves in comparison to other people (Lord & Brown, 2001). These individual-level identities lead to a tendency to behave in self-enhancing ways (Lord & Brown, 2003), creating and reinforcing social norms which are related closely to task-oriented achievement or status differentiation between individuals (Lord et al., 2016). Lord and colleagues (1999) posit that leaders who emphasise individual-level identities highlight the importance of the related individually-focused social processes to both social and organisational functioning in that environment. Servant leaders, in direct opposition to leaders who emphasise individually-focussed social processes, are well-established to create positive, supportive working environments that prioritise the welfare and well-being of others (*e.g.*, Hale & Fields, 2007; Miao, Newman, Schwarz, & Xu, 2014). With concepts such as creating value for the community and helping followers grow and succeed as central components of this leadership philosophy (Liden et al., 2014a; Liden et al., 2008), the servant leader is proposed to directly challenge inherent aspects of individual identity. Rather than emphasising an individual's uniqueness or distinctiveness, or indeed reinforcing the importance of self-enhancing behaviours that are argued to activate a follower's individual identity (Lord et al., 2016), servant leaders both emphasise and increase the salience of prosocial motives and associated behaviours in the workplace (*e.g.*, Hoch et al., 2018; Hunter et al., 2013).

Moreover, servant leaders are well-established to behave ethically (*e.g.*, Liden et al., 2008; Liden et al., 2014a), and to instate ethical working climates for their followers (Jaramillo et al., 2015). Individual identities have been established, alongside interdependent identities, to be influenced by justice perceptions (Johnson & Lord, 2010). It has been established that, when perceiving one's environment as fair, followers are more likely to have activated collective

identities (Johnson et al., 2006), therein moving away from the activation of an individual identity level.

From both the prosocial emphasis and the central role of justice and ethical behaviour at the core of the approach, servant leadership is proposed to be negatively related to follower individual identity level. The following hypothesis is therefore proposed:

*Hypothesis 2a: Supervisory servant leadership will be negatively related to follower individual identity level.*

When followers have an activated individual identity level, they are understood to look for differentiation between themselves and others, emphasising their uniqueness (Lord & Brown, 2001, 2003; Lord et al., 1999) and engaging in self-enhancing behaviours (Lord & Brown, 2003). Followers therefore assess the relative advantage they might gain from engaging in certain behaviour. In order to be committed to a target, an individual must make a decision to commit to that target, a decision that is based on the salience and overall favourability of dedicating themselves to that target (Klein et al., 2012). This study proposes that, when an individual-level identity has been activated in a follower, the expenditure required to commit to the public will be evaluated by the follower as not in-keeping with their overall self-enhancement motives. This study therefore proposes that an individual identity level mediates the relationship between supervisory servant leadership and follower commitment to the public. From this, the following hypothesis is proposed:

*Hypothesis 2b: Follower individual identity level will mediate the positive relationship between supervisory servant leadership and follower commitment to the public.*

As moral disengagement can be triggered by certain circumstances (Hystad et al., 2014), this study proposes that activated individual identity level will contribute to an individual morally disengaging. In emphasising self-interest (Lord et al., 2016), it is proposed that subsequent cognitive decision-making processes will be oriented around achieving outcomes that benefit

the individual, rather than outcomes that are founded in social norms. As follower self-concept has been shown to form an important self-regulatory mechanism that has implications for both workplace attitudes and intentions (Johnson et al., 2006), it is proposed that followers with an activated individual identity may be more inclined to justify unethical behaviours to themselves. This self-justification avoids the resultant cognitive dissonance or distress arising from unethical behaviours whilst working towards the potential of self-benefitting or self-enhancing outcomes. From this, the following hypothesis is proposed:

*Hypothesis 2c: Follower individual identity level will mediate the negative relationship between supervisory servant leadership and follower moral disengagement.*

### **6.2.3 Servant Leadership, Follower Relational Identity Level, Commitment to the Public and Moral Disengagement**

Aside from the personal, individual level, two additional social identity levels which anchor the self within a social context are in the literature (Lord et al., 1999). At these two levels, individuals are defined and represented in terms of their connection to others, either to a specific individual as seen at the relational identity level, or to a broader group or team as seen at the collective identity level (Lord & Brown, 2001, 2003).

At the relational identity level, individuals will define themselves in relation to a specific individual with whom they have a close interpersonal relationship (Lord & Brown, 2003; Lord et al., 1999, 2016). This identity level is thought to motivate individuals to engage in behaviour that benefits that specific individual (Lord & Brown, 2001), with dyadic norms being of great importance to followers (Lord & Brown, 2003). Followers are invested in meeting the expectations of their leader and feedback from that leader will play a significant role in follower self-appraisal (Lord & Brown, 2003). Within this study, servant leaders are proposed to activate follower relational identity through the creation and maintenance of high-quality, meaningful exchange relationships with their followers. Servant leaders develop these relationships due to the care they express for followers, empowering them, helping them grow and succeed through

mentoring and a genuine concern for their career growth, alongside showing sensitivity towards their followers through engaging in emotional healing (Liden et al., 2008). Through these core aspects of contemporary conceptualisations of servant leadership, the servant leader should activate follower relational identity level. The following hypothesis is therefore proposed:

*Hypothesis 3a: Supervisory servant leadership will be positively related to follower relational identity level.*

With follower behaviour grounded in a specific interpersonal relationship (Lord & Brown, 2001; Lord et al., 1999, 2016), the values and perspectives of the leader, alongside feedback received from them, will be especially salient to the follower (Lord & Brown, 2003). At this relational identity level, followers should be especially responsive to their servant leader as a role model, therein engaging in appropriate role behaviours to meet their expectations. These expectations include serving others and creating value for the community whilst at work (Liden et al., 2008). A follower's psychological attachment to the community, manifest in commitment to the public within this study, is posited as an appropriate role behaviour which emulates the prosocial perspective of the servant leader and should result in favourable feedback and appraisal from the servant leader. Therefore, when the follower is served by the leader, the following hypothesis is proposed:

*Hypothesis 3b: Follower relational identity level will mediate the positive relationship between supervisory servant leadership and follower commitment to the public.*

As servant leaders emphasise the importance of behaving ethically and role model other-serving behaviour through their focus on creating value for the community (Liden et al., 2008), this study proposes that followers will seek to positively respond to their leader's ethical and prosocial perspective within that dyad. Activated relational identity levels should therein result in a reduction of moral disengagement. This negative relationship is proposed as a leader clarifies their expectations for follower behaviour, seen in ethical behaviour, and provides

followers with an ethical role model whose behaviour they can emulate to receive desirable appraisal and feedback. From this, the following hypothesis is proposed:

*Hypothesis 3c: Follower relational identity level will mediate the negative relationship between supervisory servant leadership and follower moral disengagement .*

#### **6.2.4 Servant Leadership, Follower Collective Identity Level, Commitment to the Public and Moral Disengagement**

At the collective level, an individual identifies with a group or collective. The comparisons they make are related a perceived group prototype, both in comparisons to others and in self-definition (Lord et al., 1999). When the collective identity level is activated, an individual will be concerned with the group's welfare (Lord et al., 1999) and will be motivated to act in the best interests of that group (Lord & Brown, 2001). Less personal than relational, a collective identity level represents an aggregated social identity (Lord & Brown, 2003), wherein a group member's self-worth depends on their overall perception of the group as favourable or not (Lord et al., 2016). This study proposes that servant leadership, through its emphasis on collectively-oriented social norms such as creating value for the community and behaving ethically (Liden et al., 2014a; Liden et al., 2008) positively contributes to the activation of follower collective identity level. This transcends the dyadic nature of a relational identity that focuses on achieving benefit for the other dyadic member. Follower collective identity level should be activated by a servant leader, which leaves that follower more concerned and invested in the success and welfare of their group.

As previously mentioned, the ethical behaviour of a servant leader, alongside their involvement in the creation of psychologically safe (Chiniara & Bentein, 2016) and ethical working climates (Jaramillo et al., 2015), should also result in a positive relationship between a servant leader and the activation of a collective identity level. Fair, positive treatment has been found to prime self-identity levels (Johnson & Lord, 2010). Followers of servant leaders are

expected, through the ethical approach of the servant leader, to perceive their leader to be fair, ethical, trustworthy and other-oriented. The following hypothesis is therefore proposed:

*Hypothesis 4a: Supervisory servant leadership will be positively related to follower collective identity level.*

When a follower's collective identity level is activated, the resultant social dynamics are different to both individual and relational identity levels, with much greater emphasis being placed on organisational culture and collective social norms (Lord & Brown, 2003; Ybarra & Trefimow, 1998). Lord and colleagues assert that, when a collective identity level is activated, individuals should be more invested in safeguarding the group's welfare (Lord & Brown, 2001; Lord et al., 1999), as well as being inclined to work towards shared group or collective goals, even putting aside individual self-interest to pursue those goals (Lord et al., 2016). From this perspective, an activated collective identity level in followers should foster group-oriented motivation and behaviour (Lord et al., 2016). As commitment to the public is proposed to be a psychological bond which reflects an individual's sense of responsibility for a specific and relevant target (Klein et al., 2012), an activated collective identity level should facilitate follower commitment to the public, especially in an environment where the welfare of the others is higher in importance (Jonson & Saboe, 2010). From this, with prosocial goals being dominant in one's activated identity, the following hypothesis is proposed:

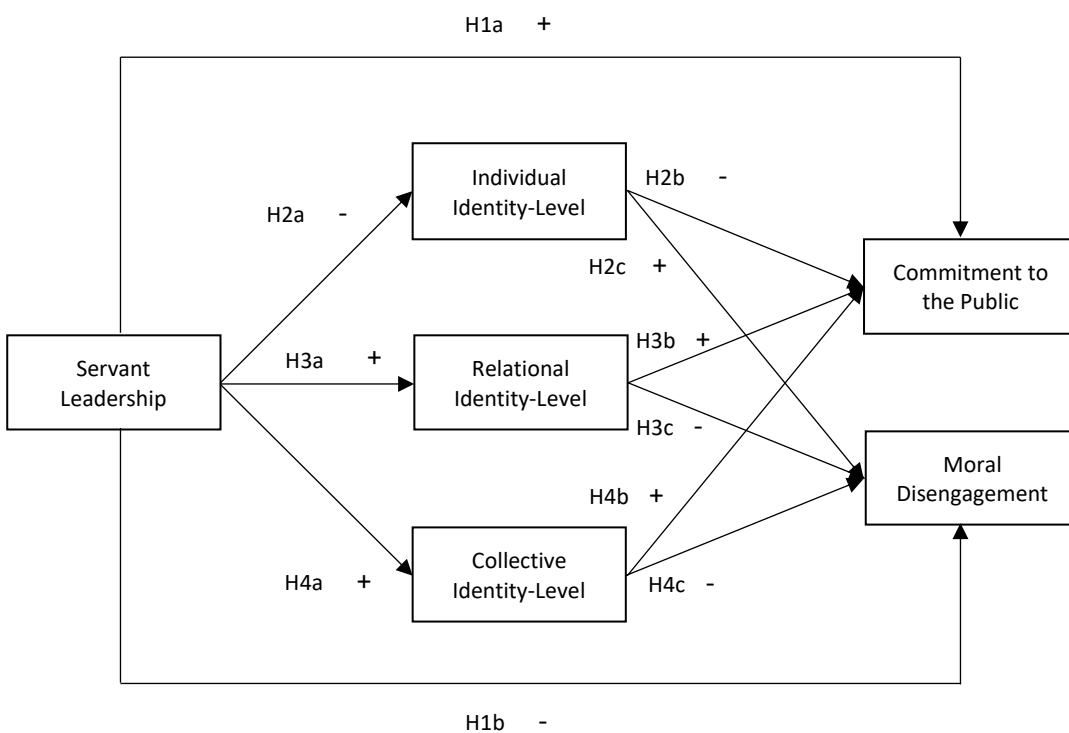
*Hypothesis 4b: Follower collective identity level will mediate the positive relationship between supervisory servant leadership and follower commitment to the public.*

An individual with an activated collective identity level derives their self-worth from the way in which they feel their group is perceived (Lord & Brown, 2001; Lord et al., 1999). Followers are proposed to engage in behaviours that contribute towards group objectives or collective goals (Lord et al., 2016). Servant leaders communicate their expectations around behaving ethically and creating value for the community (Liden et al., 2008). Therefore, this study contends that followers will have a greater understanding of the importance of ethical and serving members

of the public through other-oriented behaviour. As moral disengagement represents a violation of social norms that are instated, supported and communicated by a servant leader, an activated collective identity level should discourage moral disengagement. From this, the following hypothesis is proposed:

*Hypothesis 4c: Follower collective identity level will mediate the negative relationship between supervisory servant leadership and follower moral disengagement.*

**Figure 6-1: Hypothesised Mediation Model of Study 3**



### 6.3 Methodology

#### 6.3.1 Sample & Procedure

The data for this study were collected from members of a police force in the United Kingdom as part of a larger collaborative research project, discussed in more detail in Section 3.2.2 of this thesis. At the time of the Time 1 survey, the total number of employees in this organisation was 8768. The response rate was 32.6% for Time 1 and 14.2% for Time 2 ( $n = 2860$  and  $1248$

respectively). Responses to both surveys were matched using an anonymous identification code. In total, there were 573 useable matched questionnaires, i.e., a response rate of 20.0% using those persons who returned Time 1 as a base or a response rate of 6.5% using the whole organisation as a base. Within this matched sample, 60.7% of respondents were male ( $n = 348$ ), 68.2% were police officers ( $n = 391$ ), and 54.3% were in the lowest rank or grade in the organisational hierarchy ( $n = 311$ ).

In the Time 1 survey, respondents rated their immediate supervisor's servant leadership, followed by self-rating their individual, relational and collective self-concepts. One month later respondents self-reported their level of commitment to the public and moral disengagement in the workplace in the Time 2 survey. All employees were given the opportunity to respond to each survey. Instructions provided to respondents are included in the Appendix section of this thesis.

### **6.3.2 Measures**

Short forms of the measurement instruments were used when possible to increase the likelihood of responding. Unless otherwise noted, all item-level responses were made on a 7-point Likert scale, with response anchors of 1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*. All survey items including questions and response scales are included in the Appendix section of this thesis.

*Servant Leadership.* Respondents assessed their immediate supervisor's servant leadership using Liden and colleagues' SL-7 scale (2015). A sample item is, "*My supervisor puts my best interests ahead of his/her own*". McDonald's omega for this scale was .91, and Cronbach's alpha was .91, indicating good internal consistency reliability.

*Individual, relational and collective identity levels.* Followers were asked to rate three different identity levels, measurement of which is based upon the shortened measure of self-concept, The Levels of Self-Concept Scale, included in work by Johnson, Selenta and Lord (2006). Each scale has five items. For individual identity level (Comparative identity sub-scale), a sample



item is *"I feel best about myself when I perform better than others"*, with a McDonald's omega of .89, a Cronbach's alpha of .88. For relational identity level (Concern for others sub-scale), McDonald's omega was .83, and a Cronbach's alpha of .82; a sample item is *"It is important to me that I uphold my commitments to significant people in my life"*. Thirdly, a sample item for collective identity level (Group achievement focus sub-scale) is *"When I'm part of a team, I am concerned about the group as a whole instead of whether individual team members like me or whether I like them"*, with a McDonald's omega of .87, and a Cronbach's alpha of .84.

