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A Servant Leader's Impact on Employee Psychological Capital: What is the Relationship of an Employee's Perception of their Manager's Servant Leader Behaviors on Their Reported Psychological Capital?

By

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ABSTRACT

Psychological Capital, or PsyCap, is an individual's positive psychological state of development that consists of: confidence in self (self-efficacy); positive success attributions (optimism); perseverance and orientation toward goals (hope); and ability to bounce back from adversity (resilience) in order to succeed. Improved employee psychological capital has demonstrated positive relationships to employee performance metrics, satisfaction, organization commitment, acceptance for change and reduced turnover intent. This mixed-method research begins to explain the relationship of an employee's perceptions of their direct manager's demonstration of servant leader behaviors on their own psychological capital.

A sample of 212 graduate students evaluated via two surveys the demonstrated servant leader behaviors of their immediate supervisor and their self-reported level of psychological capital within the context of their most recent work experience. A significant positive relationship was demonstrated between employee psychological capital and each of the eight servant leader behaviors: empowerment: accountability, humility, authenticity, courage, standing back, forgiveness and stewardship. Together, these servant leader behaviors explain almost one quarter of the variance in employee psychological capital, with empowerment providing the strongest predictive capability. With the exception of employee age and position type, the demographics of the employee, the manager or the company did not have a significant relationship to employee psychological capital.

These findings were discussed in focus group and interviews which helped to provide additional insight into the relationship servant leader behaviors and employee

psychological capital. Variables reported to modulate the influence of the manager's behavior in employee psychological capital include: amount of interaction, specific work accountabilities and individual characteristics of the manager and the employee. Additionally, it is suggested that there are work situations that may also increase the impact of the perception of manager behavior, including: first-of-a kind experiences, performance feedback settings, high stress business cycles, workplace conflict and disruptive change events.

This paper summarizes six specific contributions this study has made to servant leadership and positive organization behavior theory and practice. Additionally, practical implications of the research findings are outlined for the employee, the manager and the organization. Finally, the paper suggests directions for future research.

DEDICATION

In his book, the Alchemist, Paulo Coelho tells the story of a shepherd boy, Santiago. Through a reoccurring dream Santiago learns of a great treasure that he believes awaits him in a far off land. Like many young men, he leaves the comfort of home and his chosen profession and sets off in pursuit of his dream treasure. His journey is filled with exotic destinations, challenging situations and wonderfully strange companions.

In many ways my journey in pursuit of this degree parallels the journey of Santiago. For me, this journey began 38 years ago with a dream and a decision. A dream to be a leader and a decision to build a balanced life of love, learning and laughter. This path lead me literally around the world, through four educational institutions, eight jobs, dozens of companies, hundreds of projects and thousands of choices, each shaping me as a leader and as a man. Along the path, I encountered teachers who challenged me, mentors who inspired me, angels who protected me, and even charlatans who sought to take advantage of me. However, throughout my journey there have been two constants:

- **My faith**, *which provides me "a future and a hope" (Jer 29:11) and has taught me love through the nail-scarred hands of a servant;* and,
- **My family**, *who through their hope, optimism, confidence and resilience have been and will always be, my primary source of love, learning and laughter.*

It is to these two constants in my life, that I dedicate not only this volume, but also my life's journey.

At the end of his story, Santiago found his treasure, in the richness of his journey and the return to the place that holds the best life has to offer – home.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF APPENDICES

CHAPTER I - INTRODUCTION

> "If the rate of change on the outside exceeds the rate of change in the inside, the end is near." – Jack Welch
> (Mani, 2007)

Background

The rate of change today is accelerating at unprecedented rates (May, 2011). Organizations and their employees must contend with the pressures of global competition, rapidly advancing technology, growing regulatory control, changing workforce demographics, and an explosion of information (Kotter, 2001). These pressures are demanding that organizations – no matter their purpose or mission – adapt to survive. Non-profits, social organizations, religious organizations as well as the for-profit firms are all facing the necessity to understand and assimilate the changes occurring in their environment, their markets and their staff into new operational models that will support them moving forward. Some changes can be anticipated and even planned (e.g., implementation of the new requirements of Affordable Care Act; change of supplier; launch of new product line; retirement of leader), while other changes arrive in the form of a crisis, unexpected, and shaking the organization to the core (e.g., facility fire; loss of sole source provider; senior management shake-up; hostile take-over). Some organizations will survive, others will not, but all are called upon to react.

How successful an organization will be at adapting to these changing conditions is tied directly to how the people who make up the organization choose to perceive the new condition and their related individual and group action (Abrahamson, 2000; Avey,

Wernsing & Luthans, 2008). Some employees quickly adapt, even thrive, during times of organizational change while others spiral downward demonstrating resistance and cynicism and considering themselves a "victim" of the changing condition (Stanley, Meyer & Topolntsky, 2005). When business conditions challenge the status quo, frustration, anger, and lost productivity are often observed across the workforce.

Why are some employees better at adapting to the dynamics of change than others? What influences the employees' level of optimism and hopefulness when faced with a disruptive change? How can organizations help its employees and work teams to demonstrate a greater resilience, that ability to bounce back from adversity, when confronted with challenges to the status quo? What factors impact the ability of the employee to develop and demonstrate these skills? Some employees appear better equipped to react positively to the change (Shin, Taylor & Seo, 2012). Success in anticipating and reacting to changing business conditions may be related in part to the employees' readiness for change (Armenakis, Harris & Mosshlder, 1993; Pelletiete, 2006).

The accelerating rate and demands of change confronting organizations is not limited to 'for profit' organizations. These same conditions are threatening the viability and sustainability of 'not for profit, governmental and public service organizations. The necessity to develop the capability of organizational members, both leaders, and employees, to anticipate and adapt is becoming a critical organizational success competency. Jack Welch's quote at the beginning of this chapter highlights that to survive in today's world, each organization must master its ability to change, to adapt and to do so as quickly as possible. The ability to build a culture and support systems

designed to empower an agile and resilient workforce has become a competitive differentiator (Luthans, Youssef & Avolio, 2007).

Problem Statement

Chester Barnard in his classic management treatise, The Functions of the Executive (1938), defines an organization as: "that kind of cooperation among men that is conscious, deliberate, purposeful" (p. 4). Individuals coordinating their collective action (i.e. delivery of products/services) around a common purpose and through a defined set of operational practices (i.e., structure, business processes) seek stability and predictability (Rochet, Keramidas & Bout, 2008). However, in today's world of rapid and unpredictable change, it is more and more difficult to achieve this desired stability. It is harder and harder to make an organization shock resistant. The challenge for organizations, therefore, is no longer how to reduce the rate and impact of change, but how to build elastic organizations of resilient employees capable to weather the inevitable changes imposed by external and internal forces (Conner, 1996). Although scholars and practitioners alike recognize that modern organizations must adapt to survive, a gap of understanding exists about behaviors and processes, which differentiate organizations that falter from those that survive (even thrive) during times of significant change (Ledesma, 2014; Nishikawa, 2006; Vogus & Sutcliffe, 2007). Finding ways to positively impact the capability of the individual and organization to adapt to changes in the business environment, may ultimately be the difference between organizational success and failure (Hamel & Valikangas, 2003; Luthans, Vogelgesang & Lester, 2006).

Psychological Capital, or PsyCap, is an individual's positive psychological state of development that consists of: confidence in self (self-efficacy); positive success

attributions (optimism); perseverance and orientation toward goals (hope); and ability to bounce back from adversity (resilience) in order to succeed (Luthans & Youssef, 2004; Luthans, Youssef & Avolio, 2007). A recent meta-analysis of 51 independent samples (total N = 12,567 employees) reported a positive relationship of psychological capital with job performance, organizational commitment, job satisfaction, organizational citizenship and a negative relationship to cynicism, job stress, turnover intent and deviance (Avey, Reichard, Luthans & Mhatre, 2011). Psychological Capital has also demonstrated a positive relationship to individual readiness for change and the ability to adjust to disruptive change within their work environment (Avey, Wernsing & Luthans, 2008; Fachruddin & Mangundjaya, 2012). These studies illustrate empirical evidence of the positive potential for developing psychological capital as a means to impact organizational performance and employee readiness for change.

Avey (2014) explains that although there have been numerous studies exploring the relationship of employee psychological capital to positive individual and organizational outcomes, "very little is known about how and why an individual reaches and stabilizes at a given level of PsyCap" (Avey, 2014, p. 141C). Psychological capital is a state-like construct, suggesting that it is open to change and development (Luthans, Youssef & Avolio, 2007). The employee's psychological capital helps the individual demonstrate the resilience to cope with disruptive change positively and within their organization (Luthans, Youssef & Avolio, 2007; Youssef & Luthans, 2005). Therefore, building an understanding of the factors that influence psychological capital development and demonstration would be an important contribution to our understanding of how to help individuals and organizations adapt. This study was designed to advance the

understanding of the role of leadership behaviors in building positive employee psychological capital.

There is empirical evidence that leaders' behaviors directly influence employees' performance and capability development (Avolio, 1999; Meuser, Linden, Wayne & Henderson, 2011). Research also suggests leaders may have an impact on employee psychological capital (Avey, Luthans, & Youssef, 2010; Gooty, Gavin, Johnson, Fraizer & Snow, 2009; Walumbwa & Schaubroeck, 2009). This study was designed to add additional empirical evidence to help explain the influence that leader behaviors have in predicting employee psychological capital.

Although there are dozens of leadership models and associated theories, the Servant Leadership model, grounded in the seminal work of Greenleaf, claims a unique focus on the meeting the needs of the individual employee (Greenleaf, 1970; Linden, Wayne, Zhao, & Henderson, 2008; Spears, 2002). This employee orientation of the servant leader considers utmost the needs, behaviors, and reactions of the employee when taking leadership action (Spears, 2002; van Dierendonck, 2011). Hale and Fields (2007) define Servant leadership as " an understanding and practice of leadership that places the good of those led over the self-interest of the leader, emphasizing leader behaviors that focus on follower [employee] development, and de-emphasizing glorification of the leader" (p 397). The servant leader focuses on building the capabilities of the workforce toward self-reliance and enhanced collaboration by investing in building relationships with and between employees (Luthans & Avolio, 2003; van Dierendonck & Paterson, 2010).

This study seeks to advance the understanding of how the demonstration of servant leader behaviors may influence the positive psychological capital (PsyCap) of their direct reports. This knowledge will help leaders build the pre-requisite capabilities for themselves and their employees to support improved change readiness.

Significance of this Study

The role and practices of leaders within organizations have received significant attention within popular and scientific writing (Bass & Stogdill, 1990; Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Hickman, 2009; Peters & Waterman, 1982; Zaleznik, 1977). Weick & Quinn (1999) explain a role of leaders is to help the employee make sense out of organizational events and conditions within the context of the organizational mission and ongoing operational practices. The leader prepares the workforce for changes in a dynamic work environment (e.g. new work procedures, evolving market dynamics) by setting strategy, defining an operational agenda and inspiring the action and alignment of the employees (Kotter, 2001). Researchers know little about how leader actions influence the employee's ability psychological capabilities as most leadership research has failed to adequately consider the role of the employee within the leader-employee interaction (Graen & Uhl-Bein, 1995; Judge, Thorsen, Pucik & Welbourne, 1999; Tran, 2014).

This study seeks to understand the relationship between the perceptions of leaders' behavior and the employees' psychological capital capability. Are there leadership behaviors that stimulate the employee's psychological capital and therefore make it easier for the employee to assimilate to a significant change? This study examined how the characteristics of a Servant Leader when demonstrated by a leader influence the psychological capital of the individual employee (Linden et al., 2008;

Spears, 2002). A deeper understanding of the impact of these servant leader behaviors on the employee's psychological capital will have direct implications for not only an organization's ability to grow the capabilities of its employees but will also have implications for both the selection and development of current and future leaders.

Conceptual Framework

This study is grounded in a post-positivist world view, the desire to "identify and assess the causes that influence outcomes" (Creswell, 2014b, p.7). The post-positivist world view is a reductionist perspective that assumes that through measurement and observation an objective reality can be documented (Creswell, 2014b). This objective reality will be assessed using both quantitative and qualitative methods described in Chapter III. The post-positivist view, supports the ability to make predictions, specifically, that leadership behaviors will be positively correlated to employee psychological capital.

The dependent variable is positive employee psychological capital. PsyCap is defined as "a second-order factor comprised of the shared variance of four recognized positive psychological resources of hope, optimism, efficacy and resilience" (Avey, Reichard, Luthans, Mhatre, 2011 p. 130). Each of these four constructs meets the positive organization behavior criteria of being grounded in theory, state-like and therefore developable, and has empirical evidence of a positive impact on individual performance. For the purpose of this study, PsyCap will be considered a single multidimensional factor. Applying Hobfoll's (2002) psychological resource theory, PsyCap sub-constructs can be understood best as predictors of the broader underlying factor. Therefore, although hope and optimism are demonstrated to be discriminant constructs, they have more in

common between them then they are different. Additionally, the relatively high correlation between the individual constructs (.6 to .7 range) demonstrates their inter-relatedness. Therefore, while the individual construct may be valid in and of itself, there may be a greater benefit to consider it as an indicator of something larger, in this case, psychological capital.

The independent variables for this study are the eight servant leadership behaviors as described by van Dierendonck & Nuijten (2011). The servant leadership style has been selected from other possible leadership models for five primary reasons:

1. Over the last 10 years the research base for servant leadership has been growing (Northouse, 2013; van Dierendonck, 2011);
2. The unique claim of servant leadership theory to focus on building capability/skills in the employee as a primary focus of the leader (Luthans & Avolio, 2003);
3. A reported favorable impact of servant leader behaviors on subordinate performance (Meuser et al., 2011);
4. The defined servant leader behaviors can be developed in leaders (vs. a trait based assumption that leaders are born with or without these traits) (Spears, 2010); and,
5. The Servant leadership model considers the influences of leader behavior and employee outcomes (Liden et al., 2013).

Together this worldview and these conceptual frameworks have influenced the research design, data analysis, research conclusions and suggested applications.

The purpose of this project to contribute to both the scholarly understanding and practical applications of these important topics. An in-depth analysis of the relationship between the servant leader's behavior and the psychological capital of the employees will enrich the understanding and application of servant leadership theory and further explain the development of the psychological capital construct. Understanding which leader behaviors may influence employee attitudes, performance and readiness for change, will also inform the practical applications of leadership development and selection.

Research Design

This study used a two-phase mixed method research design. In Phase One, the quantitative analysis, a sample of graduate students at a Midwest University, who had worked full-time or part-time within the last two years, were asked to complete two separate on-line assessment instruments. The first instrument, the Psychological Capital Questionnaire (24 questions) asked each participant to evaluate their current level of psychological capital, including the subordinate constructs of hope, optimism, efficacy and resilience. The second assessment instrument, the Servant Leader Survey (30 questions), requested each participant to describe the level of demonstration of eight servant leader behaviors by their current (most recent) immediate manager. A correlational and regression analysis were conducted to explain relationships that exist among and between the leader behaviors and the psychological capital levels of the employees. Table 1.1 outlines the servant leadership and psychological capital constructs which serve as the anchors of this quantitative analysis.

Table 1.1

Constructs assessed in this study

Servant Leader Constructs (as measured by the SLS)		**Psychological Capital Constructs** (as measured by the PCQ)
• Empowerment • Accountability • Standing Back • Humility • Authenticity • Courage	• Interpersonal Acceptance • Stewardship • *Overall Servant Leadership	• Resilience • Hope • Self-Efficacy • Optimism • *Overall PsyCap

* - aggregate of all construct scores

Phase II of the research utilized focus groups and interviews to gather qualitative data from a sub-set of the Phase I participants. The objective of this data collection was to enrich the understanding of Phase I results through a discussion of data interpretations and applications.

Research Questions

Phase I was designed to address the following two research questions using quantitative data collection and analysis methods:

Research Question #1 – What relationship exists between the perceived demonstration of servant leader behaviors by a manager and the self-reported psychological capital (PsyCap) of the subordinate?

Research Question #2 – Does the perception of the manager's demonstration of the eight identified servant leader behaviors, individually or together, predict increased capacity for the employee PsyCap?

Phase II was designed to address the following research questions using qualitative data collection and analysis methods:

Research Question #3 – What are the employee perceptions about their manager's servant leader behavior and its impact their own psychological capital?

Limitations

This study is designed to begin to build an understanding of how servant leader behaviors in influence employee psychological capital. While this research will add value to the body of literature, there are many other influences that can impact employee psychological capital that are outside the control of this study. For example, each individual brings to their workplace a unique set of experiences that shape how they interpret and react to workplace events, including the behavior of the manager. These individual histories may also influence employee psychological capital, but are outside the scope and control of this study.

Although this study did account for organization size, industry and role type (individual contributor vs. manager), there was no attempt to control for variables unique to the employees organization (i.e., structure, stage of development, product/service type, market dynamics, internal support systems, strength of social network, external support systems, culture dynamics, etc.) or role accountabilities (i.e. specific work tasks, level of mastery, degree of autonomy, etc.). Phase II did identify work environment and role factors that may influence the impact of the perception of leader behaviors on psychological capital; no effort was made to control for these factors which may also influence the state-like nature of employee psychological capital.

The sample used for data collection for this study, graduate students with recent work experience, support ease of data collection, represent a diverse population, and

protects the confidentiality of participants. However, this sample may not represent the diversity of across cultures, industries or even employee demographics. This sample represents the overall university population and is therefore skewed toward white females. Therefore, care must be taken to understand generalizability (or lack thereof) of results.

This project also focused on the perception of the employee for both their self-assessment of psychological capital and the measure of their manger's servant leader behaviors. While the results will provide direct insight into the role of perceived role of leader behavior in shaping psychological capital (hope, optimism, efficacy and resilience) it only represents one perspective or viewpoint on the relationship between and among these variables.

Definition of Terms

The following definitions are used throughout this research and related documentation:

1. *Change (also disruptive change):* alterations of the existing work environment, routines or strategies that disrupt the status quo and affect individuals and the organization (Herold & Fedor, 2008).
2. *Efficacy:* see self-efficacy below
3. *Follower:* the individual [employee] who a leader seeks to influence (Northouse, 2013).
4. *Hope:* "positive motivational state that is based on the interactively derived sense of successful (1) agency (goal-directed) and (2) pathways (planning to meet goals)" (Snyder, Irving and Anderson, 1991, p 287).

5. *Leader:* one or more individuals accountable to direct the actions and accountabilities of others
6. *Leadership:* is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal" (Northouse, 2013, p5).
7. *Manager (immediate manager):* individual leader directly accountable for assigning and evaluating the work accountabilities of an employee.
8. *Optimism:* the expectation of good things and successful outcomes regardless of personal ability (Avey, Wernsing and Luthans, 2008).
9. *Organization:* is the unique body of people with a particular purpose, "that kind of cooperation among men that is conscious, deliberate, purposeful" (Bernard, 1938, p. 4).
10. *Organizational Resilience:* the organization's ability to bounce back from adversity and create an environment that enhances personal and career resiliency in their employees to significant intervening change (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2010; Brock & Grady, 2002; Nishikawa, 2006).
11. *Positive Organizational Behavior:* "the study and application of positively oriented human resource strengths and psychological capacities that can be measured, developed and effectively managed for performance improvement" (Luthans, 2002, p. 59).
12. *Psychological Capital (PsyCap):* individual;' positive state of development', characterized by the physical resources of self-efficacy, hope, optimism and resilience (Luthans, Youssef & Avolio, 2007, p.3); the dependent variable of this study.

13. *Psychological Capital Questionnaire (PCQ):* an instrument for measuring the multidimensional composite positive psychology construct of PsyCap including the sub-constructs of hope, resilience, optimism and self-efficacy (Luthans, Youssef & Avolio, 2007).
14. *Resilience:* "positive psychological capacity to rebound, to 'bounce back' from adversity, uncertainty, conflict, failure or even positive change, progress and increased responsibility" (Luthans, 2002, p.702).
15. *Self-Efficacy:* "the employee's conviction and confidence about his or her abilities to mobilize the motivation, cognitive resources, or course of action needed to successfully execute given task within a given context" (Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998, p.66).
16. *Servant Leadership:* " an understanding and practice of leadership that places the good of those led over the self-interest of the leader, emphasizing leader behaviors that focus on follower [employee] development, and de-emphasizing glorification of the leader" (Hale and Fields 2007, p.397).
17. *Servant Leader Survey (SLS):* a twenty-four item survey used to assess servant leadership factors of 1) Empowerment; 2) Accountability; 3) Standing Back; 4) Humility; 5) Authenticity; 6) Courage; 7) Interpersonal Acceptance; and, 8) Stewardship. (van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2011)
18. *Thrive:* the ability to go beyond an original level of functioning and to grow during times of significant stress or crisis (O'Leary, 1998).

Organization of the Document

The next chapter will provide a review of the relevant literature in support of building a conceptual and research foundation for the specific research hypothesis. Additionally, Chapter II will introduce the specific in more detail research questions driving this inquiry. Chapter III will review the research methodology selected for exploring the identified research questions. As the research design is a mixed method approach, Chapter III will also outline the qualitative design to test the statistical relationships between the servant leader behaviors and PsyCap constructs; and, the qualitative analysis applied to enrich the understanding of these correlations using focus groups from the sample population. Chapter IV will outline the results of the qualitative analysis of the relationships between servant leadership behaviors and the impact on employee psychological capital and describe the outcomes of the focus group data collection. Chapter V of this paper will discuss the conclusions and implications of the results of the study in light of the scholarly frameworks outlined in Chapter II. The final chapter will also suggest recommendations for additional research and describes practical consequences and applications for the demonstration of servant leadership and how to build psychological capital for the employee, the leader and the organization.

Summary

The ability for any organization to be able to anticipate and respond to the ever-changing environment in which it exists is critical to its survival. The rate at which these changes are bombarding organizations today is astounding, magnifying the importance of Welch's observation, "If the rate of change on the outside exceeds the rate of change in the inside, the end is near" (Mani, 2007). As he suggests only organizations prepared to

change and quickly adapt will survive this onslaught – others will not. Recognizing that organizations do not exist apart from the coordinated actions of the individual stakeholders this study will explore the correlation of (servant) leader behaviors with the self-reported psychological capital capabilities of the employee (Barnard, 1938). Building the positive psychological capital and specifically resilience (i.e., the ability to bounce back) are keys to success for the individual and the organization during these times of rapid and often unpredictable change. Therefore, this study will contribute to the scholarly understanding of servant leadership theory, positive psychological capital and building employee psychological capital, which holds potential for improving employee productivity and readiness for change. Additionally, the results of this study will have direct implications for practice in the areas of leadership preparation (i.e., development and selection) and employee capability development (i.e., PsyCap variables of hope, optimism, self-efficacy and resilience).

CHAPTER II – LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Butin (2010) suggest that a dissertation literature review is in reality "multiple levels of literature reviews that may be thought of as a progressively focused downward spiral" (p. 64). The journey through the literature helps to initially inform and then to refine and focus the research inquiry and methodology. To that end, this literature review will describe the downward spiraling path required to reach the final research questions and methodologies of this study.

Although the final design of this study appears straightforward, analyzing the impact of leader behavior on employee attitudes, it was the implications that these employee attitudes on their ability to adapt to changing business conditions that originally stimulated this inquiry. Therefore, this chapter begins with a brief context-setting, to help the reader understand the initial motivations of the researcher. Then the chapter progresses down the narrowing literature review funnel to the specific conceptual and empirical foundations that informed the development of the specific research questions and hypothesis tested in this study. Finally, the chapter will conclude with an overview of the specific research instruments and methodological approaches of this study to inform the empirical review of methodology in Chapter III.

Change and Resilience

The rate of change today is accelerating at unprecedented rates (Kotter, 2001; May, 2011). An organizational disruption can be significant (e.g., rapid market deterioration, hostile takeover, loss of major customer, downsizing, a major industrial

accident) or less volatile (e.g., implementation of a new email system, product rebranding, new general manager, change in a customer's service expectations). If organizations are going to thrive in these dynamic and turbulent times, they must understand not how to avoid change but how to embrace change to affect both short-term effectiveness and long-term organizational viability (Hamel & Valikangas, 2003; Sutcliffe and Vogus, 2003).

Leaders and employees must be prepared to expect change and to build the resilience skills required to adapt quickly to evolving market demands, technological advances, and process changes to reduce the time from disruption to productivity (Conner, 2006). Employees are called upon to be resilient to changes to the status quo and to build the skills to positively cope with these changes, both planned and unplanned (Hamel & Valikangas, 2003; Luthans, Vogelgesang & Lester, 2006). Employee attitudes and readiness for change have increasingly been the focus of research into the antecedents and consequences of disruptive change (Armenakis, Harris & Mosshlder, 1993; Pelletiete, 2006). This research project started with the desire to gain additional insight into how leaders and employees can develop their ability to adapt to the ever increasing and inevitable dynamics of change within the workplace.

Researchers have suggested that up to fifty percent of all planned organizational change efforts fail to achieve their desired objectives (Marks 2006; Quinn, 2011). The ultimate success or failure of the planned change is directly dependent on the ability of employees to make the required shift in attitude and behavior to support the new direction (Kotter & Cohen, 2002). Employee reluctance, resistance, and outright defiance are often cited as reasons for program failure and reduced performance (Stanley, Meyer &

Topolnytsky, 2005). In addition to planned change initiatives, those unplanned and random disruptions to the status quo of the workplace also present the employee with demands on their resilience ability, to positively cope with the frustrations, changing priorities, performance distractions and potential adversity of the disruption.

Resiliency research within organizations is beginning to shape new paradigms with which to understand how organizations and their employees react to change as a way to survive and "thrive" (O'Leary, 1998). As an outgrowth of the positive psychology movement researchers are beginning to look for ways to recognize and develop resiliency capability within an organization (Nelson & Cooper, 2007; Tugade & Fredrickson, 2004; Seligaman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Snyder & Lopez, 2002). For example, exposure to positive emotions (pre-and post-trauma) developing perceptions of self-confidence and control and reinforcing that growth can come from both positive and negative experiences have each been demonstrated to strengthen the ability of individuals to positively cope with disruptive events (Bonnano, 2004; Fredrickson, 2001; Fredrickson, Tugade & Waugh, 2003; Weiner, Freize, Kukla, Reed, Rest, & Rosenbaum, 1972). Employee resilience has begun to emerge as an important reservoir of coping capability to help individuals deal with the demands of disruptive change (Waugh, Fredrickson, Taylor & Larkin, 2008). The path of this research project began to focus on understanding the factors that build individual resilience within the workplace.

The idea of building resilience to cope with difficult situations is not new. Personal resilience has long been a focus of study in psychology, psychiatry, developmental psychopathology and human development (Ledesma, 2014). Each discipline has attempted to understand the underlying factors that allow the individual to

survive and adapt during and after events of significant impact in their life. The analysis of individual resilience from these varied perspectives has begun to create an understanding of the factors that lead to effective coping as a result of adversity (Ledesma, 2014; O'Leary, 1998). Included in these factors are positive self-efficacy, resilience, optimism, risk-taking, low fear of failure, determination, perseverance, and a high tolerance for uncertainty (Greene, 2002; Moenkemeyer, Hoegl, & Weiss, 2012; O'Leary, 1998).

With the desire to proactively develop this resiliency capability three strategies have been suggested: Risk-focused; Asset-focused; and, Process-focused (Masten, 2001; Masten & Reed 2002). The risk-focused strategy builds a strong social infrastructure (i.e., organizational culture) to help the organizational members reduce the risk and understand how to react to the occurrence of adverse events (Luthans, Vogelgesang & Lester, 2006). The process-focused strategy seeks to shape how the specific events and experiences are interpreted by the employee (Masten & Reed, 2002). The degree of optimism and hope that the individual applies to a given situation may influence how they will make sense out of the antecedents and consequences of a disruptive event (Luthans, Vogelgesang & Lester, 2006). The asset-focused strategy would invest in developing the human capital (i.e., knowledge, skills and abilities) and the social capital (i.e., networks, engagement) required to facilitate support and coping during times of adversity (Luthens & Youssef, 2004; Youssef & Luthens, 2005). Finally, the confidence (efficacy) of the individual in their own abilities may also impact how a specific experience is interpreted, and the degree of resilience demonstrated (Avolio & Luthans, 2006).

Luthans, Vogelgesang and Lester (2006), suggested that emphasis on the "what you know" (i.e., human capital) and "who you know" (i.e., social capital) of the asset-focused strategy, left out the personal characteristics of "who you are" and "what you can become" which they call psychological capital (p. 26). Psychological capital is a "second order factor comprised of four recognized positive psychology resources of hope, optimism, efficacy and resilience" (Avey, Reichard, Luthans & Mhatre (2001, p. 130). Based on its alignment with factors said to influence employee adaptability, as outlined above, this research project narrowed the focus to psychological capital and its influence on employee readiness for change.

Psychological Capital

Psychological Capital, also called PsyCap, is a core construct of positive organizational behavior (POB). The new field of positive organizational behavior emerged from the positive psychology tradition which is the study of the strengths and virtues that enable individuals, communities, and organizations to thrive (Nelson & Cooper, 2007; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Positive organizational behavior as a research discipline is defined as "the study and application of positively oriented human resource strengths and psychological capacities that can be measured, developed and effectively managed for performance improvement" (Luthans, 2002, p. 59). So positive organizational behavior research seeks to identify, measure and develop the capacities of the individual that have a direct impact on improved performance. As such, this definition differentiates positive organizational behavior from "the positively oriented popular personal development literature (e.g., power of positive thinking or the seven habits of highly effective people) or the relatively fixed, trait-like positively oriented

organizational behavior literature (e.g., Big Five personality dimensions or core self-evaluations)" (Avey, et al., 2008, p.52-53).

Positive organizational behavior research seeks to provide empirical evidence for relationships of individual attributes to positive individual and organization outcomes. Constructs of analysis, therefore, must meet the following criteria: positive, strengths-based and relatively unique to POB; theory and research-based; and, considered to be state-like, meaning that the construct can be measured and developed (Luthans, 2002). By way of illustration, employee resilience meets this defined criteria as it is grounded in empirical research from several disciplines, can be measured by valid instruments, and can be developed within individuals (Luthans, Vogelgesang & Lester, 2006, Masten, 2001). Shin, Taylor, and Seo (2012), for example, demonstrated that employee psychological resilience is directly related their positive perceptions of an organizational change [$r=.32$, $p<.01$].

Psychological Capital is defined as "an individual's positive psychological state of development that is characterized by the following: (a) having confidence (self-efficacy) to take on and put in the necessary effort to succeed at challenging tasks; (b) making a positive attribution (optimism) about succeeding now and in the future; (c) persevering toward goals, and when necessary, redirecting paths to goals (hope) in order to succeed; and (d) when beset by problems and adversity, sustaining and bouncing back and even beyond (resiliency) to attain success" (Luthans, Youssef & Avolio, 2007, p.3). Each of these four constructs meets the positive organization behavior criteria of being grounded in theory, state-like and therefore developable, and has empirical evidence of a positive impact on individual performance.

Avolio & Luthans (2006) describe an individual's psychological capabilities as arrayed along a continuum. One end of the continuum is characterized by positive 'traits' that are relatively unchangeable and enduring over time (e.g., intelligence, heritable characteristics). They suggest that these stable 'traits' might even be considered hard-wired into the DNA of the individual. The other end of the continuum is characterized by positive 'states' that change often based on the context and conditions of a specific situation (e.g., pleasure, positive moods, happiness). These positive 'states' are momentary and can be easily influenced and changed. In between these extremes, Avolio & Luthans (2006) describe the two additional categories of "trait-like" and "state-like". "Trait-like" constructs are relatively stable and difficult to change, for example, the Big Five personality dimensions and character strengths. Although these "trait-like" constructs are not considered hard-wired, they are considered enduring characteristics, very difficult to influence. The final category of constructs represented along this continuum, between the 'state' and 'trait-like' categories are "state-like" constructs. The 'state-like' constructs are more stable and enduring than 'state' based capabilities but are seen as not embedded 'traits' of the individual. Therefore, the "state-like" capabilities of an individual will change over time. This is an important distinction because unlike "traits", which are characterized by relative stability over time and situation, "state-like" capabilities are more malleable and thus are open to change and development.

Each of the four constructs associated with PsyCap of hope, optimism, self-efficacy and resilience have been demonstrated to be 'state-like' and therefore open to development over time within the individual (Luthans, 2002; Luthans, Youssef & Avolio, 2007). Employees who demonstrate high levels of each of the subordinate constructs of

psychological capital have "a variety of positive psychological resources to draw from to cope with the challenge of organizational change" (Avey, et al., 2008, p.55). This chapter will now describe each of the sub-constructs before returning to address PsyCap and empirical support for its ability to influence positive organizational outcomes.

Psychological Capital – Hope

Hope is defined as "positive motivational state that is based on the interactively derived sense of successful (1) agency, goal-directed; and (2) pathways, planning to meet goals" (Snyder, Irving and Anderson, 1991, p 287). These authors explain that hope is the ability to set challenging goals and then to marshal the energy and focus on accomplishing those goals (also called "willpower"). What makes this definition of hope unique however, is the generation and adaptation of the pathways to reach these defined goals even when initial pathways prove unsuccessful or blocked (called "waypower"). It is this adaptive capability of the individual through the continued interaction between the willpower and the waypower that inspires the individual with energy toward action (Snyder, 2002). Change to status quo may require the development of the development of new pathways while maintaining personal willpower to reach the defined goal.

The "state-like" nature of hope has been demonstrated through successful interventions to develop one's ability to set goals and create paths to goal attainment (Snyder, 2002). Additionally, valid and reliable measurement instruments have been developed to assess the state-like nature of hope (Snyder, Sympson, Ybasco, Borders, Babyak, & Higgins, 1996).