*Commitment to the public.* Commitment to the public was measured using a four-item measure of referent-specific unidimensional commitment (Klein et al., 2014). Argued by Klein and colleagues (2014) to represent a measure which is intended to be applicable to many workplace targets, this commitment measure was adapted to refer to the public, a workplace referent which is salient to the public sector context in which this study is being undertaken. A sample item is *"How dedicated are you to the public?"*, (1 = not at all to 7 = completely). The McDonald's omega for this scale was .97, and Cronbach's alpha for this scale was .97.

*Moral Disengagement.* Moral disengagement was measured using an eight-item scale from work by Moore and colleagues (2012). Referred to as *The Propensity to Morally Disengage*, this uni-factorial scale has eight theorised mechanisms which allow individuals to engage in unethical behaviours without feeling as though they have violated their internalised moral standards (Moore et al., 2012). It has subsequently been adapted for inclusion in policing research (Graham & Plater, 2016). The mechanism of moral justification was measured using the item *"It is okay to spread rumours to defend those you care about"*. Euphemistic labelling was measured using the item *"It is okay to gloss over certain facts to make your point"*. Advantageous comparison was measured using the item *"Considering the ways people grossly misrepresent themselves, it's hardly a sin to inflate your own credentials a bit"*. Displacement of responsibility was measured using the item *"People shouldn't be held accountable for doing questionable things when they were just doing what an authority figure told them to do"*.

Diffusion of responsibility was measured using the item *“People can't be blamed for doing things that are technically wrong when all their colleagues are doing it too”*. Dehumanisation was measured using the item *“Some people have to be treated roughly because they lack feelings that can be hurt”*. Attribution of blame was measured using the item *“People who get mistreated have usually done something to bring it on themselves”*. The reliability of this scale was assessed with a McDonald's omega, showing a value of .83, and Cronbach's alpha, showing a value of .82.

*Control Variables.* Demographic variables and follower characteristics have been highlighted in several instances across prior research as having an influence on an individual's experience at work (Epitropaki & Martin, 2005; van Knippenberg & van Knippenberg, 2005). To address potential confounds, self-reported demographic variables were incorporated into subsequent hypothesis testing. Role, referring to whether the respondent was a warranted police officer or a member of police staff, was the primary control variable included in the analysis as each role consists of distinct responsibilities within the organisational structure (coded as 0 = *officer*, 1 = *staff*). The occupational context and the nature of different identity levels inform the inclusion of a respondent's hierarchical position within the organisation as a statistical control variable. As relational identity level focuses on dyadic relationships and the collective identity level emphasises group membership (Lord & Brown, 2003), the role a respondent has in the hierarchical structure of the organisation may influence the activation of these different levels. Respondents selected one of the following five categories; 1 = *constable or staff equivalent* (practitioner), 2 = *sergeant / staff equivalent* (supervisory manager), 3 = *inspector / staff equivalent* (middle manager), 4 = *chief inspector / staff equivalent* (senior manager), 5 = *superintendent and above / staff equivalent* (senior manager).

Due to its long-established influence on leadership perceptions, including in research addressing servant leadership (e.g., Brubaker et al., 2015; Chan & Mak, 2014), respondents' tenure in their organisation was considered as a control variable. Tenure has also been established as having a salient influence on follower outcomes in relationships between

leadership influence and follower outcomes in the workplace (e.g., de Poel et al., 2014; Schriesheim et al., 1998), from these dual perspectives, follower tenure in policing was included as a statistical control variable in subsequent analyses. Respondents selected one of the following five categories; 1 = *less than one year*, 2 = *1 to 5 years*, 3 = *6 to 10 years*, 4 = *11 to 20 years*, 5 = *over 20 years*. Respondent age was also included as a statistical control variables, with respondents selecting one of the following five categories; 1 = *16 to 24 years*, 2 = *25 to 34 years*, 3 = *35 to 44 years*, 4 = *45 to 55 years*, 5 = *over 55 years*.

Gender was an additional follower characteristic considered to have a potential influence on the experience of work. Several studies, especially those addressing positive leadership, have established the relevance of gender as a salient influence on leadership perceptions, experiences, and preferences in the workplace (Brubaker et al., 2015; Ehrhart & Klein, 2001). An example of this gender impact on servant leadership specifically is seen in work by Dennis and Bocarnea (2005) and attested to across the servant leadership literature (Chan & Mak, 2014; Chiniara & Bentein, 2016; Hogue, 2016), therefore respondent gender and supervisor gender were instated as a control variables throughout statistical analyses (both coded as 0 = *male*, 1 = *female*).

Drawing from the service literature that indicates that customer contact frequency is strongly related to positive attitudes and outcomes in service interactions (Dagger et al., 2009), a respondent's contact frequency with the public was considered to be an additional, occupationally relevant statistical control variable in light of the outcomes of interest in this study, namely commitment to the public and moral disengagement. Respondents selected one of the following ten categories; 1 = *0 to 10%*, 2 = *11 to 20%*, 3 = *21 to 30%*, 4 = *31 to 40%*, 5 = *41 to 50%*, 6 = *51 to 60%*, 7 = *61 to 70%*, 8 = *71 to 80%*, 9 = *81 to 90%*, 10 = *91 to 100%*.

## 6.4 Results

### 6.4.1 Preliminary Results

Descriptive statistics and correlations among the study variables are presented in Table 6.1. Means, standard deviations, correlations, *t*-tests and ANOVA were produced using SPSS 24. Servant leadership had a mean score, slightly above the scale mid-point, of 4.76 ( $n = 2413$ ,  $SD = 1.40$ ). Mean ratings of individual self-concept 3.37 ( $n = 2403$ ,  $SD = 1.36$ ) were substantially lower than for relational self-concept, which had the highest mean score of the self-concept levels, with a mean score of 5.76 ( $n = 2374$ ,  $SD = .82$ ). Collective self-concept also had a high mean score of 5.39 ( $n = 2391$ ,  $SD = 1.06$ ). Commitment to the public had a mean score of 5.29 ( $n = 543$ ,  $SD = 1.23$ ), which was unsurprisingly high for respondents within the public sector. Not too surprisingly, followers on-average reported a relatively low level of moral disengagement, which had a mean score of 1.92 ( $n = 546$ ,  $SD = .73$ ).

As expected based on Hypothesis 1a, servant leadership was significantly, positively correlated with commitment to the public ( $r = .14$ ,  $p = .001$ ). However, servant leadership was not significantly correlated with moral disengagement ( $r = -.02$ ,  $p = .671$ ).

Inconsistent with Hypothesis 2a, supervisory servant leadership was not significantly correlated with follower individual identity level ( $r = -.03$ ,  $p = .12$ ). However, follower individual identity level was found to be significantly positively correlated with follower commitment to the public ( $r = .09$ ,  $p = .09$ ), and with follower moral disengagement ( $r = .13$ ,  $p = .002$ ).

As expected based on Hypothesis 3a, servant leadership was significantly, positively correlated with follower relational identity level ( $r = .14$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Follower relational identity level was found to be significantly, positively correlated with follower commitment to the public ( $r = .32$ ,  $p < .001$ ), and significantly negatively correlated with follower moral disengagement ( $r = -.18$ ,  $p < .001$ ).

As expected based on Hypothesis 4a, servant leadership was significantly, positively correlated with follower collective identity level ( $r = .19, p < .001$ ). Follower collective identity level was positively correlated with follower commitment to the public ( $r = .49, p < .001$ ), and significantly negatively correlated with follower moral disengagement ( $r = -.25, p < .001$ ).

Independent samples *t*-tests were conducted to compare the scores across the six focal variables to assess whether there were significant differences due to respondent gender (0 = *male* and 1 = *female*) and role (0 = *police officer* and 1 = *police staff*). All significance tests are two-tailed unless otherwise indicated. All effect sizes of significant difference between these groups were calculated and interpreted in line with Cohen's recommendations (1988) for effect sizes in the behavioural sciences.

There were no significant difference between men and women in perceptions of servant leadership,  $t(2463) = -0.80, p = .42$  (male  $M = 4.73, SD = 1.42$ ; female  $M = 4.78, SD = 1.38$ ), nor for commitment to the public,  $t(556) = 1.84, p = .07$  (male  $M = 5.10, SD = .91$ ; female  $M = 5.12, SD = .82$ ). For individual identity there was a small statistically significant difference associated with gender, with females scoring slightly higher than males (male  $M = 3.27, SD = 1.34$ ; female  $M = 3.43, SD = 1.37$ ;  $t(2487) = -2.64, p = .01$ , two-tailed), however the magnitude of this effect was extremely small and not considered to be of practical significance (eta squared = .0003). There was a significant difference,  $t(2459) = 4.78, p < .001$ , in scores for males and females in relational identity level (male  $M = 5.86, SD = .76$ ; female  $M = 5.70, SD = .85$ ). The magnitude of the differences in these means (mean difference = .16, 95% CI: .95 to .23) was small (eta squared = .01). There was also a significant difference,  $t(559) = 6.55, p < .001$ , in scores males and females in collective identity level (male  $M = 5.58, SD = .89$ ; female  $M = 5.31, SD = 1.12$ ). The magnitude of the differences in these means (mean difference = .27, 95% CI: .19 to .35) was small (eta squared = .02). There was also a significant difference,  $t(559) = -3.35, p < .001$ , in scores for males and females in self-reporting on moral disengagement, with males reporting lower scores than their female colleagues (male  $M = 1.78, SD = .65$ ; female  $M = 1.99, SD = .77$ ). The magnitude

of the differences in these means (mean difference =  $-.21$ , 95% CI:  $-.33$  to  $-.09$ ) was small (eta squared =  $.02$ ).

For role (police officer or police staff), there was no significant difference,  $t(2503) = .14$ ,  $p = .89$ , for servant leadership (officer mean score =  $4.76$ ,  $SD = 1.42$ ; staff mean score =  $4.76$ ,  $SD = 1.35$ ), individual identity level,  $t(2528) = -.81$ ,  $p = .42$ , (officer  $M = 3.36$ ,  $SD = 1.36$ ; staff  $M = 3.41$ ,  $SD = 1.35$ ), relational identity level,  $t(952) = -1.48$ ,  $p = .14$  (officer  $M = 5.75$ ,  $SD = .84$ ; staff  $M = 5.76$ ,  $SD = .76$ ), commitment to the public,  $t(562) = .36$ ,  $p = .72$ , (officer  $M = 5.31$ ,  $SD = 1.22$ ; staff  $M = 5.26$ ,  $SD = 1.27$ ) and moral disengagement,  $t(565) = .22$ ,  $p = .83$ , (officer =  $1.92$ ,  $SD = .79$ ; staff  $M = 1.91$ ,  $SD = .60$ ). There was a significant difference,  $t(2513) = -4.96$ ,  $p < .001$ , in scores for collective identity level,  $t(2513) = -4.96$ ,  $p < .001$ , (officer  $M = 5.34$ ,  $SD = 1.09$ ; staff  $M = 5.56$ ,  $SD = .92$ ), with staff reporting higher responses to collective identity than officers. The magnitude of the differences in these means (mean difference =  $-.22$ , 95% CI:  $-.31$  to  $-.14$ ) was small (eta squared =  $.01$ ).

A one-way between-groups analysis of variance was conducted to explore the impact of the further demographic variables on focal study variables. There was a statistically significant difference at the  $p < .05$  level in scores for all study variables for position in the organisational hierarchy; servant leadership ( $F(4, 2495) = 2.41$ ,  $p = .048$ ) with a very small effect size of  $.004$ , individual self-concept ( $F(4, 2519) = 3.15$ ,  $p = .014$ ) with a small effect size of  $.01$ , relational self-concept ( $F(4, 2491) = 4.39$ ,  $p = .002$ ) with a small effect size of  $.01$ , collective self-concept ( $F(4, 2504) = 45.80$ ,  $p < .001$ ) with a medium effect size of  $.07$ , commitment to the public ( $F(4, 560) = 4.97$ ,  $p = .001$ ) with a small effect size of  $.03$ , and moral disengagement ( $F(4, 563) = 4.47$ ,  $p = .001$ ) with a small effect size of  $.03$ , calculated using eta squared.

In assessment of organisational tenure of respondent, there was a statistically significant difference at the  $p < .05$  level in scores for four study variables for respondent organisational tenure; servant leadership ( $F(4, 2509) = 4.53$ ,  $p = .001$ ) with a small effect size of  $.01$  calculated using eta squared, individual self-concept ( $F(4, 2531) = 7.34$ ,  $p < .001$ ) with a small effect size of

.01, collective self-concept ( $F(4, 2516) = 2.99, p = .018$ ) with a very small effect size of .004, and moral disengagement ( $F(4, 562) = 4.86, p = .001$ ) with a small effect size of .03. There was no statistical difference found for scores for relational self-concept ( $F(4, 2516) = 1.51, p = .197$ ) or for commitment to the public ( $F(4, 559) = .97, p = .425$ ).

In assessment of respondent age, there was a statistically significant difference at the  $p < .05$  level in scores for four study variables; servant leadership ( $F(4, 2482) = 4.53, p = .001$ ) with a small effect size of .01, calculated using eta squared, individual self-concept ( $F(4, 2505) = 6.60, p < .001$ ) with a small effect size of .01, relational self-concept ( $F(4, 2478) = 2.40, p = .048$ ) with a very small effect size of .004, and moral disengagement ( $F(4, 562) = 5.36, p < .001$ ) with a medium effect size of .04. There was no statistical difference found for scores for collective self-concept ( $F(4, 2490) = 1.01, p = .401$ ), or commitment to the public ( $F(4, 559) = 1.55, p = .186$ ).

In assessment of respondent contact frequency with the public, there was a statistically significant difference at the  $p < .05$  level in scores for two study variables; collective self-concept ( $F(9, 2512) = 6.56, p < .001$ ) with a small effect size of .02, calculated using eta squared, and moral disengagement ( $F(9, 558) = 2.46, p = .009$ ) with a small effect size of .04. There was no statistical difference found for servant leadership ( $F(9, 2500) = .58, p = .816$ ), individual self-concept ( $F(9, 2527) = .78, p = .639$ ), relational self-concept ( $F(9, 2498) = 1.54, p = .128$ ), or commitment to the public ( $F(49, 555) = .95, p = .483$ ).