The positive impact of hope to employee performance has been established related to work outcomes. For example, Peterson & Bryan (2008) demonstrate that

hopeful employees generate more solutions [β=.71, p<.001] and higher quality solutions in response to work problems [β =.54, p,.001]. Additional studies have described the positive relationship of employee hope to work attitudes (Youssef & Luthans, 2005); satisfactions and retention (Peterson & Luthans, 2003); supervisor rating and merit pay (Luthans, Avolio, Walumbwa, & Li, 2005) and organizational profitability (Adams, Snyder, Rand, King, Sigmon, & Pulvers, 2002). Hope is also a capability critical to coping with uncertain and unpredictable situations (Avey, et al., 2008; Weick & Quinn, 1999).

Psychological Capital – Optimism

The second psychological capital construct is optimism. This construct is defined by one's ability to explain positive outcomes as a result of personal, pervasive and permanent causes while considering the source of negative outcomes as external, situational and temporary (Seligman, 1998; 2011). Avey, Wernsing & Luthans, (2008) describe optimism as the ability to hold the expectation of good things and successful outcomes regardless of personal ability. The optimist takes credit for positive outcomes, sees these outcomes as within their control, enduring and generalizable to other situations. However, negative events are often seen as outside of their control, short-term and unique to the situation. This allows them to maintain their positive and confident view of the future even in light of difficulty and disruption of the status quo (Luthans et al., 2007).

As a "state-like" construct, optimism is somewhat enduring across situations but can be influenced by attribution and explanation within the context of the situation (Seligman, 1998; 2011). Luthans and colleagues (2007) explain the need for optimism to

be realistic and flexible, "[it] should not take extremes, either in internalizing success and trying to take control of every aspect of one's work life, or in externalizing all types of failure and thus shirking responsibility" (p 95). Valid and reliable measurement instruments have also been developed to assess the 'state-like' nature of optimism (Scheiver & Carver, 1985).

Optimism has been associated positively with physiological and psychological health and well-being outcomes (Scheiver & Carver, 1987; Seligman, 2011). In the workplace, the positive impact of optimism has been demonstrated in both productivity and in higher performance in sales and leadership (Luthans et al., 2005; Seligman & Schulman, 1986; Schulman, 1999). Optimism also has been demonstrated to have an impact on coping and recovery behaviors directly related to dealing with disruptive change (Scheiver & Carver, 1987; Seligman, 2011).

Psychological Capital - Self-Efficacy

The third construct included in psychological capital is efficacy (also called self-efficacy). Grounded in the work of Bandura (1997) and social cognitive theory, efficacy is defined as "the employees' conviction (or confidence) about his or her abilities to mobilize the motivation, cognitive resources, or course of action needed to successfully execute given task within a given context" (Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998, p.66). Bandura (1997) outlined five cognitive processes associated with self-efficacy: symbolizing (creating mental models to analyze situation); forethought (considering actions and potential consequences); observation (learning from the experience of others); self-regulation (setting and monitoring goals and standards); and, self-reflection (looking back

to learn from previous experiences). Together these processes equip the individual to build their sense of efficacy and capability to act.

Efficacy has long been viewed and measured as a state-like construct (Maurer & Peirce, 1998; Parker, 1998). Luthans and colleagues (2007) reported five characteristics that demonstrate the state-like nature of this construct: a) it is domain specific – your confidence may vary across differ information/action domains; b) it is based on practice – efficacy is directly tied to rehearsal and perceptions of mastery; c) it can always be improved – even in areas of great confidence there are tasks that can be developed; d) it is influenced by others – demonstrating the power of the self-fulfilling prophecy; and, e) it is dependent on many factors – some within your control (e.g., building knowledge) and others outside of your control (e.g., organizational resources limitations).

The relationship of self-efficacy and performance is well documented, and is related to work attitudes (Luthans, Zhu & Avolio, 2006); leadership effectiveness (Chemers, Watson, & May, 2000); ethical decision making (Youssef & Luthans, 2005); participation (Lam, Chen & Schaubroeck, 2002); learning (Ramakrishna, 2002) and overall work-related performance (Bandura & Locke, 2003; Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998). This construct has strong relationships to performance and adaptability to new situations (change) through vicarious learning, developing task mastery and performance persistence (Avey, et al., 2008; Bandura, 2007).

Psychological Capital – Resilience

The final construct considered as part of psychological capital is resilience. This discussion brings us full circle to the original motivation behind his study, the desire to better understand the employees' ability to bounce back from crisis or disruptive change.

Resilience is also considered to be 'state-like' employee capability and therefore can be developed (Luthans, et al., 2007). Latin provides the base word for resilience, *resiliens* which refers to the elastic or pliant nature of a substance (Greene, 2002). Resilience as a construct within psychological capital is defined as "the developable capacity to rebound or bounce back from adversity, conflict, failure of even positive events, progress and increased responsibility" (Luthans, 2002, p.702). Individuals with greater levels of resilience are more open to new experiences and more flexible to the shifting demands of disruptive change (Tugade & Fredrickson, 2004). They may also demonstrate higher levels of performance as they learn from their experiences (Bananno, 2004). Positive individual attributes associated with resilience include cognitive abilities; temperament; positive self-perceptions; faith; a positive outlook; emotional stability; self-regulation; a sense of humor; general appeal; insight; independence; initiative; relationships; creativity and morality (Masten, 2001, Sutcliffe & Vogus, 2003).

Although an overlap of attributes can be seen with the constructs of hope; optimism and efficacy as described above, resilience has been demonstrated to be a distinct PsyCap construct (Luthans, et al., 2006). Moreover, the other PsyCap factors may "act as a pathway to resilience… and may moderate the relationship between resilience and outcomes such as performance" (Luthans, Vogelgesang & Lester, 2006, p. 29). For example, those who are hopeful, optimistic and confident are more likely to bounce back from adversity than those who are not. Resilience ability may also serve to help restore the optimism, hope and confidence of an individual after a disruptive event. This suggests that resiliency may also serve as an "antecedent to other positive outcomes of psychological capital" (Luthans, Vogelgesang & Lester, 2006, p.30).

As a "state-like" construct, the resilience of an individual, although somewhat stable, will fluctuate over time and situation (Luthans, Vogelgesang & Lester, 2006, Masten, 2001). Therefore, the desire to develop the capability of the individual for resilient attitudes and behaviors has been a focus not only both clinical research and private industry (Maston, 2001; Luthans, et al., 2007; Revich & Shatte, 2002). The study of individual resilience has resulted in the development of several reliable resilience assessment instruments, each designed for a specific population and application (Pangallo, Zibarras, Lewis & Flaxman, 2015; Windle, Bennett & Noyes, 2011).

The relationship of resiliency with positive performance outcomes within the workplace has also just begun to be documented with very promising results (Luthans, et al., 2006). Recovery after traumatic events by coping and adaptation as well as overall workplace outcomes have been demonstrated as positive outcomes of resiliency development within the workplace (Luthans, et al., 2006; Masten & Reed, 2002; Reivich & Shatte, 2002). Luthans, Vogelgesang & Lester (2006) go as far as to suggest that in order to address the volatility of the current turbulent economic and rate of disruptive change within organizations today "that human resources professionals and departments need to invest in and develop psychological capital, in general, and resiliency in particular" (p25).

Poweley & Piderit (2008) contrast this resilient capacity with an active healing process required to knit back together the social structures of the organization after a significant change. They highlight the central role and importance of rebuilding the emotional traits of trust and relationships in addition to the logical, proactive analysis of the disruption event (e.g., antecedents, actions and consequences). Vogus and Sutcliffe

(2007) explain that resilient organizations and their employees engage in proactive analysis, question assumptions, discuss current capability, learn from errors and migrate decision making to those with the greatest expertise. Horne and Orr (1997) describe seven streams of behaviors to develop individual and organizational resilience, which include building: community (common identity), competence (requisite skills), connections (flexible relationships), commitment (trust and goodwill), communication (foster sense-making), coordination (alignment), and consideration (human relations). The degree to which these behaviors are demonstrated by the organizational members (e.g., board of directors, senior leaders, front-line leaders, employees, support contractors) and reaction to these behaviors by the organization's significant stakeholders (e.g., employees, customers, suppliers, partners) may be the difference between thriving and going out of business in response to an crisis. To thrive requires that the organizational members have the 'psychological capital' and interest to demonstrate appropriate coping and resilience behaviors (Ledesman, 2014; Luthans & Yousef, 2004; Luthans, Youssef & Avolio, 2007).

Psychological Capital – Second Order Factor

Earlier in this chapter, Psychological Capital was introduced as a second-order factor comprised on four separate psychological constructs (Avey, Reichard, Luthans & Mhatre, 2011). Hobfoll (2002) explained in psychological resource theory that sometimes constructs are best understood as predictors of a broader underlying factor. Specifically, the four dimensions of hope, optimism, self-efficacy and resilience are members of the broader concept of psychological capital. Although each dimension has been demonstrated to be valid in term of both discriminant and predictive validity,

psychological resource theory suggests it is more useful to consider them as an indicator of something more than the individual dimensions alone (Avey, et al., 2011). Therefore, although hope and optimism are demonstrated to be discriminant constructs, they have more in common between them than they have differences. Additionally, the relatively high correlation between the individual constructs (.6 to .7 range) demonstrates their inter-relatedness. As such, psychological capital is what Law, Wong and Mobley (1998) define as a multidimensional construct. The development of the multidimensional PsyCap assessment instrument is addressed in more detail in Chapter III however it is important to understand that it was built by combining parts of four existing well-researched scales, one associated with each of the four sub-constructs (Luthans, Youseff & Avolio, 2007). PsyCap is primarily operationalized as a self-report instrument. For PysCap to be useful as multidimensional construct the value of the higher-order construct must be proven, the whole must be greater than the sum of its parts.

In an early study involving Chinese factory workers, psychological capital demonstrated a higher relationship to defined performance outcomes than any of the individual components, supporting the view of psychological capital as a second-order construct (Luthans, Avolio, Waumbas and Li (2005). Luthans, Avolio, Avey & Norman (2007) conducted two separate studies analyzing employee hope, optimism, self-efficacy and resilience individually and as a combined second-order factor. Psychological capital as a second-order construct had significant positive relationships with both performance and satisfaction respectively in a manufacturing firm [$r = .33$, $p < .01$; $r = .22$, $p < .01$] and a service firm [$r = .32$, $p < .01$; $r = .53$, $p < .01$]. Results suggested that "in general, PsyCap is more consistently related to both performance and satisfaction than each of the individual

components…and increased the multiple correlations value [in a regression analysis] above and beyond its individual components (p. 564)". This suggests that related to job performance and satisfactory of employees, the composite may be a better predictor than the individual components. PsyCap has demonstrated positive relationships to many individual and organizational performance outcomes. Avey, Reichard, Luthans & Mhatre (2011) executed meta-analysis of 51 separate samples from published and yet-to-be published research projects, consisting of a total of 12,567 employees. The results of these studies were coded into five mutually exclusive categories: desirable employee attitudes, undesirable employee attitudes, desirable citizenship behaviors, and the undesirable behavior of deviance and employee performance. Table 2.1 represents the results of this analysis.

Table 2.1
Results of meta-data analysis PsyCap outcomes

Outcome Variable	**k**	**N**	**corrected r**	**sd**
Desirable Attitudes				
- Satisfaction	10	3,123	.54**	.17
- Commitment	9	2,072	.48*	.07
- Well-being	3	1,305	.57*	.16
Desirable Behaviors				
- Citizenship Behaviors	8	2,319	.45**	.15
Employee Performance	24	6,931	.26**	.08
Undesirable Attitudes				
- Cynicism for change	4	918	-.49	.07
- Stress, Anxiety	4	1,459	-.29**	.11
- Turnover Intentions	3	2,650	-.28**	.20
Undesirable Behavior				
- Deviance	7	1,959	-.43**	.12

Note. * p < 05, **p < 01. k represents independent samples, reported against multiple outcomes

The results of this meta-analysis demonstrate strong positive relationships between psychological capital and the desirable employee attributes of satisfaction, commitment, and well-being. Additionally, overall performance and employee demonstrated

citizenship behaviors also demonstrate a positive relationship with PsyCap. On the other hand, psychological capital demonstrated a negative relationship with the undesirable employee attitudes of cynicism, personal stress and expressed turnover intentions as well as the undesirable employee behavior of deviance.

Success in implementing changes within an organization is often related to the employee's readiness for this change (Armenakis, Harris & Mossholder, 1993; Pelletiete, 2006). Fachruddin & Mangundjaya (2012) suggest that psychological capital of the individual directly influences their attitudes and readiness for change. Lizar, Mangundjaya, and Rachmawan (2015) set out to understand the specific role employee psychological capital and psychological empowerment play in an individual's readiness for change. Using a state–owned construction company in Indonesia, they administered three questionnaires to assess: individual readiness for change, psychological empowerment, and psychological capital. The results suggest a significant (sig=.000) predictive relationship of psychological capital and employee empowerment to individual readiness for change. PsyCap, explained 31% and employee empowerment 41.5% of the variance in employee readiness for change as measured by the Individual Readiness for Change questionnaire (adapted from Hanpachern, 1997). Therefore, the psychological capital of the employee may influence their ability to prepare for and react to change within the workplace.

A study by Lin, Kao, Chen & Lu (2015) report that the relationship with the manager that broadens and builds the requisite change-oriented behaviors in employees. It is particularly noteworthy that Lin and colleagues suggest that it is through high-quality relationships with their managers that employees build positive affect toward the change

and develop the personal psychological capital required to prepare for and adapt to change. Psychological capital fosters the employees' change-oriented behaviors by providing the energy (optimism), path alternatives (hope) and confidence (self-efficacy) to implement the required change. Additionally, a high-level of psychological capital enables the individual to cope better with the stressors and failure (resilience) often associated with learning new methods. The research focus of this study is now narrowing to the specific influencing factors affecting the level of employee psychological capital.

Psychological Capital - Dependent Variable

Psychological capital is the "individual positive state of development, characterized by the physical resources of self-efficacy, hope, optimism and resilience (Luthans, Youssef & Avolio, 2007, p.3). Psychological capital is grounded in theory, has a strong research base, can be measured and demonstrates "state-like" characteristics supporting individual capability development (Avey Reichard, Luthans, & Mhatre, 2011, Luthans, 2002; Luthans, Youssef & Avolio, 2007). The "state-like" nature of PsyCap makes it "analogous to traditional economic capital [and therefore] open to investment and development for the improvement and development of competitive advantage" (Luthans, Vogelgesang & Lester, 2006, p26). Psychological capital has demonstrated relationships to positive employee and organizations outcomes, including employee readiness for change. Impacting employee psychological capital has important impacts within an organization. Therefore, psychological capital was selected as the dependent variable for this study. The challenge in this research journey was to identify the independent variables that could influence psychological capital.

Avey Reichard, Luthans, & Mhatre (2011), in their meta-analysis of research on psychological capital between 2005 and 2011 found "very few studies that measured anything pertaining to the formation of PsyCap" (p.148). To address this gap, Avery (2014) conducted two research studies to test the reasonableness of four categories of potential antecedents, to psychological capital and therefore begin to explore the "systems and structures within persons and organizational life", that serve as predictors of psychological capital. These categories of potential psychological capital predictors are 1) individual differences based on each employees' unique life experience; 2) factors of job design; 3) leader impact; and, 4) employee demographic factors.

The first study was conducted in a large aerospace firm and used the 24-item Psychological Capital Questionnaire (Luthans, Youseff, & Avolio, 2007) as the dependent variable and three separate inventories as the independent variables. These inventories measured: the 'trait-like' individual differences of proactive personality; the task complexity associated with job design; and, the role of supervision leadership styles. A significant positive correlation (sig=.001) to PsyCap was demonstrated by all inventories, except abusive supervision inventory. The results of a regression analysis demonstrated that individual differences were the strongest predictor of PsyCap, explaining 45% of the variance. Leadership style and job characteristics explained 32% and 12% respectively. Of the three demographic characteristics collected, age, tenure, and gender; only age demonstrated a significant positive relationship predicting only 2% of the variance in employee psychological capital.

The second study assessed the employees of a telecommunications company in mainland China. To measure individual differences across participants, instruments were

used to measure the three constructs of power distance, uncertainty avoidance, and collectivism. The leadership dimension was measured using two instruments designed to measure empowering leadership behaviors and ethical leadership. The job characteristic category was not assessed in this study based on time and overall instrument length considerations. Even though this study was conducted in China the results were consistent with study one, suggesting individual differences was the strongest predictor of PsyCap, explaining 24% of the variance. The individual leadership assessments both demonstrated a significant positive correlation to PsyCap; empowering leadership behavior (b=.33, p<.001) and ethical leadership (b=.24, p<.001). Together, these leadership variables explained 23% of PsyCap variance. None of the demographic variables collected demonstrated a significant correlation between the dependent variable, psychological capital.