**Table 6-1: Means, Standard Deviations and Correlations for Study 3 Variables**

	Mean	S.D.	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.
1. Role	.24	.43													
2. Position in org. hierarchy	1.75	1.13	.45**												
3. Org. tenure	4.01	.96	.08**	.23**											
4. Respondent age	3.36	.85	.23**	.25**	.70**										
5. Respondent gender	.66	.48	-.26**	-.05**	.04	.06**									
6. Supervisor gender	.29	.46	.20**	-.01	-.04*	.01	-.17**								
7. Contact frequency w/public	3.61	2.89	-.29**	-.33**	-.28**	-.24**	.08**	-.04*							
8. Servant leadership	4.76	1.40	-.00	.05*	-.06**	-.01	.02	.01	-.03	<i>(.91)</i>					
9. Individual self-concept	3.37	1.36	.02	.05*	-.10**	-.08**	.05*	-.01	-.03	-.03	<i>(.89)</i>				
10. Relational self-concept	5.76	.82	.00	.07**	-.02	-.04	-.09**	.01	-.00	.14**	.08**	<i>(.83)</i>			
11. Collective self-concept	5.39	1.06	.09**	.26**	-.01	.01	-.13**	.00	-.10**	.19**	.23**	.52**	<i>(.87)</i>		
12. Commitment to the public	5.29	1.23	-.02	.18**	.06	.09*	-.08	.04	.05	.14**	.09*	.32**	.49**	<i>(.97)</i>	
13. Moral disengagement	1.92	.73	-.01	-.17**	-.17**	-.13**	.14**	-.03	.05	-.02	.13**	-.18**	-.25**	-.33**	<i>(.83)</i>

Note:  $n = 568-2553$ ; Where relevant, McDonald's omega for scale variables is included in italics on the matrix diagonal. Respondent role was coded as 0 = officer, 1 = staff; respondent position in organisational hierarchy was measured across five categories; 1 = constable or staff equivalent, 2 = sergeant / staff equivalent, 3 = inspector / staff equivalent, 4 = chief inspector / staff equivalent, 5 = superintendent and above / staff equivalent. Respondent organisational tenure was measured across five categories; 1 = less than one year, 2 = 1 to 5 years, 3 = 6 to 10 years, 4 = 11 to 20 years, 5 = over 20 years. Respondent age was measured across five categories, 1 = 16 to 24 years, 2 = 25 to 34 years, 3 = 35 to 44 years, 4 = 45 to 55 years, 5 = over 55 years. Respondent gender and supervisor gender were coded as 0 = male, 1 = female; Respondent contact frequency with the public was measured across ten categories; 1 = 0 to 10%, 2 = 11 to 20%, 3 = 21 to 30%, 4 = 31 to 40%, 5 = 41 to 50%, 6 = 51 to 60%, 7 = 61 to 70%, 8 = 71 to 80%, 9 = 81 to 90%, 10 = 91 to 100%. \*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level; \* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).



Comparative analyses across groups, using both independent sample *t*-tests and one-way analysis of variance between-groups testing, indicate that there are several statistical differences in responses across control variables. For gender, statistical differences were found across all three identity levels and moral disengagement. For role, responses for collective identity level were found to be statistically different between police officers and police staff. These control variables were therefore included in subsequent hypothesis testing analyses to determine more accurately the proposed study relationships. The analyses of position in organisational hierarchy, respondent tenure, age and contact frequency for the public also indicated statistically significant differences between various groups and, as a result, these variables also were included in subsequent hypothesis testing.

#### **6.4.2 Confirmatory Factor Analysis**

Before testing study hypotheses, a series of confirmatory factor analyses was undertaken to confirm the distinctiveness of the variables of interest in this study, and are reported in Table 6.2. The hypothesised measurement model with six factors, namely servant leadership, individual self-concept, relational self-concept, collective self-concept, commitment to the public and moral disengagement, was tested. The residual items for some were allowed to correlate within some of the factors due to conceptual overlap between these items. As previously discussed, these were identified using the model modification indices, with values greater than 100 being allowed to correlate (Hystad et al., 2010). For individual self-concept, items one *“I thrive on opportunities to demonstrate that my abilities or talents are better than those of other people”* and two *“I have a strong need to know how I stand in comparison to my co-workers”* were allowed to correlate due to their shared reference towards comparison in ability between the respondent and their co-workers. For relational self-concept, items four *“Caring deeply about another person such as a co-worker is important to me”* and five *“Knowing that a close other acknowledges and values the role that I play in their life makes me feel like a worthwhile person”* were allowed to correlate. For the moral disengagement factor, items four

“People shouldn't be held accountable for doing questionable things when they were just doing what an authority figure told them to do” and five “People can't be blamed for doing things that are technically wrong when all their colleagues are doing it too” were also allowed to correlate due to the conceptual similarity of negating responsibility in light of others' behaviours.

**Table 6-2: Fit Comparisons of Alternative Factor Models for Study 3**

Models	$\chi^2$	df	$\Delta \chi^2$	$\Delta df$	RMSEA	CFI	SRMR
Hypothesised model	2151.50	509	-		.04	.95	.04
Model A	3118.25	514	966.75	5	.04	.93	.09
Model B	9549.71	518	7398.21	9	.08	.75	.09
Model C	10484.58	521	8333.08	12	.09	.72	.11
Model D	12261.00	523	10109.5	14	.09	.67	.17
Model E	21948.55	524	19797.05	15	.13	.40	.20

*Notes: Model A: 5 - factor model combining commitment to the public and moral disengagement as one factor; Model B: 4 - factor model combining individual, relational and collective self-concept as one factor; Model C: 3 - factor model combining individual, relational and collective self-concept as one factor and commitment to the public and moral disengagement as one factor; Model D: 2 - factor model combining individual, relational and collective self-concept and commitment to the public and moral disengagement as one factor; Model E: 1-factor model combining all study variables.*

The resulting modified model fit well,  $\chi^2 (509) = 2151.50$ , CFI = .95, TFI = .95; RMSEA = .04; SRMR = .04. All factor loadings for the modified model were statistically significant. In addition, this model fit significantly better than the alternative models. Fit statistics for the alternative models, along with comparisons to the baseline modified model are included in Table 6.2. as the alternative models include a five-factor model combining commitment to the public and moral disengagement as one factor (Model A:  $\chi^2 (514) = 3118.25$ , CFI = .93, TFI .92; RMSEA = .04; SRMR = .09); a four factor model combining individual, relational and collective self-concept as one factor (Model B:  $\chi^2 (518) = 9549.71$ , CFI = .75, TFI .72; RMSEA = .08; SRMR = .09); a three factor model combining individual, relational and collective self-concept as one factor and commitment to the public and moral disengagement as one factor (Model C:  $\chi^2 (521) = 10484.58$ , CFI = .72, TFI .70; RMSEA = .09; SRMR = .11); a two factor model combining individual, relational and collective self-concept and commitment to the public and moral disengagement as one

factor (Model D:  $\chi^2$  (523) = 12261.00, CFI = .67, TFI .65; RMSEA = .09; SRMR = .17); and a one factor model combining all study variables (Model E:  $\chi^2$  (524) = 21948.55, CFI = .40, TFI .35; RMSEA = .13; SRMR = .20). These findings support the discriminant validity of the research variables included within this study.

### 6.4.3 Hypothesis Testing

Hypotheses were examined using a manifest variable path analysis analytic approach in Mplus 7.3 (Muthén & Muthén, 2015). Table 6.3 presents the tests of direct and indirect effects based on the hypothesised model. A path model was estimated with the two dependent study variables to test Hypotheses 1a and 1b, regarding the direct effects of servant leadership on follower commitment to the public and follower moral disengagement. These variables were included as independent variables in the estimated model also including seven control variables (respondent role, position in the organisational hierarchy, respondent tenure in policing, age, respondent and supervisor gender and contact frequency with the public). Supporting Hypothesis 1a, supervisory servant leadership was found to be positively related to follower commitment to the public ( $b = .11$ ,  $SE = .04$ ; 95% CI = .035, .197). A significant relationship between supervisory servant leadership and follower moral disengagement was not found ( $b = .01$ ,  $SE = .02$ ; 95% CI = -.042, .050), resulting in Hypothesis 1b not being supported.

Another manifest variable path model was estimated with the composite scores of all study variables. In the model testing mediating effects, both the direct and indirect effects of servant leadership on commitment to the public and moral disengagement via the hypothesised model of follower identity levels were considered. As all three mediators, individual, relational and collective identity levels were measured at the same time, their disturbance terms were allowed to correlate. The direct effects of respondent role, position in the organisational hierarchy, respondent tenure in policing, age, respondent and supervisor gender and contact frequency with the public were specified as control variables for hypothesis testing. The model allowed freely estimated effects of the specified control variables on all mediators and both dependent

variables. Supporting Hypothesis 2a, supervisory servant leadership was found to be negatively related to follower individual identity level ( $b = -.05$ ,  $SE = .02$ ;  $p = .02$ ). Results of the tests for indirect effect indicate that follower individual identity level did not significantly mediate between supervisory servant leadership and follower commitment to the public ( $b = .00$ ,  $SE = .00$ ; 95% CI =  $-.003, .004$ ), meaning that Hypothesis 2b was not supported. However, follower individual identity level had significant, although very small, mediation effects on the relationship of supervisory servant leadership with follower moral disengagement ( $b = -.004$ ,  $SE = .00$ ; 95% CI =  $-.009, -.001$ ), supporting Hypothesis 2c.

Supporting Hypothesis 3a<sup>6</sup>, supervisory servant leadership was found to be positively related to follower relational identity level ( $b = .07$ ,  $SE = .01$ ;  $p < .001$ ). Results of indirect effect tests indicate that follower relational identity level had significant mediation effects on the links between supervisory servant leadership and follower commitment to the public ( $b = .01$ ,  $SE = .01$ ; 95% CI =  $.003, .028$ ), supporting Hypothesis 3b. Results of indirect effects indicate that follower relational identity level did not have any significant mediation effects on the links between supervisory servant leadership and follower moral disengagement ( $b = -.00$ ,  $SE = .00$ ; 95% CI =  $-.011, .003$ ), meaning that Hypothesis 3c was not supported.

Supporting Hypothesis 4a<sup>6</sup>, supervisory servant leadership was found to be positively related to follower collective identity level ( $b = .12$ ,  $SE = .02$ ;  $p < .001$ ). Results of indirect effect tests indicate that follower collective identity level had significant mediation effects on the links between supervisory servant leadership and follower commitment to the public ( $b = .06$ ,  $SE = .01$ ; 95% CI =  $.042, .089$ ), supporting Hypothesis 4b. Results of indirect effects indicate that follower collective identity level also had significant mediation effects on the links between

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<sup>6</sup> In consideration of comments in the existing literature regarding gender differences in interdependency (e.g., Gabriel & Gardner, 1999), respondent gender was tested as a moderator of the relationships between supervisory servant leadership and follower relational self-concept, and between supervisory servant leadership and follower collective self-identity. Testing of this potential moderator, respondent gender (0 = *male*, 1 = *female*), was found to be non-significant in both relationships.

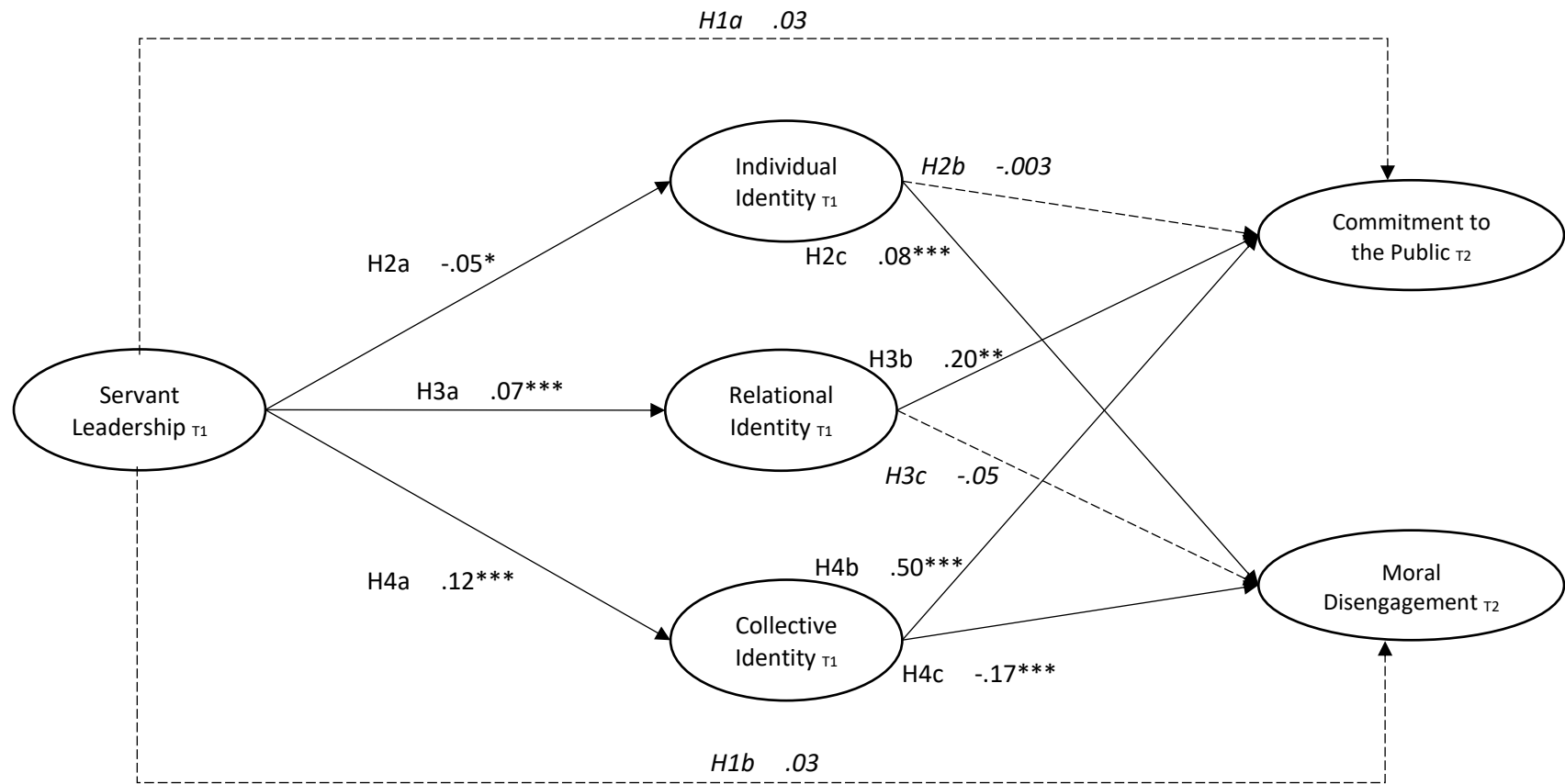
supervisory servant leadership and follower moral disengagement ( $b = -.02$ ,  $SE = .01$ ; 95% CI =  $-.034, -.010$ ), supporting Hypothesis 4c.