Separately considering each of the four potential predictors of psychological capital described by Avey (2014), the first of category is the "trait-like" difference demonstrated between individuals. These "trait-like" characteristics cause individuals to react based on their automatic and unconscious interpretation and anticipated consequences of each situation (Lazarus, 1991; 1993). As "trait-like" characteristics, they are part of the individual personality and social DNA. So, two individuals presented with the same situation might report different levels of PsyCap as a result of how their personal history and experience has sample these enduring characteristics. The second category of predictors impacting employee psychological capital are the unique characteristics of the job the employee holds. Each job within a firm has accountabilities and duties, articulated or implied. Hackman and Oldham (1980) describe task

expectations, task difficulty and probability for mastery/success as variables of job design. When job conditions provide clear task expectations and the resources required for task mastery, employee psychological capital may be higher than when the probability for mastery, and therefore self-efficacy is low. The third category of psychological capital predictor is the influence that the leader may have on the employee psychological capital. How the leader acts and communicates influence the reported level of self-efficacy and optimism of the individual (Avey, Luthans, & Youssef, 2010; Gooty, Gavin, Johnson, Fraizier, & Snow, 2009; Walumbwa & Schaubroeck, 2009). The final category of potential predictors are the demographic characteristics of the employee themselves. Age, for example, was demonstrative to have a small but significant impact on employee reported psychological capital.

Each of these categories held the potential to serve as independent variables for this study. However, the complexity of attempting to measure the trait-like differences of individuals as well as the limited ability to control the diversity of tasks and accountabilities, job design, across a sample suggested the elimination of individual differences and job design as the independent variables for this research project. Therefore, it was decided to pursue how leaders influence employee psychological capital as the research agenda for this study. The following literature review builds a foundation of leadership theory in order to identify specific operational definitions to test the relationship leadership has on employee psychological capital. This study also helps to inform the relationship of individual demographics on self-reported levels of psychological capital.

Leadership

Until recently organizational leadership models and theories were "hostile to the notion of resilience and counter to the goals of building adaptive capability" (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2010, p 338). The traditional models were built on the belief that the goal of structure, process, hierarchy and bureaucracy were to ensure organizational stability and efficiency. Companies in the information age are attempting to conduct business using outdated industrial age theories (McCollum, 1995). Wheatley (1993) argues that many of our current beliefs about organizations – what they are and how they work – are built upon outdated notions. Our desire for repeatability and stability has led us to view organizations as 'machines', which are believed to be easily maintained and predictable moment-to-moment. Denhardt & Denhardt, (2010) argues, rather, that organizations are living, dynamic systems constantly changing and evolving – reacting to change in the environment. Schein (2010) takes this one step further by suggesting that organization are social constructs, similar in complexity to a culture. Organizational cultures manifest patterns of shared attitudes, beliefs and values. These patterns emerge and evolve over time into expectations of "how work gets done around here". They become part of the fabric of the company – influencing perceptions, attitudes, and action. Leaders play a critical role in the development of the organizational culture and how employees make sense and create meaning out of the intervening demands of daily operation as well as during times of adversity (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2010; Weick & Quinn, 1999). However, more research is needed to draw solid connections between leadership action and the ability of their organizations to quickly adapt to change and build resilient individuals and learning organizations capable of thriving during times that challenge the status quo.

Leadership has been identified as a potential key variable in the development of resilient individuals, teams and organizations (van der Kleij, Molenaar & Schraagen, 2011; Vogus & Sutcliffe, 2007). Although empirical research directly linking leadership capability to resilience is limited, theorists have hypothesized the connection and recognized additional scholarly attention is warranted (Harland, Harrison, Jones & Reiter-Palmon, 2005, Luthans & Avolio, 2003; Vogus & Sutcliff, 2007). Leaders are called upon to maneuver organizations through the often rapidly changing demands of the environment. They are expected to maintain personal energy and to marshal the troop in times of stress. Several studies tested the correlation of leadership characteristics on the resilience of subordinates and teams (Avolio, 1999; Harland, Harrison, Jones & Reiter-Palmon, 2005; van der Kleij, Molenaar & Schraagen, 2011). These studies demonstrate a positive correlation of four of the five transformation leadership dimensions: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration with team member resilience.

Avolio (1999) suggest that additional research is needed to understand the correlation of leadership behaviors on employee change readiness and adaptability during turbulent times. This research project focuses on the leader's influence on employee psychological capital, including hope, optimism, self-efficacy and resilience capabilities.

Leadership – Defined

The role and practices of the leader within the organization has received significant attention within popular and scientific research (Bass & Stogdill, 1990; Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Hickman, 2009; Peters & Waterman, 1982; Zaleznik, 1977). In fact, the breadth of writing on this topic is found on the newsstand, academic journals and fills

entire libraries. However, it was observed by James MacGregor Burns, political scientist, biographer and noted authority on leadership history that "leadership is one of the most observed and least understood phenomena on earth" (Lipman-Bumen, 2006, p.14). Ironically, a clear and agreed upon definition of leadership has been elusive to researchers and theorists (Stogdill, 1974; Rost,1993; Yukl, 2002).

There are over 350 unique definitions of leadership (Cottrell, 2004; Wright, 2005). To establish a clear definition of leadership must be "understandable, usable, researchable and comprehensive while possessing the ability to discriminate" (Rost, 1993, p. 99). For the purpose of this study we will use the definition of leadership presented by Northouse (2013) which is "Leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals [followers] to achieve a common goal" (p5).
This definition describes leadership as a "process", which it takes the form of transactions between parties (i.e., leader and employees) with the intent to influence the attitudes or behaviors of the employees. Northouse (2013) explains that this definition also communicates that "attention to common goals gives leadership an ethical overtone because it stresses the need for leaders to work with followers [employees], to achieve selected goals" (p.6).

The interest and study of leadership have been part of active inquiry back to the beginning of civilization (Stone & Patterson, 2005; Tran, 2014). Over time, our understanding of the role and influences of leaders has evolved shaping the description and applications of leadership theory.

Leadership – Theory

Becoming a leader in the early patriarchal societies was often a birth-right or a result of military power. These individuals were thought to possess unique inborn traits or characteristics that made them leaders. Bass and Stogdill (1990) found the following:

> "Leaders as prophets, priests, chiefs, and kings [e.g., Great man theories] served as symbols, representatives, and models for their people in the Old and New Testaments, in the Upanishads, in the Greek and Latin classics, and in the Icelandic sagas. … [They] were important in the development of civilized societies (p. 49-50).

As the economic model shifted from agricultural to industrial so did leadership research and resulting theory (Tran, 2014).

Over time, the leadership theory began to move away from a focus on identifying the innate traits of the leader to understanding the demonstrated skills and then their style used to influence those they desire to influence. With the introduction of the evolution of the industrial age the scientific management theories of Fredrick Taylor, Henri Fayol, and F. W. Mooney suggested bureaucracy and time-and-motion studies could be used to improve employee efficiency. These leaders viewed employees like the machines of the production line and led with increased control, clear structure and defined accountability for de-skilled jobs (Hersey & Blanchard, 1996). The Hawthorne studies of Elton Mayo demonstrated that there was more to achieving higher productivity than imposed control and structure. Together with the work of Abraham Maslow and Fredrick Herzberg, Mayo's research demonstrated that environmental conditions (e.g., work conditions, pay; policies; recognition, responsibility) and the needs of the employee (i.e., psychological, safety, belonging, esteem and self-actualization) motivate, or hinder performance. The

ability (skills) of leaders to initiate and balance task and relationship behaviors were said to predict success in influencing their followers (Blake & Mouton, 1984; Misumi & Peterson, 1985; Stogdill, 1974).

Many leadership theories have been proposed and tested to try to define how a leader best influences subordinates to achieve common goals. Table 2.1 provides a summary of these major leadership theories. It describes the uniquely defined characteristic of each theoretical orientation to leadership. These defining characteristics are categorized into three orientations: leader-centric (focused on leader's traits, skills, styles); process-centric (focused on leader interactions) and follower-centric (focused on the leadership needs of the follower). The defining characteristics of each leadership model helps to explain the priorities and application expectations of that model of leadership.

Table 2.2

Summary of Major Leadership Theories

Approach/ Theory	Brief Description	Sample Authors	Defining Characteristics	Strengths	Criticisms
Trait Approach	*Leaders have(lack) certain traits (qualities/characteristics) that predict their success*	• *Stogdill, 1974* • *Mann, 1959* • *Lord et al., 1986; 2002*	*Leader-centric* *Traits inherent in leaders*	• *Intuitive* • *Century of research* • *Connection to personality*	• *No definitive trait list (subjective)* • *No situation variability* • *No outcome focus*
Skills Approach	*Leaders have(lack) the competencies they need to succeed*	• *Katz, 1955* • *Mumford, 2000* • *Lord et al., 1986; 2002*	*Leader-centric* *Skills demonstrated by leaders*	• *Intuitive* • *Development orientated* • *Wide variety of skills*	• *Too broad skill variety* • *Weak predictive value* • *Generalizability across situations/organizations*
Style Approach	*A leader's style can be described by the extent to which they provide(do not provide) structure - called task behaviors; and, nurturing - called relationship behaviors*	• *Hemphill & Coons, 1957* • *Blake & Mouton, 1984*	*Leader-centric* *What leaders do and how they act*	• *Beyond leader characteristics* • *Differentiation of leader behaviors* • *Describes complexity of leadership*	• *Unclear how styles relate to outcomes* • *No universal effective behaviors identified* • *Implies best style (Hi-Hi)*
Situational Approach	*An effective leader will adapt his/her approach based on the unique needs of the situation (task, employee ability, and commitment)*	• *Hersey & Blanchard, 1969; 1993* • *Reddin, 1967*	*Follower-centric* *What do employees need from their leader*	• *Practical; Flexible* • *Applied across multiple settings* • *Prescriptive (how to)*	• *Limited research* • *Concerns about ability to estimate employee commitment* • *One-on One focus*
Contingency Theory	*Effective leadership is 'contingent' upon matching the leader's style with the right situation/context*	• *Fiedler, 1964* • *Fiedler & Garcia, 1987*	*Leader-centric* *What situation best fit this leader's style*	• *Relationship of style & situation demands* • *Predictive of success* • *Leader placement*	• *Fails to explain why style is effective* • *Scale validity* • *Mis-match resolution*

Table 2.2

Summary of Major Leadership Theories (cont.)

Approach/ Theory	Brief Description	Sample Authors	Defining Characteristics	Strengths	Criticisms
Path-Goal Theory	*Subordinates will be motivated if they feel: they are capable of performing task; effort will result in certain outcome; and, payoffs are worthwhile*	• *Evans, 1970* • *House, 1971*	*Follower-centric* *Enhancing outcomes by addressing employee motivation*	• *Satisfaction and performance* • *Focus on motivation (expectancy theory)* • *Clarify path and remove obstacles*	• *Complex; confusing* • *Unclear tie of leader behavior to employee motivation* • *Treats leadership as a one-way event*
Leader-Member Exchange Theory (LMX)	*Leadership is enacted in the dyadic interactions between the leader and the subordinate*	• *Dansereau, et al., 1976* • *Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995*	*Process-centric* *Leadership is centered on interactions*	• *Description of in-groups & out-groups* • *Dyadic focus* • *Communication role*	• *Perceptions of fairness* • *Lack of 'How to'* • *Lack of consideration of contextual impact*
Transformational Leadership	*Leaders engages with others to create connection that raises the motivation and morality of both leader and follower*	• *Bass, 1990* • *Downton, 1973* • *Bryman, 1992*	*Leader & Follower- centric* *Inspiring others to achieve great things*	• *Intuitive; visionary* • *Interplay between leaders & followers* • *Focus on values, needs & morals*	• *Lacks clarity* • *Trait focus* • *Elitist; changing the value of others*
Servant Leadership	*Leaders are attentive to the needs of the follower; empathize with them, empower them and help them reach their full potential*	• *Greenleaf, 1970* • *van Dierendonck, 2011*	*Follower-centric* *Putting followers first; serving their unique needs*	• *Principle of caring for others* • *Give up control & influence* • *Relationship to outcomes*	• *Multitude of abilities, traits and behaviors* • *Paradoxical* • *Conflicts with traditional leader behaviors*
Authentic Leadership	*Leaders exhibit genuine leadership; lead from conviction and transparency*	• *Avolio et al., 2005*	*Leader-centric* *Authenticity of leaders and their leadership*	• *Timely and topical* • *Provides broad guidelines for authentic behavior* • *Explicit morals*	• *Formative stages* • *Questioned stated relationship with positive psychology* • *Unclear outcomes*

Note. Adapted from Northouse, P. G. (2013). *Leadership: Theory and practice*. Thousand Oaks, CA; Sage.

Each theoretical approach to the interpretation of the leader's role has strengths and weaknesses in theory and application. However, to provide a clear basis for interpretation of a leadership research project, it seems advisable to select a specific leadership model or theory that describe the assumptions, language, priorities and anticipated outcomes for the research. Many of the existing organizational and leadership models do not explain the leader's role as anything more than controlling the known, predictable variables of operational efficacy and continuous improvement (Wheatley, 1993). Authentic leadership behaviors and Transformational leadership behaviors have been linked to improved employee coping behaviors of efficacy and resilience (Avolio & Luthans, 2006; Bass, 1990; Harland et al., 2005). Servant Leadership behaviors have demonstrated a positive relationship to employee engagement, organizational commitment and positive employee outcomes (Asag-Gau & van Dierendonck, 2011; van Dierendonck, Stam, Boersma, Windt & Alkema, 2013; Sousa & van Dierendonck, 2015).

The Servant Leadership framework/s has been selected as the overarching framework to describe leadership traits/attributes, behaviors, and desired outcomes. The Servant Leadership orientation – as described by Liden, Panaccio, Hu, and Meuser (2013) - has been selected for five primary reasons:

1. The claims of servant leadership theory to focus on building capability/skills in the employee as a primary focus of the leader (Luthans & Avolio, 2003). [This research project seeks to understand the relationship of the defined servant leader behaviors on building and enabling psychological capital capability/skills of hope, optimism, efficacy and resilience of the employee].

2. Over the last ten years, the research base for servant leadership has been growing (Northouse, 2013; van Dierendonck, 2011). [This allows for a rich research review to inform the design, data analysis and applications of the conclusions of this study.]
3. A favorable impact on subordinate in-role performance has been reported (Meuser et al., 2011). [This suggests that the defined behaviors of a servant leader will have a direct impact on the performance and behavior of the employee.]
4. The defined servant leader behaviors are state-like and therefore can be developed (vs. traits or style theories which cannot) by leaders wishing to improve their influence as a leader (Spears, 2010). [This has significant implications for the application of this study (i.e., leadership development and selection), once the relationship between the leader behavior and the follower psychological capital is better understood.]
5. The Servant leadership model considers the integration of the organizational context and culture as antecedents and influences of leader behavior and follower outcomes (Liden, Panccia, Hu & Meuser (2013). [The inclusion of these antecedents will help to explain supporting variables influencing leader and follower behavior.]

Servant Leadership

Robert Greenleaf first introduced the term "servant leadership" in his seminal work *The Servant as Leader* (Greenleaf, 1970). Through a series of essays, lectures and his celebrated book *Servant Leadership: a Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power*

and Greatness, Greenleaf (1977) provided both the philosophical and practical foundations of the servant leadership theory. Working for AT&T for 40 years, he worked his way through many leadership roles culminating in the role of Director of Management Research. In this role and his vocation after retirement, he sought to understand the antecedents and demonstration of ethical leadership particularly in light of the issues of power and authority (Northouse, 2013; Pousa, 2014; Tran 2014).

Greenleaf credits his articulation of the servant leader to Herman Heese's 1956 novel, *The Journey to the East.* In the novel, readers are introduced to a servant who performs menial tasks for the travelers of a mythological journey. As the pilgrims encounter various trials and challenges along their journey, the servant unifies and sustains the group through his unique devotion, spirit, and songs. When the servant disappears, various self-proclaimed leaders emerge to attempt to lead the group. However, the group falls into conflict and disarray and ultimately abandon the journey. Greenleaf recognized the unique leadership demonstrated by this servant through his selfless devotion to the pilgrims (Northouse, 2013; Spear 2010, Tran 2014). It was the selfless devotion to others as illustrated in the story and in the Bible stories of his Quaker faith that stimulated him to consider the role of service to others for leaders (Beaver, 2014). Later in life, he founded the Center for Applied Ethics, now the Robert K. Greenleaf Center.

Although he lacked an operational definition of servant leadership, he described the concept as:

> "… the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead… to make sure that other people's highest

> priority needs are being served. The best test--- is: do those served grow as persons; do they while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants?" (Greenleaf, 1970, p15).

Rooted in going beyond one's self-interest and creating opportunities to help followers grow (Luthans & Avolio, 2003), the servant leader releases the traditional strongholds of command and control for employee empowerment and development. Greenleaf's writings suggest that good leadership is a commitment to the growth of individual employees, the survival of the organization and a responsibility to the community (Reinke, 2004).

Spears (2002), who worked as the Director of the Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership, articulated ten characteristics of the servant leader:

- listening (listen first),
- empathy (understanding others point of view),
- healing (well-being);
- awareness (environmental and personal impact);
- persuasion (convince others);
- conceptualization (visionary);
- foresight (anticipate change);
- stewardship (responsibility);
- commitment to people growth (personal and professional); and,
- building community (safe place).

Spears' characteristics have often been cited and has served as the basis for most subsequent work to operationalize the concepts of servant leadership (Parris & Peachey, 2013; Pousa, 2014). Spears was the "most influential person to translate Greenleaf's ideas into a model of the servant leader" (van Dierendonck, 2011, p.1231).

Although the characteristics of a servant leader including the commitment to ethical behavior, employee empowerment and giving back for the greater good of the community are appealing concepts during times of increased corporate scandal and falling employee engagement, there has been no consensus on an operational definition or theoretical framework for servant leadership (Block, 2005). So while servant leadership ideals and perspectives were enjoying a rise in popularity and even adoption in practice in organizations across the globe, the research community lagged behind without a consensus on a common framework or research tools with which to investigate these concepts (van Dierendonck, 2011). However, over the last 15 years, sprouting from the initial work of Greenleaf and Spears, new operational definitions and a wide variety of descriptions of key characteristics of the servant leader have emerged. These have been articulated as researchers attempted to develop and validate operational assessments for the servant leadership theory (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006; Ehrhart, 2004; Laub, 1999; Linden et al., 2008; Patterson, 2003, Russell & Stone, 2002; van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2011). Most of these models of servant leadership focused on assessing the key characteristics of leaders demonstrated (or not) in servant-like behaviors by the leader. Although there were overlaps in constructs, each approach (re)defined the characteristics and priorities of the servant leader. Most leadership models fail to describe clearly the role of the follower in the leadership interaction (Tran, 2014). Followership has been

systematically devalued and understudied as a variable in leadership theory (Alcorn, 1992; Bjugstad, Thach, Thompson & Morris, 2006). However, no leader leads without a follower. The intent to influence toward common goals from our definition of leadership articulated above requires someone's to influence. Meuser et al., (2011) report that these servant leader behaviors have a positive impact on the in-role performance of followers.

Linden, Wayne, Zhao & Henderson (2008) developed a model of servant leadership that considered not only the servant leader behaviors but also the antecedent conditions and resulting outcomes of these leader behaviors. Antecedent conditions are defined as the organizational culture, leader attributes, and employee receptivity which shape the context of the leadership interactions. Organizational culture is an antecedent to employee receptivity, individual achievement and organizational performance (Liden et al., 2013). The seven servant leader behaviors, which resemble those articulated by Spears (2002) include: conceptualizing, emotional healing, putting followers first, helping employees grow and succeed, behaving ethically, empowering, and creating value for the community. Servant leader behaviors are demonstrated within the context described as antecedents, with the desire to produce the following outcomes: positive employee performance and growth; organizational performance; and, then ultimately societal impact.

For this project, Servant leadership is defined as "an understanding and practice of leadership that places the good of those being [led] over the self-interest of the leader, emphasizing leader behaviors that focus on follower [employee] development, and de-emphasizing glorification of the leader" (Hale and Fields 2007, p.397). This research

begins to tie the behaviors of a servant leader to employee psychological capital constructs.

Servant Leadership – Eight Behaviors

Van Dierendonck & Nuijten (2011) outlined eight dimensions of servant leadership. Their objective was to articulate a description of the theoretical underpinnings of servant leadership and to create a survey instrument, the Servant Leader Survey (SLS) to assess the theoretical foundations. Each of the eight dimensions of the SLS are based on literature and represent the result of multiple validation studies:

1. **Empowerment** describes behavior aimed at "fostering a pro-active, self-confident attitude among followers and gives them a sense of personal power" (van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2011, p. 251). Servant leaders believe in the intrinsic value of each employee. Their empowerment behaviors focus on enabling information sharing, self-directed decisions, and employee development through coaching, recognition and encouragement toward continual learning (Conger, 2000; Greenleaf, 1989; Konczak, Stelly & Trusty, 2000). Servant leaders look for opportunities to give others a chance to lead.
2. **Accountability** involves holding followers responsible for the personal and team performance that is within their control (Conger, 1989; Konczak et al., 2000). "It is powerful… to show confidence in one's followers; it provides boundaries within which one is free to achieve one's goals" (van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2011, p.252). Servant Leaders ensure self and others take direct responsibility for their actions. Although accountability

is often referenced in servant leadership literature, the SLS is the only instrument to include the measurement of accountability.

Together, empowerment and accountability are leader behaviors that require action of the employee toward defined outcomes.

3. **Standing Back** describes "the extent to which a leader gives priority to the needs of others first and gives them the necessary support and credit… to retreat into the background when a task has successfully been competed" (van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2011, p. 252). Servant leaders ensure others get the credit they deserve.
4. **Humility** is the acknowledgment of personal weaknesses, mistakes, along with one's strengths, and the ability to put personal accomplishments and capabilities in the proper perspective (Morris, Brotheridge & Urbanski, 2005; Patterson, 2003). Servant leaders "actively seek the contributions of others in order to overcome those limitations". (van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2011, p.252).
5. **Authenticity** is the ability of the leader to live consistent with their inner thoughts and feelings (Harter, 2002: Peterson & Seligamn, 2004). Servant leaders seek to live a life true to one's self both privately and publicly.
6. **Courage** is the willingness to take risks, challenge conventional wisdom and create or tolerate new ways to operate (Henrzndez, 2008; Russell & Stone, 2002). Greenleaf (1991) suggested that the calling out of managerial courage differentiated servant leadership from other leadership

models. Servant leaders demonstrate the ability to make the tough decisions.

7. **Interpersonal Acceptance** is about being able to consider the perspective of others, to accept mistakes or offences without caring a grudge, and, to demonstrate compassion, empathy and forgiveness of followers (George, 2000; McCullough, Hoyt & Rachal, 2000). Servant leaders build an atmosphere of trust, acceptance, and freedom to allow followers to try new things and make mistakes without fear of rejection or punishment (Ferch, 2005).
8. **Stewardship** is the willingness of a leader to serve objectives larger than those related to their self-interest (Block, 1993; Hernandez, 2008). The servant leader is a caretaker and role model for service to common goals shared across groups, organizations, communities, and societies. Therefore, "stewardship is closely related to social responsibility, loyalty and teamwork" (van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2011, p. 252).

Greenleaf (1991) stated that the servant-leader is a servant first. This perspective is sharply different from the person who is a leader first, perhaps because of the need to assuage an unusual power drive or to acquire material possessions. The leader first and the servant-first are two extreme types. The difference manifests itself in the care taken by the servant-first to make sure that other people's highest priority needs are being served. The servant leader's 'best test' is when through their interactions, employees grow. They develop the attitudes and capabilities to advance themselves and serve others. Luthans et al. (2006) explains that an individual's psychological capital describes

characteristics of an individual that shape how they interpret and react to events within their personal experience. Therefore, this project set out to better understand at how the manager behavior might influence the interpretations and reactions of employees.

Servant Leadership - Independent Variables

Over the last ten years, the research base for servant leadership has been growing (Northouse, 2013; van Dierendocck, 2011). Parris and Peachy (2013) conducted a literature review of 39 articles that appears in peer-reviewed journals between 2004 and 2011. Although these individual studies used a variety of instruments to measure the constructs and behaviors of servant leadership, the analysis described relationships of servant leadership behaviors to follower behaviors, including self-efficacy [r=.39, p<.01], need satisfaction [r=.42, p<.05], organizational commitment [r=..83, p<.001], job satisfaction [ranging from r=.37-.67, p<.05] and outcome performance [r=.24, p<.01] among other positive follower behaviors. Additionally, this analysis revealed negative relationships of Servant Leadership to job stress [r=.-18, p<.01], burnout [r= -.30, p<.01], turnover intentions [r= -..32, p<.01], and employee disengagement [r= -.32, p<.01]. In addition to the follower relate outcomes, the meta-analysis also reported the influence of servant leadership on organizational behaviors. Samples of these organizational measures of behavior include: team performance [ranging from r= .38 to .60, p<.01], procedural justice climate [r= .72, p<.05], psychological safety [r= .37, p<.01], and organizational learning [r= .58, p<.001].

Using a sample of 174 highly talented workers in the airline industry, positive correlations were established between servant leader behaviors of empowerment [r=.43, p<.01], humility [r=.27, p<.01], standing back [r=.24, p<.01], accountability [r=.44,

p<.01], and stewardship [r=.32, p<.01] as measured by the SLS and challenging work (Asag-Gau & van Dierendonck, 2011). Challenging work was measured by nine items taken from Manhart (1972) work values inventory, as revised by Meyer, Irving, and Allen (2008). This result makes the tie of servant leadership to the development of challenging work conditions for talented employees. Van Dierendonck, Stam, Boersma, Windt, and Alkema, (2013) reported a significant positive relationship of Servant Leadership to employee work engagement [r=.49, p<.01], organizational commitment [r=..25, p<.01], and psychological needs satisfaction [r=.61, p<.01].

The Servant Leader Survey (SLS) serves as the assessment of the independent variables for this project. As such it provides the ability to look at not only the relationship of servant leadership as a whole to employee psychological capital but also to explore the relationship between and among each of the individual define eight behavior and employee psychological capital.

Research Objective

The research objective of this study is to explore the relationship between servant leaders and employee psychological capital, which includes hope, optimism, efficacy, and resilience. More specifically, how do the eight behavior of the servant leader influence the psychological of their direct reports. Finding ways to impact the adaptability capability of the individual and the organization ability may be the difference between success and failure for both the organization and the individual (Hamel & Valikangas, 2003; Luthans, Vogelgesang & Lester, 2006). This knowledge can then inform leadership development and building positive employee attitudes and outcomes.

A study of the relationship between servant leadership and employee psychological capital has not been conducted previously. This study initiated the research of these relationships through the application of a mixed method research design in pursuit of answers to three research questions:

RQ1 – What relationship exists between the perceived demonstration of servant leader behaviors by a manager and the self-reported psychological capital (PsyCap) of the subordinate?

A meta-analysis of other-oriented leadership literature, including transformational and servant leadership research, has shown positive correlations to employee performance effectiveness and satisfaction and self-efficacy (Parris & Peachy, 2013; Marinova & Park, 2014). Although there is no reported research exploring the effect of other-oriented leadership on the hope or optimism of the subordinate, it seems reasonable to expect to see similar positive correlations between the SLS and employee self-rating of of PsyCap (which includes the constructs of resilience and self-efficacy) as reported for transformational leaders. Therefore, the following hypothesis is advanced.

H1a. There will be a positive relationship (correlation) between the perceived demonstration of the defined servant leader behaviors and reported PsyCap of the subordinate.

It is also anticipated that the sample population will not demonstrate any significant difference in reported psychological capital across the collected demographic variables.

H1b. There will be no relationship of the collected demographic data with participant reported PsyCap.

The second research question of this study looks to better understand the predictive relationship between leader behavior and employee psychological capital. Most of the research to-date on psychological capital has worked to identify predictive implications of PsyCap level on employee or leader performance outcomes (e.g., satisfaction, effectiveness) rather than exploring the antecedent influences on PsyCap (Luthans, Youssef & Avolio, 2007). Psychological capital, as a positive organizational behavior construct, has been defined as having 'state-like' qualities (i.e., open to change and development) however, there has not yet been an analysis of the influences the actions of the leader might have on the psychological capital in their employees. Therefore, this study seeks to better understand the relationship servant leader behaviors on the positive employee psychological capital.

RQ2 – Does the perception of the manager's demonstration of the eight identified servant leader behaviors, individually or together, predict employee PsyCap?

The review of the literature has generated two separate hypotheses connected to this research question. The first is based on the existing research about the perception of transformational leadership behavior on employee reported capability. Hartland et al., (2005) report a strong positive relationship between several transformational leadership factors and self-reported employee resiliency within MBA students in response to a change event within their individual workplace. One of these identified transformational leadership factors, idealized influence, is characterized by the leader who can effectively communicate a sense of higher purpose to the subordinate (Bass, 1990, Hartland, et al., 2005). Leaders that demonstrate high levels of idealized influence are able to help themselves and their followers transcend their immediate self-interests to focus attention

and effort on a higher-level, common goal. This behavior is very similar to the characteristic of stewardship within servant leadership research. Stewardship is that ability of the leader to focus personal and group attention on a longer term, higher order vision and to engender individual sacrifice for the good of the larger group and or objective (van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2011). The leader who demonstrates stewardship helps their team even in times of conflict or frustration, reach beyond the here and now to see the larger, long-term objectives. It is logical that this orientation supports the development and demonstration of personal resilience, as the individual is encouraged to see beyond the immediate crisis toward the longer-term promise of restoration and renewal. Since the positive relationship between the idealized influence of the transformational leader and employee resilience has been established, it follows that a similar positive relationship between the servant leadership behavior of stewardship and employee resilience will also be seen.

Bandura (1977) suggested that self-efficacy (i.e., confidence in one's abilities) can be developed through experience, practice and success/mastery. Self-efficacy and the perception of self-control has been identified as important success factors contributing to the ability to manage the stress, anxiety, and adaptation during disruptive change (Bandura & Locke, 2003). Although confidence is built through mastery and is specific to a task or context (Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998), it seems logical that one's direct supervisor can shape the conditions and expectations for individual capability development within the work environment. An empowering manager who provides opportunity, resources, clear performance expectations and ongoing support can facilitate the development of mastery by an employee (Cogner, 2000; Konczak et al., 2000).

Leaders who demonstrate empowering behaviors are not focused on their own authority, but on providing the autonomy, information, and support to build efficacy and strength in performance within others (Srivastava, Bartol & Locke, 2006). Therefore, it is appropriate to suggest that the level of empowerment measured in the SLS will be positively correlated to the individual's psychological capital (which includes self-efficacy).

Although these studies do not directly measure the influence of leader behavior on employee psychological capital, they do illustrate a link between leader behavior to components of the PsyCap construct – specifically resilience and self-efficacy. Considered within the theoretical perspective of positive organizational behavior and the established criteria for the development of, and inclusion in, the PsyCap construct, it seems reasonable to expect that these same predictive links will exist between the servant leader behaviors of empowerment and stewardship with the higher-order construct of PsyCap. Therefore, based on the evidence of a directional influence of these research studies that this it seems plausible to extrapolate the following research hypothesis.

> **H2a.** The servant leadership behaviors of stewardship and empowerment will have a stronger ability to predict subordinate reported PsyCap than the other defined servant leader behaviors.

The Servant Leader Survey (SLS) defines servant leadership as demonstrated by eight unique leader behaviors. Each of these behaviors is a powerful description of leadership behavior in and of itself. However, it is the combination of these behaviors that define servant leadership (Spears, 2002; van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2011). Together, these behaviors represent a unique follower-centered approach to leadership

characterized by providing opportunities for the employee to grow (Luthans & Avolio, 2003). It is the objective of this research study to understand the perception of how these individual leader behaviors interact to demonstrate servant leadership and to impact the psychological capital of the employee. This conclusion leads to the following research hypothesis.

H2b. The servant leadership behaviors taken together will be more predictive of subordinate PsyCap than any individual servant leader behaviors alone.

Lastly, in order to explain and enrich the results of the qualitative analysis designed to answer the first two research questions, two small focus groups of survey participants (8-12 participants) will assemble to engage in a discussion of findings. This structured, facilitated discussion will be designed to address the third and final research question.

RQ3 – What are the employee perceptions about their manager's servant leader behavior and its impact their own psychological capital?

By asking the participant how they explain (i.e., make sense of) the results within the context of their personal experience and perception, the research results can be more accurately interpreted.

Answers to these research questions will help to build a better understanding of the relationship of leader behavior to employee attitudes and abilities and therefore inform both our academic understanding and practical application. This research will support insight into leadership influence on employee attitudes demonstrated to have an impact on performance resiliency in the workplace.

Research Approach

Creswell and Clark (2007) argue that used alone, quantitative data are inadequate to address the complexities and subtleties of a topic as complex as the domain of leadership. Leadership cannot be boiled down into numbers alone (i.e., profit margin, cost trends) as it is built on relationships, individual styles, and imperfect people. Therefore, this research project will utilize a mixed method analysis in an attempt to take a quantitative snapshot of the statistical relationships and add the richness of discussion and interpretation gained through an additional qualitative analysis. Creswell (2014a) defines mixed method research as:

> "an approach to research in the social, behavioral and health sciences in which the investigator gathers both quantitative (closed-ended) and qualitative (open-ended) data, integrates the two and then draws interpretations based on the combined strengths of both sets of data to understand the research problem" (p. 2).