**Table 6-3: Tests of Direct and Indirect Effects Based on the Hypothesised Model for Study 3**

Effects	Estimate	s.e.	95% confidence interval	
			LL	UL
<b>Total effects</b>				
Servant leadership → commitment to the public	.11	.04	.035	.197
Servant leadership → moral disengagement	.01	.02	-.042	.050
<b>Direct effects (in the presence of the mediators)</b>				
Servant leadership → commitment to the public	.03	.04	-.037	.118
Servant leadership → moral disengagement	.03	.02	-.017	.078
<b>Total indirect effects</b>				
Servant leadership → commitment to the public	.08	.01	.052	.197
Servant leadership → moral disengagement	-.03	.01	-.041	-.050
<b>Specific Indirect effects</b>				
Servant leadership → individual self-concept → commitment to the public	.00	.00	-.003	.004
Servant leadership → relational self-concept → commitment to the public	.01	.01	.003	.028
Servant leadership → collective self-concept → commitment to the public	.06	.01	.042	.089
Servant leadership → individual self-concept → moral disengagement	-.004	.00	-.009	-.001
Servant leadership → relational self-concept → moral disengagement	-.00	.00	-.011	.003
Servant leadership → collective self-concept → moral disengagement	-.02	.01	-.034	-.010

*Note: Unstandardised estimates are reported, all estimates were tested for significance using 95% bootstrap confidence intervals by 1000 resampling.*

**Figure 6-2: Estimated Unstandardised Path Coefficients of the Hypothesised Model in Study 3**



Note: All coefficients are unstandardized coefficients; all estimates were tested for significance using 95% bootstrap confidence intervals by 1000 resampling;  $*p < .05$ ,  $**p < .01$ ,  $***p < .001$ ; Servant leadership, individual identity, relational identity, collective identity and engagement were measured at Time 1 (denoted as  $T_1$ ), and commitment to the public and moral disengagement were measured at Time 2 (denoted as  $T_2$ ). Demographic controls included in this model were respondent role, respondent position in organisational hierarchy, respondent organisational tenure, respondent age, respondent and supervisor gender, and respondent contact frequency with the public. Covariance between variance of the mediators: Individual identity with relational identity =  $.09^{***}$ , individual identity with collective identity  $.31^{***}$ , relational identity with collective identity =  $.40^{***}$ . Correlations between the disturbances of commitment to the public and moral disengagement =  $-.17^{***}$ .  $***$ Correlation is significant at the .001 level.

## 6.5 Discussion

The initial focus of this study was to examine the influence of supervisory servant leadership on two new, previously untested follower outcomes. Figure 6.2 summarises the values of the path coefficients for the indirect effects model. Study findings supported the hypothesised positive relationship between servant leadership and follower commitment to the public, and the negative relationship between servant leadership and follower moral disengagement.

To account for these outcomes, a self-identity model of this leadership influence was hypothesised. Supported by study findings, a series of self-identity level processes are found to mediate the significant positive relationship between servant leadership and follower commitment to the public, and the significant negative relationship with follower moral disengagement. Servant leadership was found to be positively related to follower commitment to the public partly through the activation of relational identity level and, more strongly, through the activation of a collective identity level. Furthermore, servant leadership was found to be negatively related to follower moral disengagement through the mediating mechanisms of follower individual and collective identity levels.

### 6.5.1 Theoretical Implications

This study has several theoretical implications. Two novel, salient follower outcomes are theorised and tested, with servant leadership found to be positively related to follower commitment to the public and negatively related to follower moral disengagement. Firstly, the finding that follower commitment to the public is a positive outcome of supervisory servant leadership supports the assertion that a servant leader encourages commitment not only to organisational referents (*e.g.*, Bobbio et al., 2012; van Dierendonck et al., 2014), but also that it positively influences commitment to referents outside of a follower's immediate working environment. This finding responds to more general calls in the literature as to the influence of servant leadership on outcomes of interest to the organisation (van Dierendonck, 2011), as well

as more specifically responding to calls for an understanding of the complexity of follower outcomes influenced by supervisory servant leadership (*e.g.*, Hunter et al., 2013; Wu et al., 2013).

Secondly, this study finds a negative relationship between servant leadership and follower moral disengagement. This finding represents a salient contribution to the literature by providing a preliminary assessment of how this leadership approach may be negatively related to unethical behaviour in the workplace. In spite of their inclusion in much conceptual work on servant leadership (*e.g.*, Greenleaf, 1977; Graham, 1991), these outcomes have received little attention from empirical leadership researchers.

The third contribution of this study is to highlight an additional mediating mechanism through which servant leadership influences follower attitudes in the workplace. The impact of supervisory servant leadership on both follower commitment to the public and follower moral disengagement through follower identity levels highlights an underlying psychological process of servant leadership that had previously been unexplored. This responds to calls within the extant literature to uncover additional mediators of the relationship between servant leadership and follower desirable outcomes (*e.g.*, Feldman, 2014; Liden et al., 2015; Peterson et al., 2012). Conceptually, this study also presents a consideration of servant leadership from Greenleaf's initial conceptual piece on the leader as servant (Greenleaf, 1977), providing the elaboration of a mediator underlying the ways in which servant leaders encourage followers to act as servants to others themselves. Findings suggest that servant leaders may have an impact upon their follower's identity, which may activate contextually relevant self-concepts in the workplace. With these self-concepts being activated, the individual followers served by the leader themselves turn towards serving others in the community.



### **6.5.2 Practical Implications**

The findings of this study have several practical implications for organisational members and public policy makers alike. In the first instance, findings suggest that a follower's perception of their supervisor as supportive may be positively related to how they respond towards events at work. If this is the case, it may increase their commitment to the public and decrease their tendency to morally disengage. From these findings, and in consideration of recommendations made by the College of Policing Leadership Review (2015), supervisors within the occupational context of policing are advised to adopt a supportive, prosocial servant leadership approach to supervisory interactions. In increasing the servant leadership approach, positive follower outcomes should result, both in the generation of positive psychological bonds with significant stakeholders and in the reduction of attitudes which underlie unethical behaviours in the workplace. At the organisational level, training and development professionals are advised to integrate an examination of prosocial leadership styles into training for those in a supervisory position. This may prove useful for existing leaders, newly promoted supervisors and those who are new to the organisation.

Secondly, this study examined a mechanism through which supervisory leadership activates relevant individual or social identities in followers. The significant relationship between supervisory servant leadership and follower commitment to the public through the mechanism of follower relational and collective identity levels suggests that servant leaders may influence outcomes, at least in part, through the activation of relevant social identities in their followers. With the presence of a servant leader who provides a supportive and meaningful other-oriented working environment, a follower's prosocial identities are activated, leading them to serve others. Practically speaking, organisations may seek to encourage the use of more supportive, collective leadership styles to encourage desirable follower outcomes. Organisations might also consider assessment for promotion that best aligns with the servant leadership style in

interpersonal interactions to support the integration of this approach across the organisational hierarchy.

This study finds positive outcomes when follower collective self-concept is activated in the workplace. Due to the positive role than an activated collective self-concept plays in follower outcomes, organisations should seek to encourage such a form of identification in the workplace. Theoretical work argues that, alongside the influence of leadership on identity levels, organisational culture and collective norms can contribute to the formation of an activation of collective identities in followers (Lord & Brown, 2003). The activation of a social identity, seen in the collective self-concept (Lord & Brown, 2001, 2003), is argued to be dependent upon individuals defining themselves in relation to both group prototypes and group membership (Lord & Brown, 2003; Lord et al., 1999, 2016). It is also argued that different social and physical cues will activate a salient working self-concept (Lord & Brown, 2003). From this, organisations should therefore seek to instate the cultural norms and working contexts which support individuals in the development and maintenance of group membership and collective identity in the workplace. Internal staff engagement communications emphasising collective identification may prove beneficial, alongside designing work around team structures and policies that support and facilitate collective decision-making in everyday working environments.

### **6.5.3 Limitations and Future Research Directions**

This study has several limitations. Firstly it should be noted that, although the theoretical mechanism proposed by Lord and colleagues is argued (Lord & Brown, 2001, 2003), the current study did not include a measurement of values for inclusion in model testing. Supported by additional calls in the servant leadership literature to better understand the environmental or organisational characteristics that support servant leadership behaviours (*e.g.*, Chen et al., 2015; Grisaffe et al., 2016; Tang et al., 2016), future research would be beneficial in considering this model with the addition of values, or indeed person-organisation values alignment. Alongside

meeting the theoretical calls for the consideration of values, this may also be a missing variable that introduces bias into hypothesis testing. In response to concerns arising in the methodological literature in relation to the impact of endogeneity (Antonakis, 2017), the lack of testing values within this model may indeed introduce omitted variable bias into estimates. Future research might consider replicating this study and include measure of appropriate, salient values. This would be a valuable addition to the expansion of the servant leadership field.

A second limitation of this study is that, although other mediators have been explored in the extant servant leadership literature (*e.g.*, Chiniara & Bentein, 2016; Feldman, 2014), these alternative processes were not tested in competing models against the hypothesised study model. From this, future research examining the mediating mechanism of follower self-concept in comparison with other mediating constructs would be useful to assess whether the mediating mechanism proposed in this study had an incremental effect beyond pre-existing mediators.

The sample used for hypothesis testing also presents limitations for the current study. Firstly, the response rate for matched questionnaires across both surveys is low when compared to the total organisational population. Although responses to the Time 1 survey, which addressed supervisory servant leadership, follower identity levels and control variables, represented a 32.6% response rate ( $n = 2860$ ), and responses to Time 2, measuring the outcomes of commitment to the public and moral disengagement, represented a 14.2% response rate ( $n = 1248$ ), matching Time 1 and Time 2 responses using a voluntary anonymous identification code resulted in a significant drop in response rate, 6.5% (Time 1 and Time 2 matched responses  $n = 566$ ; workforce total  $n = 8768$ ). From this, the overall response rate was lower than desired and, although the sample appeared representative of a typical policing organisation in the United Kingdom, this low rate limits the generalisability of study findings.

An additional limitation of the sample is that all responses were collected from a single police force in the United Kingdom, further limiting the generalisability of this study. Although this organisation represented a novel occupational context to examine the influence of servant

leadership on salient occupational outcomes, this context should be taken into account in interpreting study findings. Police officers and staff may be more susceptible to the different leadership styles, a perspective supported by practitioner documents that emphasise the prevalence of directive and controlling leadership within policing (College of Policing, 2015). This occupational norm may influence follower perceptions of their supervisor's behaviours, wherein leadership prototypes held by respondents may differ from the behaviours associated with servant leadership. Moreover, the outcomes considered within the current study may also be responsive in part to the context in which the respondents work. In a public service organisation, individuals might be expected to value commitment to the public more highly than an employee in a private sector organisation might value commitment to a salient target, for example commitment to customer service. With the policing context in mind, alongside the existence of an official code of practice for all police officers and police staff in the United Kingdom (College of Policing, 2014), respondents might respond more extremely when asked to self-report a negative behaviour such as moral disengagement than those in an environment that lacks a formal code of ethical conduct. Future research would benefit from replicating this study in a larger, more organisationally representative sample, and by undertaking the same study in a different occupational context to support the generalisability of findings.

The cultural generalisability of findings should also be considered as an area for future research. Prior research projects into comparisons of police forces across national borders (COMPOSITE, 2014) provide interesting comments as to the primary focus and operational style of different law enforcement agencies. Policing within the United Kingdom is highlighted as being community-oriented, relying upon regional public opinion for their legitimacy, but being held accountable to the national government. For example, policing within the United Kingdom consider senior police leaders to also fulfil the societal duty of being civic leaders (COMPOSITE, 2014) who, through the development and maintenance of positive and meaningful relationships with communities and their representatives, can maintain peace and order to facilitate policing

by consent (COMPOSITE, 2014). It is therefore reasonable to assume that this societal role of police officers may not be relevant in national cultures wherein the institution is held synonymous with social control, enforcement, and a militaristic operational style. Future research may therefore benefit from undertaking an assessment of the role of policing leaders in different national contexts, as well as understanding the similarities and differences between the servant leadership philosophy (Greenleaf, 1977) and national prototypes or stereotypes of police leaders.

An additional limitation of this study is the lack of appropriate data to support causal claims in relation to study findings hypotheses. Study findings suggest that there is a positive relationship between servant leadership, follower relational and collective identity levels, and commitment to the public, and a negative relationship between servant leadership, individual identity level and moral disengagement. In spite of the calculated effects, causal direction cannot be assumed. Several alternative perspectives as to these relationships are also plausible, for example that servant leaders might encourage followers to develop increased psychological bonds and commitment to the public that, in turn, activate a collective self-concept. It is also possible that through the experience of followers demonstrating high levels of commitment to the public and other attitudes and behaviours associated with an activated collective identity level, leaders may internalise and echo the same behaviours towards their followers. Further to the aforementioned potential for reverse causality, the relationships explored within this study may also be subject to the influence of simultaneity, wherein there are feedback loops between variables that confound any claims that could be made as to a singular direction of cause and effect. Consistent with recommendations from Antonakis and colleagues (2010) as to statistical methods that allow a researcher to infer causality, instrumental-variable estimation could be used to retest these hypotheses. Future research could therefore explore the tested relationships alongside an instrumental variable to clarify the accurate causal path through which this influence occurs.

#### 6.5.4 Conclusion

In conclusion, the effectiveness and outcomes of leadership styles in the workplace is of interest in scholarly and practitioner alike. As public sector organisations are under strain to “*do more with less*” (May, 2014), positive follower attitudes and ethical orientation are priorities in practitioner communities, alongside an increased depth in understanding how leadership can be used to influence such outcomes. This study illustrates the importance of servant leadership in the workplace and elaborates a mechanism through which leaders can positively influence follower attitudinal outcomes, an activated identity level. This is seen both in increasing positive social attachments such as commitment, and in reducing attitudes that are thought to lead to unethical outcomes, such as moral disengagement. Taken together, the present study offers some interesting insights into the role of a servant leader in altering follower identity-levels, therein encouraging positive follower outcomes in the workplace.

## Chapter 7. Conclusions and Implications

### 7.1 Summary of Study Findings

The purpose of this research was to gain a better understanding of servant leadership, both in how and when this positive leadership approach influences follower workplace outcomes.

#### 7.1.1 Study 1: *If I Serve You, Will You Serve the Public?* A Moderated Mediation Model of Servant Leadership, Organisational Vision Clarity, Public Service Motivation and Proactive Behaviour

**Study 1** is based upon insights developed into the role that leaders play in influencing the values and social identities of their followers (Lord & Brown, 2001, 2003). This study makes *three* theoretical contributions through the examination of a motivational perspective of influence.

The *first* contribution of this study is that servant leadership was found to be positively related to the previously untested novel follower behavioural outcome of taking charge. By investigating follower taking charge behaviour as indicative of follower discretionary effort, this study considers a non-traditional form of discretionary effort which has yet to be explored in the servant leadership literature (Feldman, 2014; Mayer, 2010). To the best of the author's knowledge the present study is the first to explore an incremental, constructive form of discretionary effort.

*Secondly*, public service motivation was theorised and confirmed as a mediator of this relationship. This study extends existing servant leadership research, which has largely focused on concepts such as trust (Chan & Mak, 2014), individual self-efficacy beliefs (Chen et al., 2015), and psychological need satisfaction (Chiniara & Bentein, 2016), by examining the motivational process through which this leadership approach influences follower outcomes. To the author's knowledge, this study is the first to investigate the influence of servant leadership on follower discretionary effort from a motivational perspective.

Researchers have argued that organisational communications and messages play a vital role in employees' working experience (e.g. Dvir et al., 2004; Pandey & Wright, 2006; Sun et al., 2014). This study makes a *third* theoretical contribution by testing a boundary condition of supervisory servant leadership on follower attitudes. The findings confirmed that the relationship between supervisory servant leadership and follower public service motivation is moderated by follower perceptions and understanding of the organisation's vision. Servant leadership was only found to be significantly related to public service motivation when vision clarity was high. When vision clarity was low, the relationship was no longer statistically significant. This study therefore underscores the importance of organisational vision in clarifying follower's roles in the workplace and supporting supervisors in positively influencing how followers behave. The author hopes this will encourage further exploration of boundary conditions of supervisory servant leadership effectiveness.