Therefore, the research approach for this study is grounded in both the post-positivist and interpretative worldviews. These two orientations to research suggest different methodologies to gather and interpret data which will be executed in two separate research phases of this project.

Phase I of this research project has a post-positivist orientation of a quantitative study that seeks to identify and assess the relationships among servant leader constructs and PsyCap constructs. Each participant will be asked to assess their current level of psychological capital, using the Psychological Capital Questionnaire (Luthans, Youssef & Avolio, 2007) which measures both the second-order construct of psychological capital as well as the subordinate state-like constructs of hope, optimism, efficacy and resilience. After they completed this self-analysis, they will also be asked to complete an assessment

of their perceptions of their direct supervisor or leader. The Servant Leadership Survey, created by van Dierendonck & Nuijten (2011), asks participants to assess their leader against eight dimensions of servant leadership including empowerment; accountability; standing back; humility; authenticity, interpersonal acceptance; courage and stewardship. Phase I analysis of this project will be the qualitative analysis of the survey data to understand what relationships may exist between the perceived behaviors of the leader and the individual employee' reported level of psychological capital. The specific details of the methodological design (e.g., population/sample selection; instrument reliability, data collection procedures, etc.) for both phases of this research project will be outlined in Chapter III – Methodology.

The quantitative analysis of Phase I will be followed by the Phase II qualitative analysis. The interpretative perspective of a qualitative analysis seeks to inform understanding through discussion and inquiry to better understand the relationships identified through the quantitative research (Creswell, 2004b). Applying the description and exploration methods and tools (i.e., question design, facilitation techniques) of the interpretivist framework, two focus groups of study participants will be assembled to discuss the findings from the Phase I data collection. By asking the focus group participants to discuss, interpret and explain the qualitative data collected in Phase I, additional data will be generated to help explain the relationships identified in this study. The discussion of these focus groups will be coded and analyzed in light of the quantitative findings to help shape the research observations, conclusions, and applications.

Instrument Selection

In Phase I of this study data will be collected via survey. The selection of the right instruments to measure both the dependent and independent variables are important to validity and generalizability of the research results.

This study will use the Psychological Capital Questionnaire (Luthans, Youssef & Avolio, 2007) to assess the dependent variables of employee behavior for this study. The twenty-four item Psychological Capital Questionnaire (PCQ) is an assessment tool designed and validated specifically to measure the constructs that met the defined criteria for positive organizational behavior research (i.e., theory-based; measurable, state-like/developable and related to positive work performance) (Luthans, et al., 2006). The PCQ measures not only the subordinate state-like constructs of hope, optimism, efficacy and resilience but provides an over-arching second level integrated construct of overall PsyCap. More details on this instrument are included in Chapter III – Methodology.

The PsyCap Questionnaire was created by combining items from recognized, validated assessments of hope, optimism, efficacy and resilience (Parker, 1998; Scheier & Carver, 1985; Snyder, et al., 1996; Wagnild & Young, 1993). Each of these scales has significant psychometric support across diverse samples and companies (Jensen & Luthans, 2006; Larson & Luthans, 2006). To select the items from these four assessments to be included in the PCQ, two criteria were applied (Luthans, et al., 2007). First, it was determined that each factor would have equal weight within the PCQ. Second, the selected items had to have face and content validity with being both state-like and relevant to the workplace. The evaluation of an expert panel of the total pool of items against these criteria yielded six items for each sub-construct for a total of 24 items.

The response choices were aligned to a six-point Likert-type scale (1= strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = somewhat disagree, 4 = somewhat agree, 5= agree, 6 = strongly agree).

Luthans and colleagues (2007) tested this scale across four separate samples. These samples yielded Cronbach alpha scores as follows: hope (.72, .75, .80, .76), optimism (.74, .69, .76, .79), self-efficacy (.75, .84, .85, .75) and resilience (.71, .712, .66, .72) and an overall PsyCap (.88, .89, .89, .89). With the exception of one sample for optimism and one for resilience, generally accepted levels of internal consistency were reached. Survey data was tested for skewness and kurtosis which confirm assumptions of normality. A confirmatory factor analysis was conducted on multiple samples to establish the proposed second-level structure for overall PsyCap (i.e. a construct describing an underlying construct across the sub-constructs). The factor loading was significant on their respective latent factor at $p<.01$.

In addition to confirming the factor structure for PsyCap, the discriminant, convergent and criterion validity was empirically examined (Luthans et al., 2007). PsyCap was not related to education, age, openness or agreeableness, but did have a strong positive relationship to conscientiousness [$r=.39$, $p<.05$], extraversion [$r=.36$, $p<.05$] and core self-evaluations (measuring locus of control, neuroticism, self-esteem and self-efficacy) [$r=..60$, $p<.05$],. Two regression analyses were executed to examine the variance explained by PsyCap, conscientiousness, extraversion and core self-evaluations on employee job satisfaction and commitment outcome. In both cases, PsyCap was demonstrated to be a distinct variable predicting unique variance of both job satisfaction and organization commitment, representing the largest factor or organizational commitment. Test-retest analysis yielded an only moderate measure of

stability across time (.52). However, "there is at least preliminary empirical evidence that PsyCap may be 'state-like (Luthans, et al., 2007 p. 563).

Through hierarchical regression analysis, Luthans, et al., (2006) report a predictive validity related to (overall) PsyCap's ability to predict job satisfaction (beyond conscientiousness and extraversion and performance self-evaluation). Additionally, their analysis demonstrated discriminant validity between PsyCap from other constructs including personality traits, conscientiousness and extraversion, and performance self-evaluation. Although there was evidence identified for convergence between PsyCap and performance self-evaluation, they were shown to be empirically distinct by relatively low correlation and regression analysis. PsyCap does show promising evidence for predicting both job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

Recent reviews of the available assessment instruments designed to measure servant leadership behaviors by van Dierendonck (2011), Parris & Peachey (2013) and Pousa (2014) capture the diversity of the growing collection of research instruments targeting this leadership model. Table 2.3 illustrates a comparison of five different instruments most common servant leadership instruments along a series of evaluation dimensions including design methodology and reliability for each tool. Instruments that did not align with the with original servant leadership concepts, as articulated by Spear (2002), or demonstrated poor psychodynamic assessment characteristics or had limited use to-date were eliminated from consideration for use in this study.

Table 2.3

Summary of Servant Leader Instruments

	Laub (1999)	Ehrart (2004)	Barbuto and Wheeler (2006)	Liden et al.,., (2008)	Van Dierendonck & Nuijten (2011)
Operational definition main source	*Greenleaf (1977)* *Spears (1995)*	*Greenleaf (1977)* *Spears (1995, 1998)*	Greenleaf (1977) Spears (1995)	*Barbuto and Wheeler (2006)* *Page and Wong (2000)* *Spears and Lawrence (2002)*	*Greenleaf (1977)* *Spears (1995;Laub (1999)* *Russell and Stone (2002)* *Patterson (2003)* *Sendjaya (2003)*
Characteristics of the instrument	***One dimension*** *60 items*	***One dimension*** *14 items*	***Five dimensions*** • *Altruistic calling* • *Emotional healing* • *Wisdom* • *Persuasive mapping* • *Organizational Stewardship* *23 items*	***Seven dimensions*** • *Conceptual skills* • *Empowerment* • *Helping subordinates grow an succeed* • *Putting subordinates first* • *Behaving ethically* • *Emotional healing* • *Creating value of the community* *28 items*	***Eight dimensions*** • *Empowerment* • *Accountability* • *Standing back* • *Humility* • *Authenticity* • *Courage* • *Interpersonal acceptance* • *Stewardship* *30 items*
Methodology	*Adelphi group* *EFA*	*Literature review*	*Literature review* *Expert judges* *EFA; CFA*	*Literature review* *EFA; CFA*	*Literature review* *Expert judges* *EFA; CFA* *Cross-cultural validity*
Reported Reliability	*.98*	*.98*	*.68-.89 (self)* *.82-.95 (rater)*	*.86 - .91*	*.69 - 91*
Discriminant and convergent validity	*Not reported*	*Adequate content, and discriminate validity*	*Adequate content, discriminate and predictive validity*	*Strong content, discriminate and predictive validity*	*Strong content, discriminate and predictive validity; High stability*

Note. Adapted from Pousa, C., (2014). Measuring Servant Leadership. In R. Selladurai, & S. Carraher (Eds.) *Servant Leadership: Research and Practice* (p. 242).

The 30-item Servant Leadership Survey (SLS) by van Dierendonck & Nuijten (2011) will be used to assess servant leadership behaviors in this research study. The SLS instrument was selected based on the following criteria:

- construct alignment to original servant leadership characteristics (as articulated by Spear, 2002);
- methodology used to create and validate the instrument;
- cross-cultural testing;
- reported instrument reliability and validity; and,
- instrument availability for use in the study (pending).

The SLS survey "focuses on the leader-follower relationship as measured from the perspective of the follower" (van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2011, p.251). This assessment is designed to evaluate the following eight servant leadership behaviors: empowerment, accountability, standing back, humility, authenticity, courage, interpersonal, acceptance (also called forgiveness), and stewardship.

Van Dierendonck & Nuijten (2011) conducted eight quantitative and two qualitative studies to develop and test their instrument. The eight variables are psychometrically distinguished and have proven stable over several samples tested in two countries and describe the essential elements of servant leadership, as defined in theory and application, and have included characteristics neglected up to this point as part of their instrument. Tests against other instruments and related constructs (i.e., LMX, ethical leadership, transformational leadership), demonstrated the expected overlap of core leadership characteristics and also differentiated this tool as a unique measure of "one underlying leadership dimension, namely servant leadership… [which] takes the full

eight-factor model into account to measure servant leadership in its full breadth" (p.263). Additionally, the validation of the SLS has demonstrated respectable internal consistency statistics (ranging from .64 to .85) to the transformational leadership scale developed by Rafferty & Griffin, 2004 (as reported in van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2011).

Summary

The above review of literature highlighted the need to build capability within organizations and organizational members (i.e., leaders and employees) to adapt to the rapid change and volatility of the current work environment. Organizational resilience and more specifically psychological capital have been presented as a measure of the ability bounce back from adversity; even the adversity experienced within the organizational setting. A clear connection of these positive capabilities has been illustrated to desired outcomes for both the organizational and the individual employee (e.g., improved on the job performance, employee satisfaction; adaptability to change).

Although only one factor that influences the actions and reactions of the employee, the leader does play a unique role in influencing employee outcomes. Therefore, this chapter outlined the history of scholarly thinking and research related to leadership theory and application in order to set the groundwork for exploring the unique impact that the leader have on the abilities of the employee to prepare for and adapt to disruptive change within their work environment. Due to the unique follower-focused approach of the servant leadership theory of leadership, this chapter also outlined both the unique origin and evolution of this leadership model providing the framework for leader evaluation for this research project. A brief description of the research objective,

methodology, and measurement for this study was also reviewed in order to explain the conceptual research orientations and the specific research questions driving this project. This research agenda, design, and specific methodology will be the focus of the next chapter – Methodology.

Earlier in this chapter leadership was defined as "a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals [followers] to achieve a common goal" (Northouse, 2013, p5). During times of organizational upheaval and drastic change, the common goals held by the organizational stakeholders (e.g., steady, predictable workflow; individual feelings of competence and contribution; superordinate business goals) are often at risk. The leader who can build and encourage the capability of the organizational members to bounce back quickly from adversity will positively impact both the organizational outputs but the lives of the employees as well.

"The overwhelming benefit for the organization that fosters resilience and thriving in its workplace is a more highly motivated workforce…there is a mutually positive outcome for both the employees and the organization" (Ledesma, 2014, p.6).

CHAPTER III – METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This research project was designed to explore the impact an employee's perceptions of their direct manager's behavior would have on that employee's reported psychological capital (PsyCap). Luthans et al. (2007) explain that an individual's psychological capital describes characteristics of an individual that shape how they interpret and react to events within their personal experience. Therefore, this project set out to better understand how the perceptions of manager behavior might influence the interpretations and reactions of employees. This understanding will help inform how managers can support the needs and develop the capabilities of their employees. More specifically, this project was designed to begin to define the relationship between eight defined manager behaviors, as measured by the Servant Leader Survey (SLS), and positive psychological capital. This chapter describes the mixed method design that was used to research and explain the relationship of leader behaviors on employee capabilities (PsyCap).

Research Design

Two observations influenced the selection of the research methodology that was used in this study. First, a review of the literature revealed that there has been a lack of research on how servant leader behaviors can effect psychological capital. Therefore, even elementary correlations between these variables have yet to be established and would add to the understanding of the influence of manager's behaviors on employee's attitudes and subsequent actions. Second, the impact and influences of leadership on

employees is a complex and multi-faceted relationship. Creswell and Clark (2007) suggested that the assessment and interpretation of a manager's impact on the workplace and the individual employee they supervise would be best understood using a mixed method research design. Therefore, this study employed a mixed method approach to inquiry combining both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis procedures to produce a complete understanding and explanation of the defined research questions.

An explanatory sequential mixed method approach, also called "Quan-Qual method" (Creswell, 2014b, p. 220), was used in this project. Phase I of the project collected quantitative data via participant completion of two separate on-line surveys. The Servant Leader Survey (SLS) collected the employee's perception of their immediate manager's level of demonstration of eight servant leader behaviors. A second survey, the Psychological Capital Questionnaire (PCQ) gathered the employees' self-assessment of their level of psychological capital. The data collected via these two surveys allowed for a quantitative analysis of the relationships of the perceptions of the eight servant leader behaviors of the manager to the employee's psychological capital. Phase II of this research project used the qualitative tools of focus group discussions and interviews to gather additional insight into participant's explanations, interpretations, and applications of the statistical relationships identified in Phase I. The Quan-Qual methodology used two discrete data collection phases to provide a richer understanding and interpretation of the relationship among manager behaviors and employee psychological capital.

Throughout this study, the eight identified servant leader behaviors of the manager served as the independent variables and the employee psychological capital was

the dependent variable The quantitative data collection methods of Phase I were best suited to inform the first two of the study research questions:

RQ1. What relationship exists between the perceived demonstration of servant leader behaviors by a manager and the self-reported psychological capital (PsyCap) of the subordinate?

RQ2. Does the perception of the manager's demonstration of the eight identified servant leader behaviors, individually or together, predict employee PsyCap?

Once the statistical evidence was collected to define the relationship among managers' behaviors and employees' psychological capital, Phase II of this project presented these results to a subset of survey participants. Focus group discussions and one-on-one interviews were used to gather participant interpretations, explanations and applications of these results within the context of their individual and collective experience. The researcher conducted two focus group sessions with volunteers who completed the Phase I surveys and who expressed interest in participation in the additional discussions. Two additional interviews supplemented these results with individuals who were not available for the focus group sessions.

The focus groups and interviews of Phase II were designed to collect data on the third and final study research question:

RQ3 – What are the employee perceptions about their manager's servant leader behavior and its impact their own psychological capital?

A mixed method research design allows for the specific questions and procedures of the qualitative data collection to be influenced by the specific results generated via quantitative analysis (Creswell, 2014b). Therefore, the relationships found among leader

behaviors and employee psychological capital informed the specific focus group questions. A summary of the Phase I results were presented to the participants of Phase II. Using questions generated based on the output of the quantitative analysis, Phase II was designed to elicit more detail and specific examples from a sub-set of participants in order to help contextualize and explain the results of the Phase I. This approach facilitated a richer interpretation of the relationships among leader behaviors and employee psychological capital. The remainder of this chapter will explain the specific methodologies, instruments and data analysis protocols used in this study.

Sample Selection

The intent of this research project is to be able to generalize the results to the largest population possible, for example across industries, age groups, and organizational experience. However, the practical considerations of participant access also influenced the identification of the final research population. It was also important that the study population have recent work experience (within last two years) from which to rate their current (most recent) manager's servant leader behaviors. Although data collection within one or more organizations was an option, there was concern that setting would not ensure that the individual participant the perception of confidentiality to encourage them to share their honest evaluation of their manager, without fear of reprisal.

Considering the conditions of access, work experience and confidentiality lead the researcher to select full- and part-time graduate students at a Midwest university as the target population for this study. Working adults, who were returning to school to further their education, were the main persona of the graduate population. They provided a diverse cross section of potential participants across age, job functions and industries.

Additionally, the graduate students were readily available to the researcher and allowed for the participant to share their honest perspective as their manager remained anonymous to the researcher. For inclusion in the final data set, each student had to be currently employed or was employed during the two years prior to the study. This selection criteria was included to ensure some recent organizational work experience from which to make the subjects' evaluation of their manager and their self-reported PsyCap. The demographic diversity of graduate students also supported data segmentation for analysis and discussion related to the impact of these categories on individual PsyCap and overall generalizability of final results.

Once permission to conduct the study was obtained from the Institutional Review Board (IRB), the researcher met with the Graduate Council of graduate program directors, who granted permission to access the target population of graduate students across all academic functions of the university. Appendix A describes the initial solicitation of voluntary participation from the target population that was sent via a direct email campaign to all active graduate students. Also, to the initial email request for participation, two additional follow-up email reminder requests were sent to the potential participants at timed intervals. Each graduate student could only participate once in the study for Phase I and once for Phase II. In order to encourage participation in Phase I of this study, each invitation to participate explained that those who completed the two on-line surveys (SLS & PCQ) could optionally be entered into a random drawing for one of five $20 gift cards. Once the Phase I data collection was completed, the five winners were drawn using a random number table. A sample size of 150 participants was set as

the goal for Phase I data collection. The final sample size was 212 participants. The demographics of the Phase I participants are included in Chapter IV results summary.

Creswell, in describing purposeful sampling procedures for exploratory sequential mixed-method designs, suggests that "if the intent of the design is for the qualitative data to explain the quantitative results, the individuals in the qualitative sample need to be drawn from the pool of the participants in the quantitative sample" (Creswell, 2014b, p.79). Therefore, to maintain the integrity of the overall research design, the sample participants for Phase II were a subset of the participants of Phase I. Creswell goes on to suggest that one popular technique for identifying the participants of the follow-up sample is "to ask for volunteers when collecting quantitative data on instruments" (Creswell 2014b, p.79). At the end of the on-line survey instrument, each participant was offered the opportunity to volunteer to be considered for participation in the follow-up focus group activity. If more individuals volunteered than were needed, a stratified random sampling technique would have been used by considering the participant's length of service within the organization and his or her gender, to select the final participants.

Forty-three individuals expressed interest in participation in the Phase II focus group sessions. Once the Phase I analysis was complete an email invitation, shown in Appendix B, was sent to each of the individuals who volunteered for Phase II. This invitation explained that focus group participation could be in-person in the meeting room or remote via conference call line. It was clear from read-response requests attached to the original Phase II participation email request that many individuals were not accessing their school email address. The lack of response may have been due to the fact that the Phase II focus group sessions were conducted during the summer term when

many graduate students were not attending classes. However, fifteen individuals agreed to participate in the scheduled focus group sessions. The demographics of the Phase II participants are included in Chapter IV results summary.

Participation in both phases of this research study was completely voluntary, and any subject could choose to terminate their participation at any time during participation. Additionally, the informed consent forms for each phase explained procedures for addressing any question or concern that the subject might have with the research design, execution or confidentiality.

Data Collection

The following section outlines the specific procedures used for the data collection of both the Phase I (quantitative) and Phase II (qualitative) elements of this research project.

Phase I – Quantitative Data Collection

The initial phase of this research project conducted a quantitative assessment involving the on-line administration of two separate instruments – the Psychological Capital Questionnaire and the Servant Leader Survey. Appendix C includes the permissions obtained from the survey creators to use their surveys, in an on-line form, to support this doctoral research project. These permissions defined the use and required protocol for the use of each assessment instrument.

All of the data for Phase I was collected using the Survey Monkey on-line software tool, as a way to facilitate quick distribution, collection, and analysis.

Before launching the actual data collection, a small pilot study was executed using three individuals who accessed the on-line site and completed the survey. Based on the feedback collected via this pilot test, the instructions and workflow were adjusted to ensure clarity and ease of use. The final data analysis did not use the data collected during the pilot.

Each of the 771 graduate students at Point Park University received an invitation to participate in the survey. The email invitation briefly described the study objectives and process and explained that all proper approvals had been obtained from the university. The invitation also included a hyperlink to launch the on-line surveys. Upon survey launch, the participant was presented with a welcome page briefly explaining the project. Appendix D presents this welcome page which also included the Phase I Informed Consent form. Subjects who choose not to agree to the informed consent conditions were thanked for their interest and returned to the Point Park University web page.

Upon agreement with the conditions of the informed consent, the participant was granted access to the first data collection page which asked them to provide categorical data voluntarily describing themselves, the company for which they currently (or most recently) work and, their current or most recent direct manager. The specific identities of the individual participant, the organization nor the manager were not collected at any time during the data collection process. Appendix E outlines the list of the specific demographic data elements and the corresponding selection categories. The analysis related to these demographic variables is described in more detail in Chapter IV. The subject was free to abstain from providing any or all of this categorical information.

Next, the subject was asked to provide their perceptions of their psychological capital level by completing the 24-item PCQ. Once the PCQ was complete, instructions for completing the 30-item SLS was presented to the participant. The SLS ask the subject to describe their perception of the demonstration of the defined servant leader behaviors by their current immediate work manager. For this survey, the "immediate manager" is defined as "the person from whom you take the most job-related direction in your current or most recent role". This definition of manager supports the situation where employees may have more than one supervising influence in their work environment (e.g., administrative supervisor, project supervisor, job coach). The PCQ was administered before the SLS in an attempt to reduce the potential bias on their self-reported PsyCap. The subject was free to abstain from answering any or all of the questions for each of the surveys.

Once the participant completed the two surveys, a short description of the Phase II focus group data collection process was presented. At this point, the subject could optionally provide their name and contact information if they chose to be considered for participation in the follow-up focus group sessions. It was at this point in the on-line survey when the participant could also optionally provide their contact information for inclusion in the random drawing for five $20 gift cards.

Phase II – Qualitative Data Collection

Once the data from Phase I was collected and analyzed, an email request was sent to those who expressed interest in participation in Phase II, the qualitative data collection. Each participant that responded with continued interest was contacted individually to coordinate the scheduling of the follow-up focus group discussions. While these were

live sessions, the opportunity to participate virtually via conference call was also made available for those who could not attend a live session.

The first session included four individuals live in the meeting and two individuals on a conference call. The second session included five individuals live in the meeting room and two individuals on the phone. Two additional individuals who could not join the focus group sessions were interviewed individually over the phone using the same protocol as the group sessions.

As a way to facilitate the discussions, the focus group protocol described in Appendix F was created for each group's session and the individual interviews. The final meeting protocol after an initial pilot test of the group discussion. The protocol called first for the completion of the Phase II Informed Consent Form (see Appendix G). The informed consent of the remote participants was also collected before the sessions via email exchange. Once the informed consent forms were collected, the researcher briefly reviewed the objectives and procedures for the study and the 60-minute focus group discussion. The researcher then provided the participants an overview of the core concepts of both servant leadership and psychological capital. The researcher also provided an overview of the findings from the Phase I assessment. Together these items provided the foundation for the group discussion. Appendix H is a summary document provided to each live and remote participant that summarizes both the overview of key concepts and definitions and the summary of results of the Phase I analysis.

Once the explanation of Phase I results was complete, the participants had the opportunity to ask any clarifying questions. Then the researcher facilitated the discussion using the defined questions from the defined protocol questions. Open-ended questions

were used to elicit experiences, descriptions and participant interpretations of the relationships identified during the initial data analysis process. In addition to the pre-planned protocol questions, probing follow-up questions were used to encourage the participants to share their interpretations and personal applications as a way to explore the employee's perceptions of the impact of the leader's behavior on their psychological capital.

Quantitative Measures

Two separate survey instruments were used during the administration of Phase I of this study. This section will briefly describe the protocols, validity, and reliability for each survey.

Psychological Capital Questionnaire (PCQ)

The Psychological Capital Questionnaire (PCQ), presented in Appendix I is a relatively young instrument designed to measure the composite positive psychology construct known as psychological capital (Luthans, Youssef & Avolio, 2007). As explained in Chapter II, in their foundational research on positive organizational behavior (POS), Luthans et al., (2006) suggested that POS constructs must meet four criteria. These criteria are to be based on research and theory; be measurable; have state-like characteristics (i.e. are developable) and demonstrate a positive relationship to work performance. Luthans et al., (2006) built the PCQ on the foundation of four independent psychological scales that measured the four separate sub-constructs - hope, resilience, optimism and self-efficacy - each of which met the criteria of POS. They selected these constructs for inclusion in PsyCap from among numerous others based on their solid

grounding in published literature and demonstrated individual scale test reported reliability and validity. As reported in Chapter II, the literature on each sub-construct demonstrated its relationship to positive work performance and its state-like characteristic (vs. stable/unchanging traits). Each sub-construct included in PsyCap also demonstrated the ability to develop the construct in individuals (i.e. state-like) and has its own recognized and researched measurement instrument. The survey items in the PCQ that related to efficacy were taken from the Role Breadth Self-Efficacy (RBSE) scale created by Parker (1998). The Hope Scale (Snyder, et al., 1996) served as the source for items related to the self-report measure of hope. The scale created to measure optimism by Scheier and Carver (1985) was the source of items within the PCQ to measure optimism. Lastly, the Resilience Scale developed by Wagnild and Young (1993) provided items related to individual self-perceptions of resilience. The researcher developed the PCQ using these four instruments as a basis for survey items. Luthans et al., (2006) created the PCQ by leveraging an expert panel to select the "best six" items from each of the four established measures. The wording was adapted to the workplace environment and to reflect the state-like characteristic of each construct.

Each item within the PCQ represents a positive statement describing the self-assessment on one of the sub-constructs. The following three samples illustrate both selected positive statements and the association to a specific PsyCap construct.

- I feel confident helping to set targets in my work area. (self-efficacy);
- I usually manage difficulties one way or another. (resiliency); and,
- I can think of many ways to reach my current work goals. (hope).

Using a 6-point Likert-type scale (1 - strongly disagree; 2 – disagree; 3 – somewhat disagree; 4 – somewhat agree; 5 – agree; 6 – strongly agree), the PCQ participant assesses their agreement with twenty-four statements relating to their level of each of the defined PsyCap sub-constructs. Together, these 24 items describe the Psychological capital of the respondent – reported as the average per item score (i.e. total sum divided by 24).

Luthans et al., (2007) conducted research on the PCQ instrument using four samples (total n=404) and reported the following Cronbach alpha ranges for each measured construct, using six items from existing construct surveys, and the overall PsyCap measure:

1) self-efficacy: 6 items, α=.75-.85
2) hope: 6 items, α=.72-.80
3) optimism - 6 items, α=.69-.79
4) resilience: 6 items, α=.66-.72
5) PsyCap overall - 24 items, α=.88-89

They did note that although the optimism scale (.69) in one sample and resilience scale (.66) on another sample did not meet the generally accepted level for internal consistency, "the reliability of the overall PsyCap measure in all four samples was consistently above conventional standards" (Luthans, et al., 2007 p. 555). It should be noted that the overall PsyCap score, of the combined individual sub-construct items, has on average, a higher alpha score, which is a measure of internal consistency, than the individual scales when delivered as part of the PCQ.

Dawkins, Martin, Scott & Sanderson, (2013) in their critical review of the psychological capital construct and the psychometrics of the PCQ described the results of twenty-nine separate research projects. They reported the internal reliability to be consistent across studies with alpha levels above the minimal acceptable value of .70. They also suggested that the lower internal consistency reliability for optimism and resilience might be a result reverse scored items in their scales, which is a factor in reducing scale reliability. When these items were dropped the internal reliability improved for each scale (Dawkins, et al., 2013). They also investigated the instrument author's claims of discriminate and predictive validity to employee outcomes and concluded that although the results are promising, caution is warranted, and further research suggested.

Lastly, it should be reiterated that there is preliminary empirical evidence that PsyCap is 'state-like' and that in this way distinct from the more stable 'trait-like' nature of personality traits (Luthans, Youssef & Avolio, 2007). Therefore, targeted development, managerial direction/influence, vicarious observation and practice may improve the capability and demonstration of each construct.

Servant Leadership Survey (SLS)

Van Dierendonck & Nuijten (2011) created the Servant Leadership Survey (SLS) to assess the servant leadership behaviors identified in previous work. This instrument. Presented in Appendix J is well grounded in the perspectives and methodology surrounding servant leadership (Greenleaf, 1970; Laub, 1999; Patterson, 2003; Russell & Stone, 2002; Spears 1995). Pousa (2014) reports in a critical review of several popular servant leadership measurement instruments that the SLS leveraged an extensive

literature review, factor analysis, both exploratory (EFA) and confirmatory (CFA) and expert judges to establish a stable eight-factor structure. The resulting thirty-item SLS assesses eight distinct characteristics of the servant leader. Samples of the SLS survey items, with the factor it is designed to measure, include:

- My manager gives me the information I need to do my work. (empowerment);
- My manager earns from criticism. (humility); and,
- My manager has a long-term vision. (stewardship).

In the initial survey development and testing the individual leadership factors each demonstrated significance levels as follows (van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2011):

1) Empowerment: 7 items, α=.89;

2) Accountability: 3 items, α=.81;

3) Standing Back: 3 items, α=.76;

4) Humility: 5 items, α=.91;

5) Authenticity: 4 items, α=.82;

6) Courage: 2 items, α=.69;

7) Interpersonal Acceptance (also called Forgiveness): 3 items, α=.72; and,

8) Stewardship: 3 items, α=.74.

These significance levels were built using a total of 1032 participants in three separate studies. In addition to these studies, the authors also conducted a fourth study in the United Kingdom reporting confirmation of the eight factors with high-reliability coefficients (establishing evidence for cross-cultural validity).

Van Dierendonck & Nuijten (2011) also tested their scale for content and discriminant validity by comparing their instrument to several other leadership measures. These results are illustrated in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1

Servant Leader Scale (SLS) Content and Discriminant Validity Summary

Scale/Model	Correlation level		
	High	Medium	Low
Ehrhart (2004) One Dimensional Scale	Empowerment Standing Back Humility Authenticity Stewardship		Accountability Courage Forgiveness
Linden et al., (2008) Servant Leadership Scale	Empowerment Standing Back Humility Stewardship	Authenticity Courage Forgiveness	Accountability
Transformational Leadership	Empowerment Humility Stewardship	Accountability Standing Back Authenticity Courage Forgiveness	
LMX Charismatic and Ethical Leadership	Empowerment Standing Back Humility Authenticity		Accountability Courage Forgiveness

Note. Adapted from: Pousa, C. (2014). Measuring Servant Leadership. In R. Selladurai, & S. Carraher (Eds.) *Servant Leadership: Research and Practice* (pp. 211-242). Hershey, PA: Business Science Reference. doi:10.4018/978-1-4666-5840-0.ch011

This comparison suggests strong content validity for the constructs of empowerment, standing back, humility, and stewardship, and a weaker content validity for accountability, courage, and personal acceptance (also referred to as forgiveness).

Together the PCQ and the SLS were used to gather the perceptions of the research participants of their psychological capital and their perception of the servant leader behaviors of their direct supervisor/leader, respectively.

Qualitative Measures

Validity is established for quality analysis through the consistent application of proven procedures (Creswell, 2014b). For this study, the mixed method design supports building validity for the qualitative analysis collected through the focus group process was triangulated with the data collected via the quantitative analysis. Additionally, the qualitative data collection will include a rich description of the discussion of the focus group, describing the nature of the discussion, as well as the conclusion of the participants – including those perspectives that align with the research and those that represent discrepant themes/perspectives. Reliability was established through the use of complete transcripts, clear and consistent definitions for the thematic analysis, a single coder of the qualitative content and the use of a pilot to test both protocol and instructions for the data gathering.

This research project used existing assessment instruments and methodologies. This allowed the results of previous research, and their statistical analysis, to strengthen the argument that the selected instruments measure what they claim to measure (i.e., validity) and provide data on the stability and accuracy of the assessments themselves (i.e., reliability). Identifying, analyzing and, when possible, controlling for potential intervening variables (e.g., participant demographics, organizational characteristics, and variable interaction effects) help to explain the true impact of the intended independent variables (i.e., perceptions of servant leaders behaviors) on the dependent variable (i.e., PsyCap). Additionally, leveraging proven methodologies and research designs for both the quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis helped to define the generalizability and limitations of the resulting data

Data Analysis

Phase I of this project collected quantitative data to inform two research questions. The first defined research question seeks to understand the relationship among and between the independent variables (i.e., perceived servant leader behaviors) and the dependent variables (i.e., PsyCap constructs). To understand the strength of these relationships, a correlational analysis was conducted, and the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient represented the results. This statistical analysis describes the relationship of the eight independent variables (as measured by SLS) and the dependent variable (measured by PCQ). The results of this analysis are presented in Chapter IV.

The second defined research question sought to examine if an independent variable (or a combination of variables) predicts a positive movement in the dependent variable. Which perceptions of the manager's behaviors (or a combination of behaviors) have the greatest positive impact on reported psychological capital of the employee? To explore this predictive relationship, first an exploratory factor analysis was conducted to validate that each of the eight defined servant leaders behaviors were distinctly represented as independent variables within this data set (i.e. within the responses of this population). For the resulting dependent variable factors, a multiple linear regression analysis was conducted to identify models of predictability describing the effect of increased demonstration of the dependent variable, servant leader behaviors, would have on the self-reported psychological capital of the employee.

A correlation analysis of the collected categorical data describing the characteristics of the employee); their organization and the manager was also conducted to describe the relationships among these variables and the employee's psychological capital. These variables were also included in the regression analysis to understand their

ability to predict the PsyCap level of the employee. The results of these statistical tests are reported in Chapter IV.