#### 7.1.2 Study 2: *Serving Others Through Removing Impediments: An Internal Resource Perspective on Servant Leadership, Hindrance Stressors, Ego Depletion and Ethical Voice Behaviour*

**Study 2** returns to Greenleaf's initial treatise on the leader as servant, to examine the role of a servant leader in supporting the well-being of their followers. The *first* contribution of this second study is that it extends existing servant leadership research by examining and comparing a second alternative theoretical perspective underlying the influence of supervisory servant leadership. This represents a contribution to the literature as a departure from research which has frequently referred to the existing underlying psychological processes such as social learning theory (e.g. Grisaffe et al., 2016; Tang et al., 2016; Tuan, 2016) which facilitates follower outcomes such as trust (Chan & Mak, 2014) and engagement (van Dierendonck et al., 2014). Based on a conservation of resource perspective (Hobfoll, 1989), to the author's knowledge this study is the first to investigate the social support resources provided by supervisory servant leadership as a means of both protecting and encouraging instances of follower discretionary



effort. Using a resource perspective the study theorises and then tests whether through safeguarding followers internal resources servant leaders influence follower discretionary effort in the workplace. The findings demonstrate that servant leadership is positively related to the novel follower behavioural outcome of ethical voice behaviour, and that hindrance stressors and ego depletion sequentially mediate this relationship. These findings are strengthened by testing the resource perspective against the pre-established mechanism of follower engagement (e.g. Xanthopoulou et al., 2009), wherein the engagement path was found to be non-significant.

Finally, by investigating follower voice behaviour directed towards ethical concerns as a form of follower discretionary effort, this study makes a *second* contribution to the servant leadership literature by elaborating a previously unexplored behaviour. This responds to several calls in the literature as to exploring additional outcomes of servant leadership (e.g. Jaramillo et al., 2015; Hunter et al., 2013; Wu et al., 2013), therefore departing from several studies to date which consider organisational citizenship behaviour as the dominant outcome of servant leadership in the workplace.

### 7.1.3 Study 3: *A Test of Greenleaf: Does Serving Others Allow Them to Serve Society?* An Identity Perspective on Servant Leadership

**Study 3** provides an identity-level perspective (Lord & Brown, 2001, 2003; Lord et al., 1999) as to how servant leaders encourage positive follower outcomes and discourage negative follower outcomes. This third study makes *three* theoretical contributions in that it examines an identity-level perspective as to how servant leaders encourage positive, other-oriented attitudes, testing a target-specific form of follower commitment, and discourage unethical attitudes, testing a follower's propensity to morally disengage.

*Firstly*, servant leadership was found to be positively related to the salient follower attitudinal outcome of commitment to the public. By considering the public as a referent of commitment this study contributes to the servant leadership literature by evidencing how this leadership

approach influences outcomes which are to the benefit of the organisation and those for which it works.

*Secondly*, servant leadership was found to be negatively related to the undesirable follower attitudinal outcome of moral disengagement. By testing a negative follower attitudinal outcome this study represents a contribution to the literature by providing a preliminary assessment of how this leadership approach can reduce unethical behaviour in the workplace.

*Thirdly*, follower self-identity level was found to mediate the relationship between supervisory servant leadership, follower commitment to the public and follower moral disengagement. This study expands existing servant leadership research, which largely relied on social exchange and social learning mechanisms (*e.g.* Tang et al., 2016; Tuan, 2016; Wu et al., 2013), by investigating an identity-level mechanism of servant leadership influence. Returning to Greenleaf's seminal work on the leader as servant (1977), this thesis considers how servant leaders can develop followers into servants themselves through different attitudinal outcomes. Many scholars have commented on the need for a more holistic understanding of the mechanisms through which servant leadership influences followers (*e.g.*, Chiniara & Bentein, 2016; Feldman, 2014; Hunter et al., 2013; Mayer, 2010; van Dierendonck et al., 2014). Study 3 responds to these calls, and, to the author's knowledge, is the first to investigate servant leadership influence on attitudinal outcomes using a mechanism relating to the priming and activation of follower identity levels.

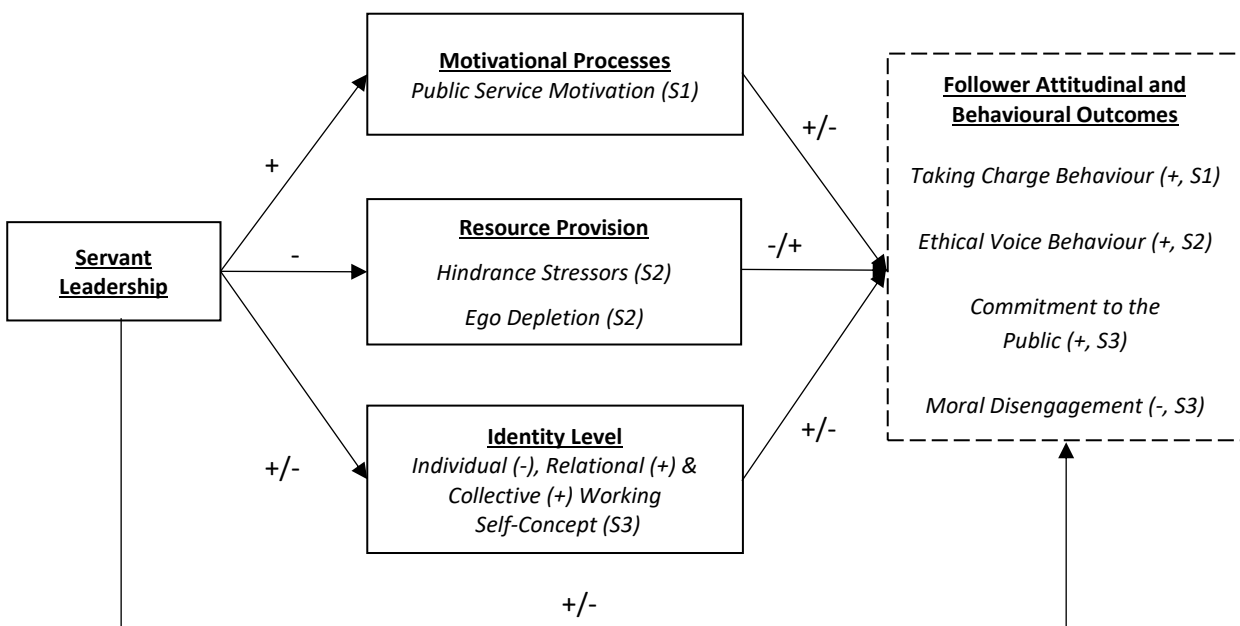
#### 7.1.4 Overall Theoretical Model

In combining the contents of Chapter 2: Literature Review with empirical findings from each study, the following overall theoretical model was developed. Placing servant leadership as the independent variable, three mediational processes are proposed. Servant leadership is proposed to be positively related follower attitudinal and behavioural outcomes through

motivational processes (Chapter 4: Study 1), the provision of resources to their followers (Chapter 5: Study 2), and through identity levels and working self-concepts (Chapter 6: Study 3).

As a leadership style, servant leadership is understood to have an inherent plurality (Parris & Peachey, 2013), with many functional qualities, characteristics and distinctive features (Joseph & Winston, 2005). Moreover, many themes arise in the extant literature as to the theoretical bases of servant leadership influence (e.g., Huang et al., 2016; Panaccio et al., 2015). Much extant research also integrates multiple theoretical perspectives in singular studies (e.g., Chiniara & Bentein, 2016; Hogue, 2016), to account for evidenced relationships. Similarly, this thesis proposes a pluralist servant leadership input into an individual’s working environment, operationalised through motivation, resource provision, and identity level. Although it was not possible to test study hypotheses in an integrated statistical models, further discussed in **Section 7.4**, the findings of this thesis as a whole provide a positive perspective as to the impact of servant leadership in the workplace. The overall positive trend seen throughout each empirical study therein suggests that servant leadership has a positive contribution to make to the contemporary workplace.

**Figure 7-1: Overall Theoretical Model**



## 7.2 Summary of Theoretical Contributions

*Firstly*, significant contribution of this thesis is to provide a series of different, but complementary assessments of some of the mechanisms through which servant leadership influences follower behaviours. Each of these mechanisms considers the influence of servant leadership from a different theoretical perspective. Study 1 presents a motivational perspective on this influence, followed by a resource mechanism proposed in Study 2, and an identity perspective in Study 3. In presenting these three alternative perspectives, this research meets calls in the literature as to the development of a deeper, more comprehensive understanding as to how this leadership behaviour influences follower outcomes at work (*e.g.*, Chiniara & Bentein, 2016; Feldman, 2014; Mayer, 2010; Mayer & Gavin, 2005; Panaccio et al., 2015; Peterson, Galvin, & Lange, 2012; van Dierendonck et al., 2014). Moreover, each study returns to Greenleaf's original conceptualisation of the servant leader (1977), with followers responding to contemporary servant leaders to mark a turning point in how they behave at work. This includes, but is not limited to their personal growth in behaviour (discussed in Studies 1 and 2), how they deal with injustice and ethical concerns (discussed in Studies 2 and 3), as well as how they serve others and how they might benefit the wider society in which their organisation functions (discussed in Studies 1 and 3).

*Secondly*, a key contribution of this research is the evidence it provides as to the range of diverse and novel attitudinal and behavioural follower outcomes of a servant leader's influence at work. To date, empirical research has addressed several follower behavioural outcomes of servant leadership such as organisational citizenship behaviours and performance outcomes (*e.g.* Brubaker et al., 2015; Chiniara & Bentein, 2016; Ehrhart, 2004; Liden, Wayne, Liao, & Meuser, 2014; Neubert et al., 2008). Although initial attention has been paid to follower discretionary effort, the influence of servant leadership on non-traditional forms of discretionary effort has yet to be established (Hunter et al., 2013; Wu et al., 2013). Study 1 tests follower taking charge behaviour, and Study 2 tests follower ethical voice behaviour as salient

follower behavioural outcomes of servant leadership influence. Furthermore, Study 3 tests the follower attitudinal outcomes of commitment to the public and follower moral disengagement. From this, this thesis contributes to the extant servant leadership literature by further diversifying the understanding of the attitudinal and behavioural outcomes of this leadership approach.

*Thirdly*, a final contribution of this thesis is the occupational context in which the data were collected. Many studies within the servant leadership literature have called for the testing of this concept and its relationship with salient attitudinal and behavioural outcomes in applied settings. Within this thesis, data for each empirical chapter was collected from a different police force within the United Kingdom, proposed as a novel and distinct occupational context for the study of servant leadership influence. This occupational context meets a multitude of calls for the examination of the effectiveness of servant leadership in different organisational contexts (*e.g.* Hu & Liden, 2011; Liden et al., 2015; Mittal & Dorfman, 2012; Sun & Wang, 2009). This context also informs the choice of organisationally relevant outcome variables in each hypothesised models, meeting further relevant calls from the extant literature (*e.g.* Parris & Peachey, 2013; Wu et al., 2013). Policing was posited as both a novel and appropriate occupational context for the study of servant leadership. In testing servant leadership in relation to variables such as public service motivation (as discussed in Study 1), ethical voice behaviour (as discussed in Study 2), and commitment to the public (as discussed in Study 3), this thesis also provides significant practical implications alongside theoretical implications,

### **7.3 Summary of Practical Implications and Occupational Context**

This thesis also has several implications for practitioners and leaders in contemporary organisations, in both private and public sectors, and more specifically within the occupational context of UK policing organisations.

*Firstly*, servant leadership literature has indicated that the positive, relationally-oriented leadership style has a positive influence on follower behaviour and contextual performance across a variety of occupational and cultural settings. This thesis further expands this literature by emphasising the influence of servant leadership on three positive follower outcomes, namely taking charge (as discussed in Study 1), ethical voice (as discussed in Study 2), and commitment to the public (as discussed in Study 3). When combined, the positive follower outcomes tested within this thesis emphasise both the relevance and importance of the experience of supervisory servant leadership in the workplace. When considered together, findings in the extant servant leadership and the attitudes and behaviours tested in this thesis indicate that, whenever possible, supervisory servant leadership behaviours should be adopted to support positive workplace outcomes. Although not directly tested within this thesis, the extant servant leadership literature also supports this perspective of the influence of servant leaders on contextual performance metrics in the workplace. When these performance-related findings are held together with the findings of the empirical chapters of this thesis, results indicate that the development, recruitment and promotion of servant leaders within an organisation should support followers in increasingly engaging in desired behaviours at work. To support the findings of this current research suggesting that servant leadership is positively related to several beneficial follower attitudes and behaviours. Practitioners may therefore benefit from considering the development of leadership-related training interventions to maximise supervisory servant leadership in the workplace. Findings from a recent meta-analytic review of many studies into leadership training suggest that it is far more effective than previously thought (Lacarenza, Reyes, Marlow, Joseph & Salas, 2017). When supported by evidence-based practice, multiple studies included within this review find positive relationships between leadership training, satisfaction and, amongst other outcomes, positive subordinate outcomes (Lacarenza et al., 2017). Practitioners may therefore consider the development and design of a comprehensive, multi-phase leadership programme that encompasses theoretically-founded components, practically relevant hard and soft skills, and responds to the desired outcomes

within the organisation. More specifically, within policing, the design of an evidence-based servant leadership training programme may be an effective entry-point to integrating the servant leadership concept into policing organisations. The development of a programme that meets the needs of supervisors and leaders at all levels of the organisational hierarchy, from first-line supervisors to Chief Officer teams, and communicates both the values related to servant leadership and the attention it places on creating value for the community may result in multiple positive outcomes for organisational members and broader organisational stakeholders. This may include, but is not limited to newly recruited police officers and staff members, front-line supervisors, middle and senior management, members of workforce representation groups and newly promoted supervisors throughout the organisation. As values, relational and collective identities are seen to have positive relationships with desirable behaviours within these studies, the aforementioned leadership programme may respond to calls within the broader leadership literature for a broadening interest in leadership development (Dinh et al., 2014), potentially connecting it to measurable outcomes for individuals or groups outside of the organisation. Further, as policing pays increasing attention to the role of leadership in supporting the creation of more diverse, representative, and inclusive workplaces (NPCC, 2018), a leadership programme which discusses servant leadership, behaving ethically, consideration for organisational stakeholders and the importance of empowering others may be extremely productive for officers, staff, and members of the public alike.

*Secondly*, organisations may consider the integration of the servant leadership philosophy and associated behaviours throughout human resource and organisational development functions. In keeping with the high performance work systems (HPWS; Den Hartog & Verburg, 2004), aligning recruitment and selection, teamwork activities, opportunities for training and development, and employee relative autonomy with the servant leadership philosophy may have positive individual and organisational outcomes. HPWS has been found to be positively related to firm performance and organisational culture (e.g., Den Hartog & Verburg, 2004;

Combs, Liu, Hall & Ketchen, 2006; Seong, 2011), and is thought to be most efficient when aligned with organisational culture (Chow & Liu, 2009). Therefore, integrating the servant leadership philosophy within organisational systems and practices may communicate the value which the organisation places on servant leadership as a priority.

*Thirdly*, similarly to the integration of servant leadership with organisational systems and practices, internal communications and employee engagement may also provide benefits for organisations and individuals alike. Each empirical study evidences positive relationships between servant leadership and forms of follower discretionary effort, especially with Study 1 indicating a positive relationship between servant leadership and follower public service motivation. Servant leadership is found to be related to follower discretionary effort through the motivational influence of an occupationally-relevant referent. Supervisors could therefore benefit from the development of supportive leadership behaviours, which may also foster forms of follower discretionary effort through the motivational influence of a salient occupational identity. Moreover, from a broader organisational perspective, organisations could benefit from increasing the valence and clarity of organisationally-desired vision for their employees. Study 1 findings indicate that the influence of supervisory servant leadership behaviours on follower motivation is only present when followers have a clear sense of the organisation's vision. From this, organisations may benefit from the development of a clear, compelling core vision, extending to communicate and embed this core vision into everyday organisational functioning. This should therefore support follower motivation and, by extension, proactive discretionary effort in the workplace. More specifically to the public sector, then, those involved in internal communications should consider the public service motivation and value of servanthood held by organisational members in the development of workplace interventions to foster follower discretionary effort in the workplace.

*Fourthly*, the collective findings from this thesis and the academic literature alike support the use of a servant approach to leadership in the generation of positive follower in-role



performance, follower discretionary effort, group-level outcomes and positive working climates. As the traditional leadership approach in UK policing is widely posited as a more directive, controlling leadership style (College of Policing, 2015) than a servant leadership approach, this thesis proposes that police officers and police staff members would benefit from the experience of greater supervisory servant leadership in the workplace. Policing organisations should also consider the implementation of HR and organisational development activities and interventions to develop new servant leaders and the support of existing servant leaders within their organisations, alongside investigating ways in which organisations might support the reduction of unnecessary authoritarianism in the workplace.

#### **7.4 Strengths, Limitations and Future Research Directions**

A significant strength of this study is that it was field-based, investigating police officers and police staff across different police forces in the United Kingdom. Data was collected independently across four police forces, with each study being based on an independently-collected dataset. Data were therefore collected within a specific working context within which they would experience leadership and other workplace factors such as organisational vision clarity (Study 1) or hindrance stressors (Study 2). Moreover, the selection of study dependent variables was closely informed by the occupational context, seen in constructs such as public service motivation (Study 1) and commitment to the public (Study 3). From this, these studies consider the role that supervisory servant leadership plays within an active, responsive workplace. In spite of the strengths that this specific occupational context adds to this thesis, research findings do have certain limitations. As the three samples were collected from four policing organisations in the United Kingdom, there is a concern that study results may not generalise to a different occupational context, industry or sector. For example, the theoretical model in Study 1, which demonstrates a positive relationship between supervisory servant leadership and follower taking charge behaviours through the mediating mechanism of follower public service motivation is susceptible to influence from the public sector context. It may be

the case that public service motivation is of greater importance to respondents within policing than respondents in other occupational contexts. From this directed motivation, respondents are likely to be more susceptible to both a servant leader and to values communication relating to the public than to those who do not work within the public sector. Similarly, in Study 2, with ethical voice behaviour, and in Study 3 with commitment to the public, occupational context raises concerns about the extent to which the results would generalise to other working groups, both within the United Kingdom and abroad. Future research would benefit from replicating the present investigation in different employee groups, both within public and private sectors, to ensure the generalisability to other occupational contexts.

As highlighted by prior research into comparative studies in policing across European (COMPOSITE, 2014), multiple clusters of policing organisations which have similar foci and operational styles can be seen. For example, this research highlights the United Kingdom, the Czech Republic and the Netherlands as considering the locally accountable community engagement and partnership working as a focal activity for policing (COMPOSITE, 2014). Another cluster highlighted in this piece situates Italy and Romania as conceptually distinct in their focal activities, instead highlighting law enforcement as a primary objective of the organisation, with community engagement receiving much less centrality (COMPOSITE, 2014). As emphasised in COMPOSITE research, there are conceptual differences in policing, both in understanding the core activities of police forces and in visualising the role of the police officer in public life. It may therefore be the case that the servant leader, whose focal interests are in empowering others and building value for the community in which they serve, would find their modes of social influence significantly less efficacious in those countries where police officers are enforcers of the law first, before any community engagement or partnership working. Future research may therefore consider evaluating the effectiveness of servant leadership in national contexts that place a greater or lesser value on servanthood than is the case within the context of the United Kingdom. It may therefore be the case that national characteristics, national leader prototypes,

or other socio-cultural differences present additional boundary conditions as to the effectiveness of servant leadership in the workplace.

A strength of this study is the contribution of a new, previously unexplored boundary condition which indicates how messages and signals from the organisation can impact the effectiveness of servant leadership influence. Organisational vision clarity was considered as a functional component of one's working environment, and was found to moderate the effectiveness of servant leadership in motivating follower discretionary effort. However, it is plausible that other potential moderators also influence this same effectiveness. From this, future research is suggested to explore more potential moderators of servant leadership influence processes and its effects on follower outcomes.

Moreover, this thesis uses a multi-wave data collection approach, therein collecting the independent variable, mediators, moderator and statistical control variables at a different time point to the measurement of the dependent variables. This represents a strength of the data collected in this thesis, avoiding the use of purely cross-sectional data and following recommendations from the literature (Podsakoff et al., 2003; 2012) to mitigate common method bias concerns in study findings by instating a time lag in measurement. Although this is a strength, it also presents several limitations, as well as providing some future research directions. Although the findings are based upon a two-wave survey design with a four week time-lag between each wave, hypotheses were not tested with truly longitudinal data. Concerns relating to common method bias and social desirability are therefore limitations of study findings. Due to this lack of longitudinal data, causal conclusions cannot be drawn, only inferred; raising concerns as to the influence of endogeneity in hypothesis testing. As concerns around the effect of endogeneity in social science research gain increasing attention (Aguinis et al., 2016; Antonakis et al., 2010; Antonakis, 2017), its potential influence should be considered at the study design stage within servant leadership research. Following suggestions from Aguinis and colleagues (2017), longitudinal study design, which may include panel models, would allow

for an assessment of alternative causal pathways than those hypothesised by researchers, therein providing more robust findings in relation to causal conclusions. Moreover, future research utilising multi-rater response data would also benefit from the expansion of the servant leadership field. Evidencing follower behavioural outcomes with supervisory ratings, co-worker ratings, or more objective performance measures collated by the organisation or external bodies, would greatly benefit the field.

Secondly, there is an additional methodological limitation relating to the data collection procedures in empirical studies. As data were collected as part of a larger collaborative research project, the study variables for empirical chapters were integrated within larger, organisation-wide staff engagement surveys. These surveys included approximately 140 items in the Time 1 surveys and approximately 40 in Time 2 surveys. From this, future research would benefit the servant leadership field in replicating these findings using alternative forms of data collection, potentially with shorter, more targeted surveys to avoid response fatigue, or being manipulated using an experimental design methodology. As previously discussed, study findings are also susceptible to common method bias originating from the measurement of servant leadership at the same time point as all mediators tested throughout this thesis. From this, future research may consider the collection of data at multiple time-points, therein facilitating a cross-lagged model which considers three or more time points for measurement (*e.g.*, Meier & Spector, 2013; Selig & Preacher, 2009). This approach to repeated measurement over an extended period of time also presents in interesting areas for future research within the servant leadership field. As the priming of follower self-identity has been found to be a mechanism through which servant leaders influence follower attitudinal outcomes, further consideration over how this identity work takes place as a relationship between leader and follower develops over time (*e.g.* Sluss & Ashforth, 2007) may be warranted. Similarly, multiple points of measurement would also facilitate testing how servant leadership is related to follower well-being and performance over time (van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2011), presenting a promising avenue for future research.

An additional limitation of this thesis are the relatively small effects in study hypothesis testing. These small effects may be due, at least in part, to the measurement of the independent variable in each study, the SL-7 scale (Liden et al., 2015). This scale was chosen for measurement due to its' high reported internal consistency (Liden et al., 2015), and its recommendation for use as a shortened measure of servant leadership within organisations (Liden et al., 2015). Due to the nature of the collection of desired measures for this study within a larger survey, respondent fatigue was a significant concern. A trade-off was therefore made between use of the complete, 28-item scale and the shorter seven-item measure, keeping the number of survey items as low as possible. The constraint of using a short measure of the focal variable of this study within this occupational context may have reduced the detail with which the relationship between servant leadership and follower attitudes and behaviours. When only measuring supervisory servant leadership with seven items rather than the 28 items within the original measure (Liden et al., 2008), it may be the case that positive and negative effects between servant leadership and study dependent variables have been collapsed within the reported effects. Further research may unearth differential findings across individual dimensions of the servant leadership constructs within the extant literature. Future research may therefore benefit from increased use of the full 28-item measure to detail potential nuances in relationships between servant leadership and a variety of variables such as organisational citizenship behaviours, discretionary effort, and workplace climates.

Moreover, the sample sizes in each empirical study may influence the reliability of study findings. Adequate sample size in applied research is of great interest (Schweizer & Furley, 2016). Within this literature, it is well-established that large or very large sample sizes are more likely to reject a null hypothesis, magnifying the bias associated with sampling (e.g., Maxwell, Kelley & Rausch, 2008; Kaplan, Chambers & Glasgow, 2014). It may therefore be the case that, as within large datasets, it is easy to obtain statistical significance for small effect sizes (Kaplan et al., 2014), the findings of the enclosed empirical studies may be reporting bias rather than

true effect. Future research replicating findings in samples with different profiles may represent an additional depth to understanding of the proposed studies.

An additional strength of this thesis was its consideration of a series of different, previously unexplored psychological mechanisms through which servant leadership influence is realised. In returning to the original conceptualisation of servant leadership (Greenleaf, 1977), this thesis suggests three alternative, salient mediating mechanisms which are considered to represent a more holistic consideration of the core construct of the leader as servant. In testing the proposed internal resources mechanism against an engagement mechanism, a strength of this study is also seen in its empirical comparison of two different processes. However, a limitation of both Study 1 and 3 was the inability to compare the proposed psychological mechanisms against previously established mediators, or indeed to compare all three proposed mediating mechanisms relative to one another in a single statistical model. In consideration of the separate coverage of different mediators, it may indeed be the case that, when compared in one statistical model, one or more of these mediational pathways would no longer be significant. Future research would therefore be beneficial in testing an integrated model of the relationship between servant leadership, various underlying psychological processes, and follower discretionary effort. In their 2008 paper, Preacher and Hayes commented on several potential advantages from testing a multiple mediation model, where multiple variables are used in testing simultaneous mediation. An example of these advantages is the ability to determine the extent to which one specific proposed variable will mediate the relationship between the independent and dependent variables, when the other proposed mediating variables are present. It also facilitates an assessment of the relative magnitudes of specific indirect effects associated with each mediator in a model (Preacher & Hayes, 2008). In testing a model with multiple mediators, concerns regarding omitted variable biases in parameter estimates may also be addressed (Preacher & Hayes, 2008). The underlying psychological mechanisms present further scope for future research. For example, Study 2 tested a resource mechanism against a

previously established process through which servant leaders influence their followers, follower work engagement. Study findings indicated that the proposed resource mechanism was evident, whereas the engagement relationship was non-significant. It would therefore be interesting to undertake similar comparative assessments of the relative importance of well-evidenced underlying mechanisms of servant leadership influence such as trust (*e.g.*, Chan & Mak, 2014), leader-member exchange (*e.g.*, Wu et al., 2013) and need satisfaction (*e.g.*, Chiniara & Bentein, 2016).

Similarly, testing different forms of follower discretionary effort in each study presents a limitation of thesis findings. An example of this is the way in which follower discretionary effort is operationalised as taking charge behaviours (Morrison & Phelps, 1999) in Study 1, and ethical voice behaviour (Graham & Zheng, 2016; Tucker et al., 2008) in Study 2. Both of these follower behaviours represent forms of individual expression and proactive behaviour which are change-oriented (Tucker et al., 2008; Morrison & Phelps, 1999), and are aimed at improving current organisational practices (Morrison & Phelps, 1999), challenge and attempts to change normatively appropriate standards, and positive behaviours in the workplace (Tucker et al., 2008). It may be the case that conceptual overlap between these dependent variables, each of which were tested in a different empirical study in this thesis, would render one of them redundant. As above, the inclusion of multiple dependent variables in a holistic, integrated model would be an interesting future direction for servant leadership research, which may include previously established relationships with other follower behaviours such as organisational citizenship behaviours and customer-oriented behaviours. Further, as indicated by Hoch and colleagues (2018), servant leadership research presents compelling incremental variance beyond the influence of other positive leadership styles (*e.g.*, authentic leadership, ethical leadership), however it is still a body of literature that lacks a comprehensive understanding of antecedents, outcomes and processes that surround servant leadership effectiveness. Future research into a more holistic understanding of servant leadership in the

workplace may therefore consist of a model encompassing the multiple mediating mechanisms explored in the extant literature, alongside a breadth of follower behaviours such as in-role performance, extra-role performance, and other-oriented behaviours.

Comments within the wider positive leadership research field are discussing with increasing attention the more situation-contingent, flexible nature of leadership in applied contexts (e.g., Shore & Coyle-Shapiro, 2003). Similarly, comments within the servant leadership literature (e.g., Van Dierendonck, 2011; Panaccio et al., 2015) also question whether or not servant leadership is a stable leadership style, or if it varies in relation to external factors, for example follower individual differences, environmental context, or availability of resources (Shore & Coyle-Shapiro, 2003; Panaccio et al., 2015). For instance, as servant leaders are expected to be other-oriented and put followers' interests before their own, it is likely that a leader's affective state would impact on their engagement in servant leadership behaviours. In a recent paper, Barnes and colleagues (Barnes, Lucianetti, Behave & Christian, 2015) considered how a leader's supervisory behaviour fluctuated based on sleep quality and quantity the previous evening. Drawing significantly from theoretical research into ego depletion, this study connects leader sleep quality to the frequency of that leader's abusive supervision behaviours, resulting in deleterious outcomes for their subordinates (Barnes et al., 2015). Similarly, it may be the case that within-person servant leadership behaviour fluctuates daily or several times a day, rather than purely considering differences in servant leadership behaviour from a between-person perspective. Future research would therefore benefit from testing servant leadership behaviours within a diary study to capture daily variance in constructs relating to servant leadership, and could also employ a multi-rater design, perhaps including followers, to establish temporal precedence. Especially in consideration of the current state of policing in the United Kingdom (HMICFRS, 2019), additional occupational strains or environmental conditions, buffeted by different increasingly complex demands in relation to crime and public safety, are present for police officers and staff members. Even the fact that it is not unusual for police



officers and staff to work varying shift patterns including day, evening, and night shifts suggests that a more nuanced understanding of when, in a temporal sense, servant leadership behaviours are or are not enacted by supervisors within policing would be beneficial.

Similarly, from a followership perspective, servant leadership behaviours will be subject to interpretation from the follower which experiences them. From this perception proposed by Panaccio and colleagues (2015), a follower's perception of the leader's motives are also likely to be relevant in servant leadership effectiveness. Moreover, as proposed within social exchange perspectives, followers' individual differences as to the meaning of social exchange relationships (Shore & Coyle-Shapiro, 2003) are likely to impact the translation of servant leadership behaviours into effective leadership influence in the workplace. This may be seen in concepts such as reciprocity awareness (Kamdar, McAllister & Turban, 2006), differences in psychological needs and need fulfilment (Karagonlar, Eisenberger & Aselage, 2016), or followers' expectations of supervisory relationships (Zhao, Liu & Gao, 2016). Future research which establishes a more nuanced understanding of the dynamic nature of servant leadership and servant followers or servant followership, may represent a valuable addition to the servant leadership literature."

## **7.5 Conclusion**

This thesis aimed to deepen understanding into how and when servant leadership influences follower behaviours in the workplace, alongside exploring some novel forms of discretionary effort that servant leaders can inspire in their followers. This thesis has three empirical studies: Study 1 demonstrates that servant leaders encourage proactive follower behaviours through a motivational mechanism, alongside highlighting the boundary condition of organisational vision clarity on this motivational effect; Study 2 argues that servant leaders foster follower ethical behaviour through the provision of internal resources in the workplace; and Study 3 suggests that servant leaders can generate positive and negative follower outcomes through their influence on followers' identity at work. Each of these studies were conducted in police forces operating within the United Kingdom through three independent multi-wave quantitative

surveys that utilise confirmatory factor analyses, structural equation modelling and bootstrapping procedure to test each hypothesised model. Surveys were completed on-line, with 979 matched responses in Study 1, 701 matched responses in Study 2, and 566 matched respondents in Study 3.

In conclusion, this thesis addressed servant leadership behaviours in extending positive leadership theory, providing both theoretical contributions to relevant literatures, practical insights for leaders and supervisors, and suggestions for future research into the influence of servant leadership across different working environments. Altogether, the servant leadership field is still in its initial phases and requires more detailed research to reach its full potential as a positive leadership philosophy. The author hopes that this thesis can both encourage and inform subsequent research into the how, why and when servant leadership is at its most effective and influential.

## Chapter 8. References

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## Chapter 9. Appendix

### Appendix A: Survey procedure

*The following section includes the written information provided for respondents when completing Time 1 and Time 2 surveys. This procedure was used across all three quantitative surveys which provide the data for Studies 1, 2 and 3.*

#### **Instructions provided to Time 1 respondents**

Welcome to the [Organisation Name; Year] Employee Survey Part A. Your feedback is important to help us understand where the force is doing well and where we need to make improvements.

Part A will take approximately 20 minutes and needs to be done in one sitting; please answer all of the questions and then press 'submit' on the very last page which registers your responses. Please read each of the questions carefully as the response options change throughout the survey.

If you are uncomfortable answering any question or do not know how to answer it, please leave that question blank. This is a confidential survey and all responses will be treated anonymously.

Thank you for taking part.

#### **Instructions provided to Time 2 respondents**

Welcome to the [Organisation Name, Year] Employee Survey Part B. Your feedback is important to help us understand where the force is doing well and where we need to make improvements.

Part B will take approximately 5 minutes and needs to be done in one sitting; please answer all of the questions and then press 'submit' on the very last page which registers your responses. Please read each of the questions carefully as the response options change throughout the survey.

If you are uncomfortable answering any question or do not know how to answer it, please leave that question blank. This is a confidential survey and all responses will be treated anonymously.

Thank you for taking part.

## Appendix B: Chapter 4 – Study 1 Measurement

*Scales for independent and dependent variables are included below, including lead-ins and rating scales for each variable. Servant leadership, vision clarity, and public service motivation were measured in the first survey, whereas taking charge was measured approximately a month later in the second survey.*

### **Servant Leadership** (*Liden et al., 2015*)

The statements below are designed to assess your supervisor's leadership style, as you perceive it. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement as a description of his or her leadership style.

*(1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree)*

My supervisor can tell if something work-related is going wrong

My supervisor makes my career development a priority

I would seek help from my supervisor if I had a personal problem

My supervisor emphasises the importance of serving the community

My supervisor puts my best interests ahead of his/her own

My supervisor gives me the freedom to handle difficult situations in the way that I feel is best

My supervisor would NOT compromise ethical principles in order to achieve success

### **Vision Clarity** (*Wright & Pandey, 2011*)

To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about your organisation, [Organisation Name]?

*(1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree)*

[Organisation Name]'s vision is clear to almost everyone who works here

It's easy to explain the vision of this organisation to outsiders

This organisation has clearly defined objectives

### **Public Service Motivation** (*Graham, & Plater, 2016; adapted from Perry, 1996; Kim, 2012; Wright & Pandey, 2011*)

To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about yourself?

*(1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree)*

I am prepared to make enormous sacrifices for the good of society

Making a difference in society means more to me than personal achievements

Meaningful public service is very important to me

I feel sympathetic to the plight of the vulnerable

I am prepared to stand up for the rights of others even if it means that I will be criticised

**Taking Charge** (*Adapted from Morrison & Phelps, 1999*)

Think about how you behave at work. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

*(1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree)*

I often try to adopt improved procedures for doing my job

I often try to change how my job is executed in order to be more effective

I often try to bring about improved procedures for my work unit or department

I often try to institute new work methods that are more effective for my organisation

I often try to change organisational rules or policies that are non-productive or counterproductive

I often make constructive suggestions for improving how things operate within the organisation

I often try to correct a faulty procedure or practice

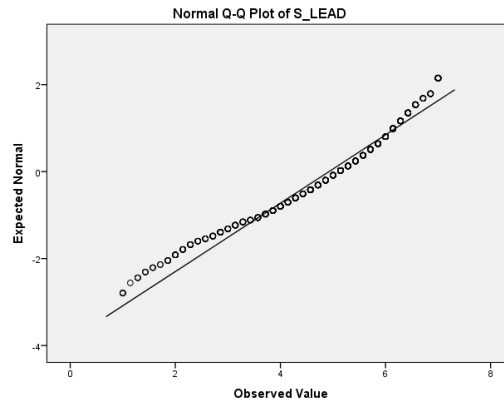
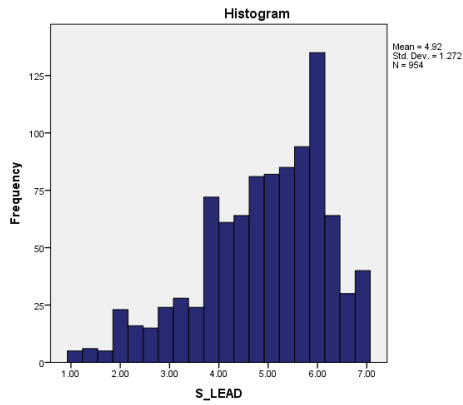
I often try to eliminate redundant or unnecessary procedures

I often try to implement solutions to pressing organisational problems

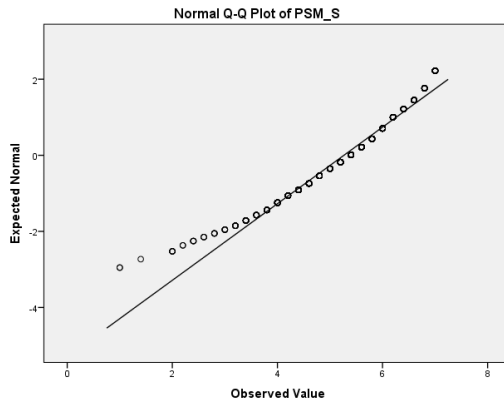
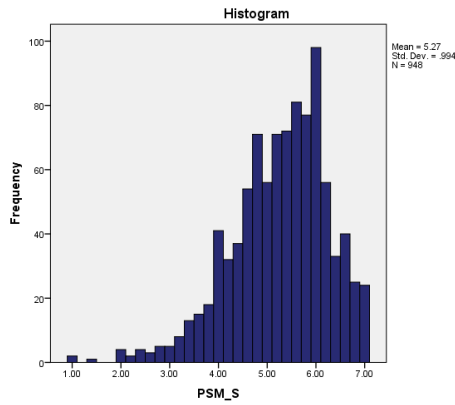
I often try to introduce new structures, technologies, or approaches to improve efficiency

# Appendix C: Chapter 4 – Graphical Representations of Study 1 Variable Distribution

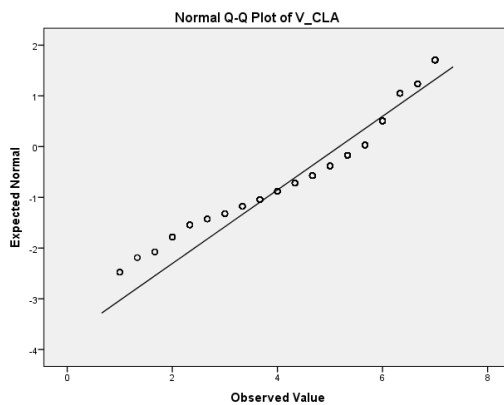
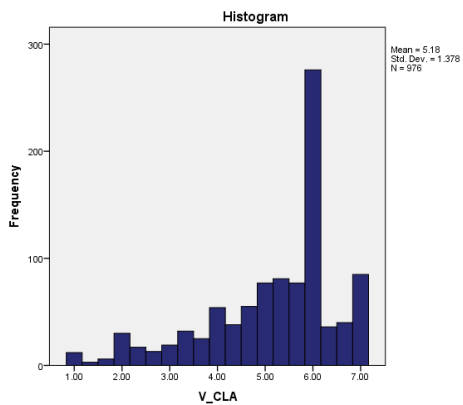
## Servant Leadership



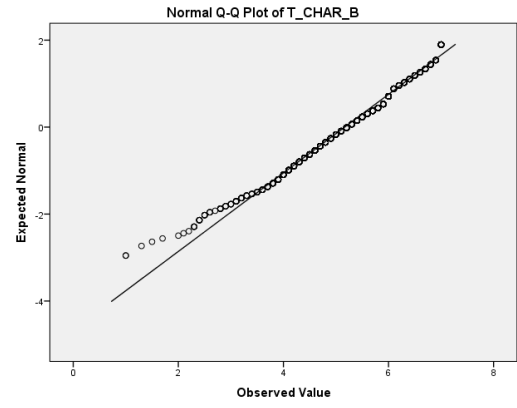
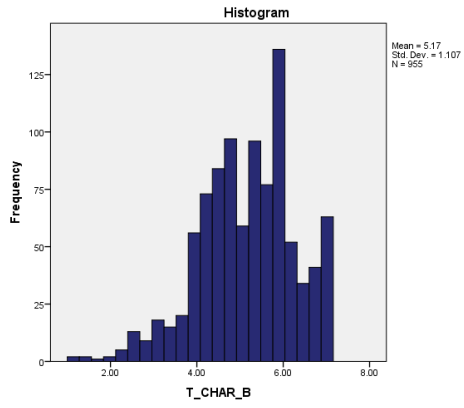
## Public Service Motivation



## Organisational Vision Clarity



## Taking Charge Behaviours



## Appendix D: Chapter 5 – Study 2 Measurement

*Scales for independent and dependent variables are included below, including lead-ins and rating scales for each variable. Servant leadership, hindrance stressors, and ego depletion were measured in the Time 1 survey, whereas ethical voice behaviour measured approximately a month later in the Time 2 survey.*

### **Servant Leadership** (*Liden et al., 2015*)

The statements below are designed to assess your supervisor's leadership style, as you perceive it. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement as a description of his or her leadership style.

*(1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree)*

My supervisor can tell if something work-related is going wrong

My supervisor makes my career development a priority

I would seek help from my supervisor if I had a personal problem

My supervisor emphasises the importance of serving the community

My supervisor puts my best interests ahead of his/her own

My supervisor gives me the freedom to handle difficult situations in the way that I feel is best

My supervisor would NOT compromise ethical principles in order to achieve success

### **Hindrance Stressors** (*Zhang, LePine, Buckman, & Wei, 2014*)

Please rate the frequency of the following demands in your daily work.

*(1 = never to 7 = extremely often)*

Administrative hassles

Bureaucratic constraints to completing work (red tape)

Conflicting instructions and expectations from your supervisor(s)

Unclear job tasks

Conflicting requests from your supervisor(s)

Disputes with co-workers

Office politics

**Ego Depletion** (*Ciarocco et al., 2016*)

For each of the following statements, please indicate what you feel is true for yourself, in your role, at this moment.

*(1 = not at all true to 7 = completely true)*

I feel drained

If I were tempted by something right now, it would be very difficult to resist

I would want to quit any difficult task I was given

I feel calm and rational

I can't absorb any more information

I need something pleasant to make me feel better

I feel sharp and focused

I want to give up

I feel like my willpower is gone

My mind feels unfocused right now

I am having a hard time controlling my urges

My mental energy is running low

**Ethical Voice Behaviour** (*Graham & Zheng, 2016, adapted from Tucker, Chimel, Turner, Hershcovis, & Stride, 2008*)

To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about yourself at work?

*(1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree)*

I am prepared to talk to co-workers who fail to behave ethically

I would tell a co-worker who is doing something unethical to stop

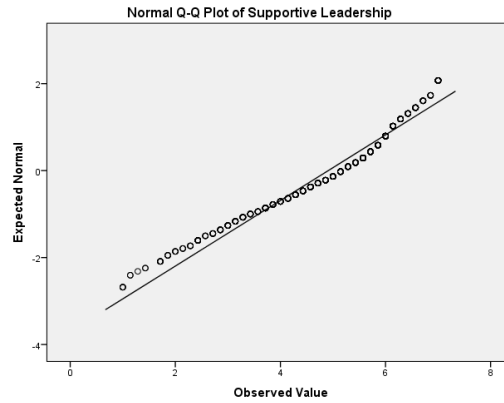
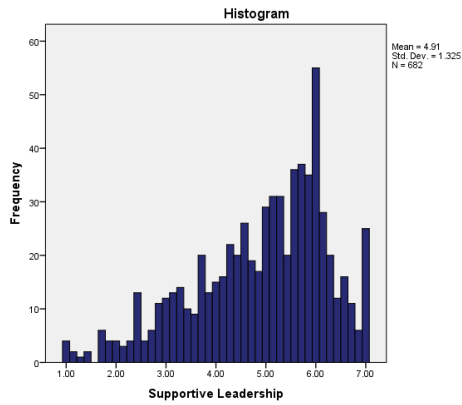
I encourage my co-workers to act with integrity

I speak up in my team to stop others from behaving with a lack of integrity

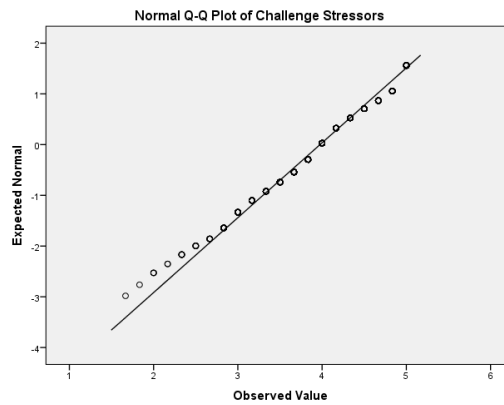
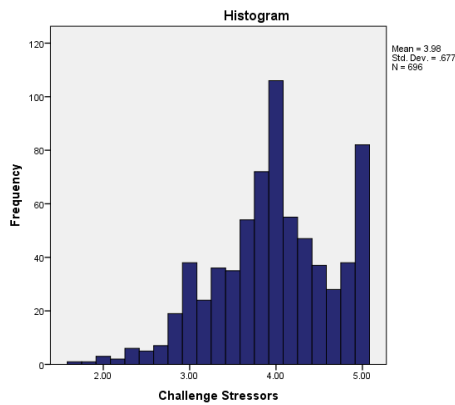


## Appendix E: Chapter 5 – Graphical Representations of Study 2 Variable Distribution

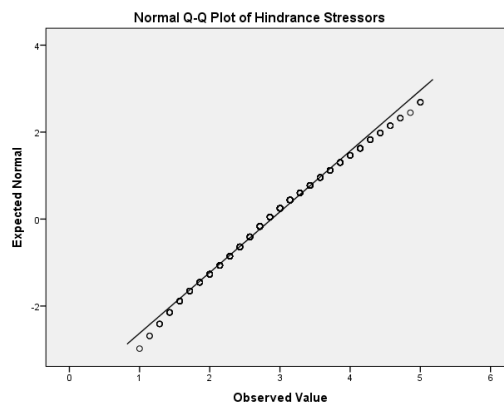
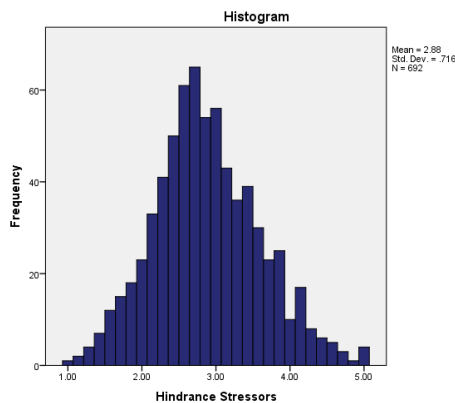
### Servant Leadership



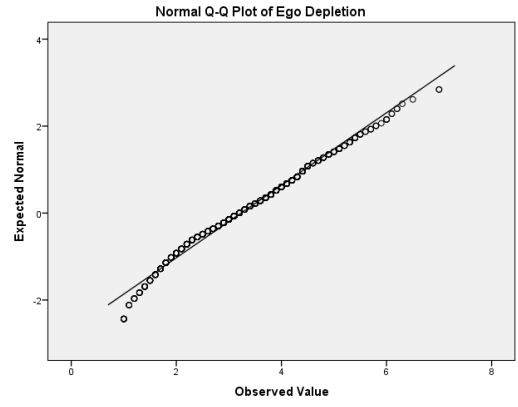
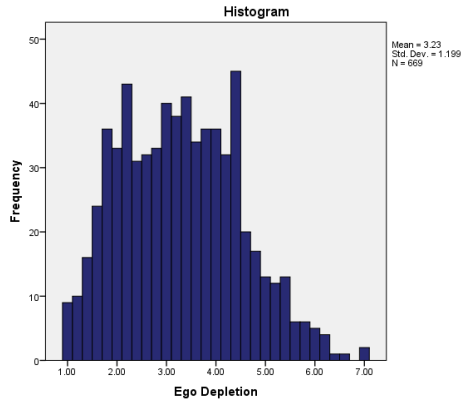
### Challenge Stressors



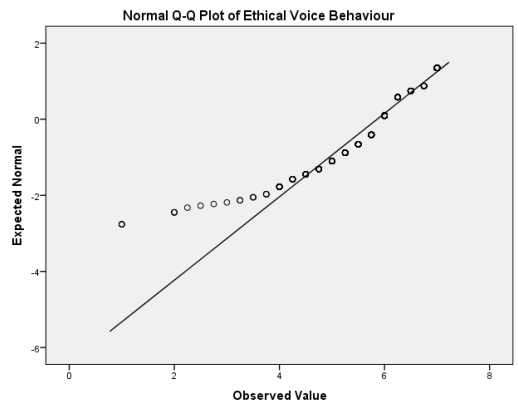
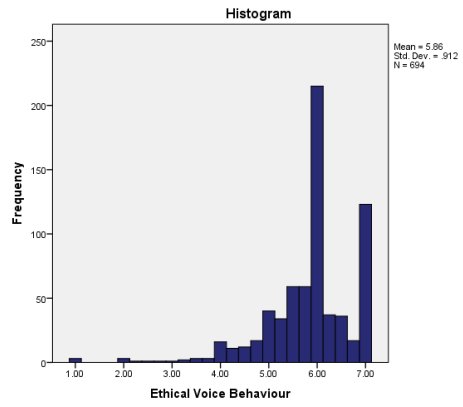
### Hindrance Stressors



## Ego Depletion



## Ethical Voice Behaviour



## Appendix F: Chapter Study 3 Measurement

*Scales for independent and dependent variables are included below, including lead-ins and rating scales for each variable. Servant leadership, authoritarian leadership, individual, relational and collective self-concept were measured in the Time 1 survey, whereas commitment to the public and moral disengagement were measured approximately a month later in the Time 2 survey.*

### **Servant Leadership** (*Liden et al., 2015*)

The statements below are designed to assess your supervisor's leadership style, as you perceive it. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement as a description of his or her leadership style.

*(1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree)*

My supervisor can tell if something work-related is going wrong

My supervisor makes my career development a priority

I would seek help from my supervisor if I had a personal problem

My supervisor emphasises the importance of serving the community

My supervisor puts my best interests ahead of his/her own

My supervisor gives me the freedom to handle difficult situations in the way that I feel is best

My supervisor would NOT compromise ethical principles in order to achieve success

### **Individual, Relational and Collective Self-Concept** (*Johnson, Selenta & Lord, 2006*)

To what extent does each of the following statements describe you at present?

*(1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree)*

#### **Individual self-concept (Comparative identity)**

I thrive on opportunities to demonstrate that my abilities or talents are better than those of other people

I have a strong need to know how I stand in comparison to my co-workers

I often compete with my co-workers

I feel best about myself when I perform better than others

I often find myself pondering over the ways that I am better or worse off than other people around me

***Relational self-concept (Concern for others)***

If a co-worker was having a personal problem, I would help him/her even if it meant sacrificing my time or money

I value co-workers who are caring, empathic individuals

It is important to me that I uphold my commitments to significant people in my life

Caring deeply about another person such as a co-worker is important to me

Knowing that a close other acknowledges and values the role that I play in their life makes me feel like a worthwhile person

***Collective self-concept (Group achievement focus)***

Making a lasting contribution to groups that I belong to, such as my work organisation, is very important to me

When I become involved in a group project, I do my best to ensure its success

I feel great pride when my team or group does well, even if I'm not the main reason for its success

I would be honoured if I were chosen by the organisation or team that I belong to, to represent them at a conference or meeting

When I'm part of a team, I am concerned about the group as a whole instead of whether individual team members like me or whether I like them

**Moral Disengagement** (*Graham, & Plater, 2016; adapted from Moore, Detert, Treviño, Baker, & Mayer, 2012*)

To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

*(1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree)*

It is okay to spread rumours to defend those you care about

Considering the ways people grossly misrepresent themselves, it's hardly a sin to inflate your own credentials a bit

It is okay to gloss over certain facts to make your point

People shouldn't be held accountable for doing questionable things when they were just doing what an authority figure told them to do

People can't be blamed for doing things that are technically wrong when all their colleagues are doing it too

Taking personal credit for ideas that were not your own is no big deal

Some people have to be treated roughly because they lack feelings that can be hurt

People who get mistreated have usually done something to bring it on themselves

**Commitment to the Public** (*Klein, Cooper, Molloy, & Swanson, 2014*)

Please indicate your response to the following questions.

*(1 = not at all to 7 = completely)*

How committed are you to the public?

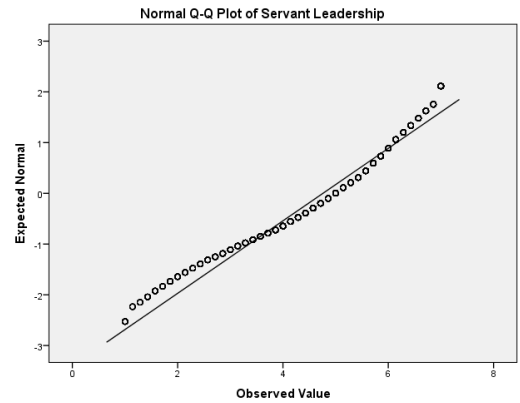
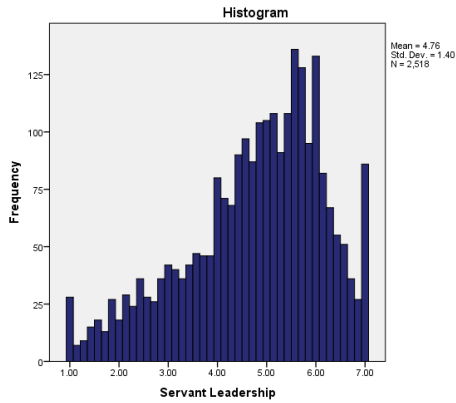
To what extent do you care about the public?

How dedicated are you to the public?

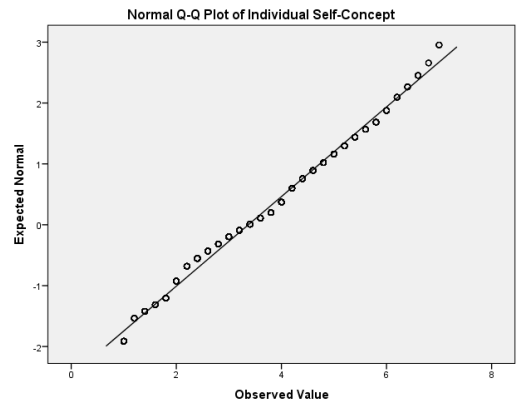
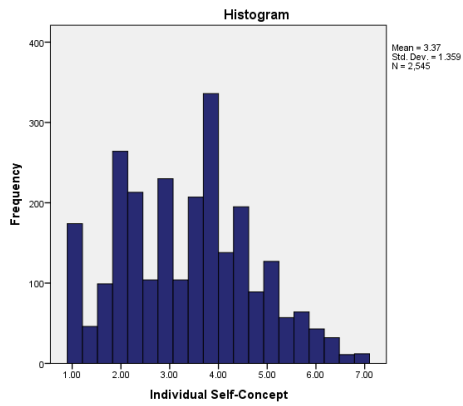
To what extent have you chosen to be committed to the public?

# Appendix G: Chapter 6 – Graphical Representations of Study 3 Variable Distribution

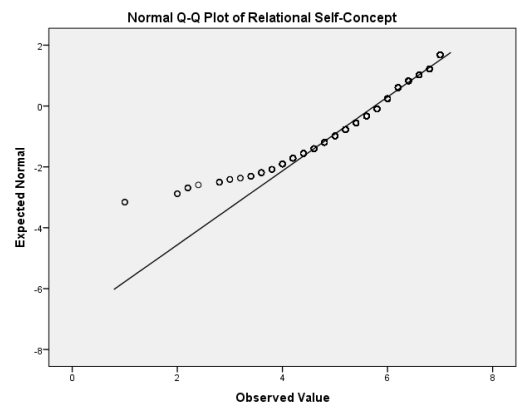
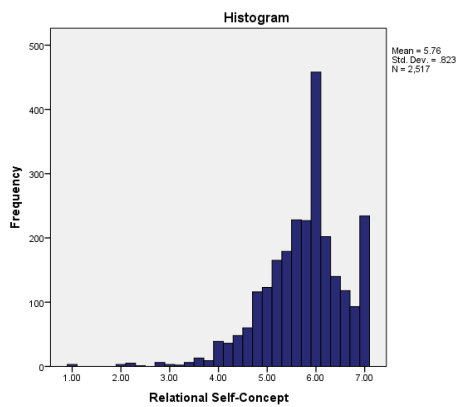
## Servant Leadership



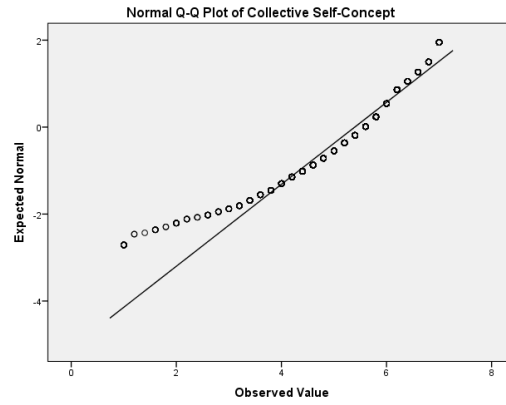
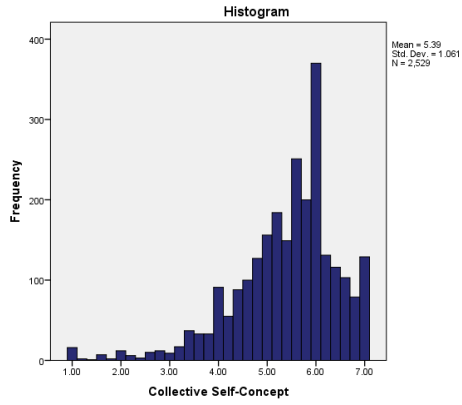
## Individual Self-Concept



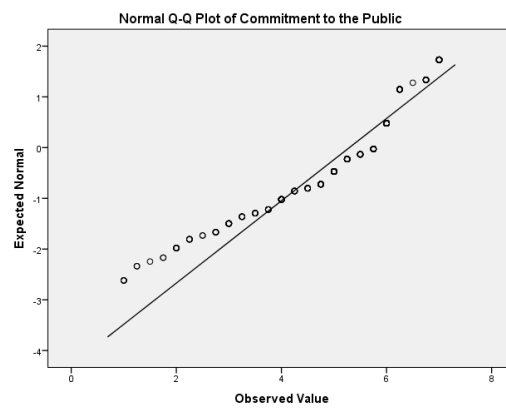
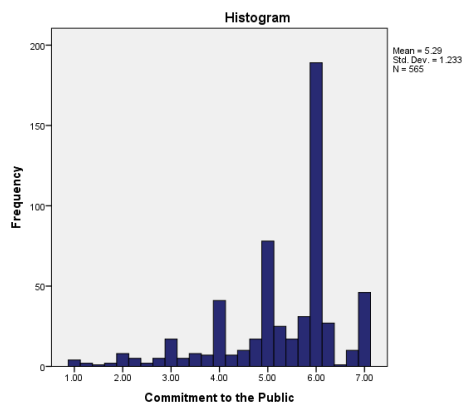
## Relational Self-Concept



### Collective Self-Concept



### Commitment to the Public



### Moral Disengagement