Phase II of the data collection moves from the quantitative approach of Phase I to the interpretative worldview of qualitative research and analysis. Once the data collected in Phase I was analyzed, a set of open-ended questions was used to gather the perspectives of focus group and interview participants on the interpretations and applications of the results of Phase I. These semi-structured questions included open questions with identified follow-up probes for use as needed, were used to facilitate two focus group discussions and two individual interviews. These discussions were recorded and transcribed for data content analysis.

This qualitative analysis generated a set of themes with which to categorize the major ideas within the data (Rovai, Baker & Ponton, 2013). This content analysis applied Tesch's (1990) eight-step method for codifying semi-structured content gathered through interviews and or focus group discussions as described in Creswell (2014, p. 197-200). The output of this analysis will is a textual representation of the discussion (transcript) and a written summary analysis to illustrate the themes, conclusions and applications gathered through the focus group process. After the collection of both the quantitative and qualitative data results, the final stage of analysis described how the qualitative findings help to explain and extend the quantitative results (Creswell, 2014b). This analysis is reported in Chapter IV.

Limitations

This study was designed to explore the influence of managers' servant leader behaviors on the psychological capital of their direct reports. However, there are other

personal and organizational influences of psychological capital than just the impact of leader behavior that this study will not directly address. Although the study methodology is designed to consider the variables that may influence the relationship of managers' behaviors on their employees' psychological capital, it will not address other potential intervening variables, for example the influence of other influential individuals within the workplace or the impact of the specific individual experience differences the employees bring to their work that may impact their psychological capital.

The selected sample population of this study, graduate students, although accessible and working represent a non-random sample of the greater population of employees that have experienced leadership behaviors. Therefore, the size and demographic distribution of this sample will limit the generalizability of the results. This study represents the initial attempt to research the relationships among servant leader behaviors and psychological capital, and additional research is needed to deepen the understanding of these relationships.

Summary

Chapter III built upon the conceptual framework established in the literature review of Chapter II. This chapter explained the mixed method study design, sample, procedures, instruments, and analysis protocols of this study. By combining the quantitative procedures of survey analysis with the qualitative research methods associated with structured discussion data collection, this project will provide a complete analysis of the relationships among the independent and dependent variables. Through both statistical analysis of collected survey data and the thematic analysis of qualitative transcripts, this study begins to build an understanding of the relationships among servant

leaders behaviors demonstrated by a manager and the self-reported psychological capital of an employee. Chapter IV describes the results of the data collection and analysis and summarizes key findings. Chapter V provides a discussion the implications for scholarly and practical applications of each of the key learnings and conclude with recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER IV - FINDINGS

Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the defined analysis exploring three research questions which serve as a guidepost for this study. After an overview of the research methodology and execution, the specific results for each of these research questions are described in this chapter.

Through the administration of an on-line survey and then follow-up focus group/ interviews, a mixed method research design was executed. The objective of this research approach was to explore data collected through both quantitative and qualitative methods to provide a richer understanding of the impact of a manager's servant leader behaviors on the psychological capital of the employee. Therefore, this chapter will describe each of the two distinct research phases: Phase One, the quantitative analysis of data collected via an on-line survey, and Phase Two, the qualitative analysis of data collected via follow-up discussions with participants sharing their experience and perceptions of managers' behaviors on their personal psychological capital.

Psychological Capital (PsyCap) is the dependent variable in both phases of this study. As the initial study researching the relationship of the perception of a manager's servant leadership behaviors on psychological capital, it was decided to look only at the overall PsyCap construct, rather than to treat each sub-constructs hope, optimism, self-efficacy, and resilience, as separate independent variables. Although overall psychological capital is the result of combining (adding) the individual results from these four sub-constructs, as was described in Chapter II, the over-arching construct of overall PsyCap demonstrates a stronger predictive power to performance and attitudinal

outcomes (Luthans, Avolio, Avey & Norman, 2007). Developing a better understanding of the impact of the perception of the manager's behavior on each of these sub-constructs individually would be an important contribution to research. This level of analysis was defined outside the scope of this specific pioneering study.

The independent variables for both phases of this research project are the eight servant leader behaviors measured in the Servant Leader Survey (van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2011). Each of the defined servant leader behaviors: empowerment, accountability, humility, courage, interpersonal acceptance (also called forgiveness), authenticity, standing back and stewardship were treated individually and collectively as independent variables for this analysis. To create each individual construct score, the scores on questions related to that construct were averaged together to generate one score for each construct. All 30-items were averaged together, per survey author instructions, to generate an overall SLS score. Therefore, conclusions can be drawn based on the demonstrated relationships of each behavior with PsyCap, as well as with the combinations of the servant leader behaviors. The quantitative analysis described below reveals both the correlational and predictive relationships between these independent variables and the dependent variable, PsyCap.

We begin the description of the research process and analysis with a short review of the overall research timeline, see Appendix K. As this research leverages two existing surveys: the Psychological Capital Questionnaire (PCQ) and the Servant Leader Survey (SLS), the researcher was granted permission to use the surveys from the respective survey authors. After a successful research proposal defense and with permission from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) the project was launched. As this study followed

the QUAN-QUAL research design (Creswell, 2014b), the quantitative data collection was initiated first, with the launching of the two-part on-line survey. An initial email was sent to the entire graduate population of Point Park University requesting participation in this research study. The on-line survey was open for approximately three weeks. Once the quantitative data was collected, it took one month to analyze the data and build the final protocol for the Phase Two, qualitative analysis. This phase consisted of focus group sessions and personal interviews conducted over a two-week period.

It is important to note that while the findings reviewed below do demonstrate a positive contribution to understanding how servant leader behaviors impact employee attitudes (psychological capital), the relationships described represent only a small slice of a very complex dynamic between leaders and followers.

Phase I – Quantitative Results

The research objective of Phase One was to collect quantitative data on the perceptions of employees about the demonstration of servant leader behaviors of their immediate (most recent) manager and their perception of their own psychological capital.

Phase I – Sample

The target population for Phase One was all graduate students, both on-site and on-line students, at Point Park University who had worked within the last two years. This population had two characteristics important to this study: recent work experience from which to draw their evaluations of their manager, and availability to the researcher. As this study focuses on the perceptions of employees on their bosses, it was important to identify a population with current or recent work experience. The majority of the

graduate student population at Point Part University are working adults, returning to school to continue their education. Of the entire graduate population of 771, a total of 253 graduate students selected the embedded hyperlink to launch the on-line survey.

In order meet the selection criteria as a subject in this study, the participant had to demonstrate recent work experience. This was tested based on their answer to the following survey question: "Are you currently employed or have you been employed, at least part-time in the last two years". If they selected the option "yes", they were considered for participation in the study. If they selected "no" or "yes; self-employed," they were thanked for their interest, returned to the university web-site. Thirteen of the initial 253 respondents were disqualified based on their response. These individuals were disqualified as they did not have recent work experience to consider when completing the surveys or had no immediate supervisor to evaluate.

The qualifying participants were provided access to complete the first, the 24-item PCQ to describe their perception of their own psychological capital within the context of their current (most recent) employment situation. Then they were given access to the 30-item SLS, to describe their perception of their immediate (most recent) manager's demonstration of the eight servant leader behaviors.

An additional twenty-seven initial respondents were removed from consideration as final study participants as they did not complete one or both of the two surveys. Although the participants had the opportunity to leave any individual questions blank, if they desired, without at least some of the questions answered for one or both of the surveys it was impossible to assess correlations between the two survey results. One additional individual was removed from the final participant data who only completed a

small amount (9 of 30) of the SLS survey. Therefore, the final count of participants in Phase One of this study was 212, which is a 27.5% response rate of the larger 771 population of graduate students who were sent the survey.

In addition to completing the two surveys, each participant was asked to optionally complete a set of select demographic data on themselves, their current (most recent) role/job, the current (most recent) company, and their current (most recent) manager. This data was collected to enable exploration of potential relationships with the perception of manager demonstration of servant leader behaviors and the employee psychological capital. For example, do woman have higher PsyCap than men? Or does a male manager have a greater impact on employee PsyCap than a woman manager? If such relationships exist between these demographic variables and employee of PsyCap, it is important to understand when researching the relationship between the independent variables (eight servant leader behaviors) to the dependent variable (PsyCap).

The demographic analysis of the 212 participant (employee) sample is presented in the tables 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3. In each table, the frequency represents the raw count for each category, and the percent represents the relative size of that category, compared to other categories and the total sample. When the frequency of category was very small, they were combined for reporting and analysis purposes. For example, several respondent race categories individually were less than 2% of total (American Indian or Alaska Native; Asian, Hispanic or Latino, and Mixed Race). Therefore they were combined into an "other" category, representing a total of 8.5% of the sample.

Table 4.1
Final Sample – Respondent's age: frequency and percent of total

Respondent Age	Frequency	Percent
Under 25	30	14.2
25-35	108	50.9
36-45	41	19.3
Over 46	32	15.1
Prefer not to report	1	.5
Total	212	100.0

Table 4.2
Final Sample – Respondent's gender: frequency and percent of total

Respondent Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	54	25.5
Female	158	74.5
Total	212	100.0

Table 4.3
Final Sample – Respondent's race: frequency and percent of total

Respondent Race	Frequency	Percent
Black or African American	26	12.3
White	168	79.2
Other	18	8.5
Total	212	100.0

A review of these descriptive statistics reveals a greater percent of females and whites participated in this study. This skewed distribution does represent a limitation of this sample, although the population from which the sample was drawn is also skewed on these two variables reporting 61.1% female and 63.9% white graduate population.

Next, the descriptive characteristics of the company for which the participant (employee) is currently (or most recently) employed is presented in Tables 4.4, 4.5 and 4.6:

Table 4.4
Final Sample – Respondent's position type: frequency and percent of total

Respondent Position	Frequency	Percent
Individual Contributor	150	70.8
Manager (leads the work of others)	49	23.1
Senior Management (sets strategy)	13	6.1
Total	212	100.0

Table 4.5
Final Sample – Respondent's length of service with company: frequency and percent of total

Respondent Length of Service with Company	Frequency	Percent
under 6 months	12	5.7
6 months to 1 year	38	17.9
1 to 2 years	45	21.2
2 to 5 years	58	27.4
5 to 10 years	36	17.0
Over 10 years	23	10.9
Total	212	100.0

Table 4.6
Final Sample – Respondent's length of service working for manager: frequency and percent of total

Respondent Length of Service working for Manager	Frequency	Percent
under 6 months	27	12.7
6 months to 1 year	57	26.9
1 to 2 years	54	25.5
2 to 5 years	53	25.0
Over 5 years	21	10.0
Total	212	100.0

Table 4.5 describes the amount of time the participants has been working for their current company, not overall work experience which may be longer. However, this sample is skewed toward shorter tenure working for their current company. Individual contributors represented 70.8% of the sample. The remaining 28.2% of the sample were

people managers, and like the individual contributor were asked to evaluate their immediate (most recent) manager on their demonstrated servant leadership and their own personal PsyCap.

The third set of descriptive statistics were generated to describe the company for which the participant (employee) currently (or most recently) worked. The results are described in the Tables 4.7 and 4.8. Although the data collection category options for Company Industry was a much larger list, borrowed from US Department of Commerce categories of industries, there were many categories that represented a small percentage of the total sample. Although these classifications appear in Table 4.7, they were combined into the category "Other" for reporting and analysis purposes.

Table 4.7
Final Sample – Company size, by employee count: frequency and percent of total

Company Size by Employee Count	Frequency	Percent
Under 50	42	19.8
51-100	33	15.6
101-250	19	9.0
251-500	29	13.7
501-1000	24	11.3
1001-5000	18	8.5
Over 5000	47	22.2
Total	212	100.0

Table 4.8
Final Sample – Company industry category: frequency and percent of total

Industry of Company	Frequency	Percent
Natural Resources*	2	.9
Manufacturing*	2	.9
Trade/Transpiration*	4	1.9
Information*	1	.5
Financial*	12	5.7
Prof Services*	6	2.8
Education	104	49.1
Health Sciences	31	14.6
Leis & Hospitality*	3	1.4
Other	47	22.2
Total	212	100.0

* - combined with "Other" category for analysis purposes.

The size of the companies represented in this sample was well-distributed from small companies to large companies. However, there was a skew of participants who reported working in the education industry (49.1%). This may be partially explained for this sample based on the strength of reputation of this university for graduate education in the field of education and a new on-line Master's degree in Education introduced the semester when this research was executed. Both of these variables contributed to the larger percentage of graduate students enrolled in education related graduate programs at this university. This skew represents a limitation to the study as the percentage of individuals in the sample working in the education industry is so large. However, the industry type does not demonstrate a significant relationship to employee PsyCap level in these findings.

One other category of company descriptors was collected intending to separate profit from non-profit companies. The results reflected a confusion on terms (i.e. non-

profit vs. not-for-profit) and lack of internal inconsistency so that data is not reported in this analysis.

In the final category of demographics collected, the participants were asked to describe (estimate) category descriptors for their current (most recent) manager, the focus of the SLS evaluation. Tables 4.9 through 4.13 present these results. Once again, categories with small relative percentages were included in other categories for reporting and analysis purposes.

Table 4.9
Final Sample – Manager's estimated age: frequency and percent of total

Manager's Estimated Age	Frequency	Percent
Under 35	35	16.5
36-45	69	32.5
46-55	63	29.7
Over 56	43	20.2
Prefer not to report	2	.9
Total	212	100.0

Table 4.10
Final Sample – Manager's reported gender: frequency and percent of total

Manager's Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	108	50.9
Female	102	48.1
Prefer not to report	2	.9
Total	212	100.0

Table 4.11
Final Sample – Manager's reported race: frequency and percent of total

Manager's Race	Frequency	Percent
Black or African American	16	7.5
White	186	87.7
Other	6	2.9
Prefer not to report	4	1.9
Total	212	100.0

Table 4.12

Final Sample – Manager's estimated length of service with company: frequency and percent of total

Manager's Estimated Length of Service with Company	Frequency	Percent
Under 2 years	25	11.7
2 to 5 years	50	23.6
5 to 10 years	58	27.4
10 to 25 years	58	27.4
Over 25 years	21	9.9
Total	212	100.0

Table 4.13

Final Sample – Manager's estimated length of service as manager: frequency and percent of total

Manager's Estimated Length of Service as Manager	Frequency	Percent
under 2 years	27	12.7
2 to 5 years	50	23.6
5 to 10 years	64	30.2
10 to 25 years	56	26.4
Over 25 years	15	7.1
Total	212	100.0

Similar to the employee demographics, manager's race is skewed toward white. However, the gender of the manager evaluated is much more balanced than the representation of the employees in this sample (50.9% male; 49.1% female). The estimated age, length of service with the company, and length of service as a manager (entire career) represent relatively normal distributions for manager experience.

Phase I - Data Collection

Prior to the launching of the survey, a small pilot test was executed to test how well pilot participants were able to understand the instructions and complete the on-line surveys. Three individuals, in addition to the researcher, completed the on-line survey

testing the links and providing feedback directly to the researcher. Updates and corrections were made based on this feedback. The collected data was not used in this analysis.

Once the on-line survey was launched, it remained open three weeks. Five $20 gift cards were offered, based on random drawing of the final list of participants, to stimulate interest and participation. Three additional reminder emails from the researcher were also sent to encourage participation. The researcher attended the assembly of graduate program directors (called the Graduate Council) to discuss additional ways stimulate participation. Although the Council decided to refrain from making specific requests of individual professors to discuss the research project in their individual classes, several graduate program directors did send emails, on the researcher's behalf, to their respective graduate populations encouraging participation.

In order to gain access to the surveys (SLS & PCQ) the participant had to first indicate agreement with the on-line informed consent. Anonymity was promised and maintained for each participant, to allow them to provide honest and candid feedback without fear of discovery or reprisal in any way. The participants only included their personal information to register for the drawing, or to provide contact information if they had an interest to participate in the Phase Two data collection. This personal data was seen only by the researcher and removed immediately from the database to ensure confidentially. The process of data reduction (elimination of select respondents from the master database) was described above. The final tally of the quantitative data consisted of responses by 212 individuals.

Phase I - Data Manipulation

Since each participant had the option to not provide a response to one or more individual questions in these two surveys, there was missing data in the dataset. Of the 11,448 total items that could have been potentially completed by this sample of 212, only 36 individual items were missing (0.31%). To address the missing data, Little's MCAR (missing completely at random) test was executed to ensure the missing values were, in fact, missing at random. The results yielded a Chi-Square=1329.321, DF=1319, Sig=.416. Since the results were not significant, it can be determined that the missing values were random. Therefore, the Expectation Maximization (EM) algorithm was applied to identify individual values for the each missing item. As EM uses the patterns in the larger data set to generate the most appropriate value for each missing data item, it generates a non-whole number. An EM was run on each separate subscale for each of the SLS eight constructs. For the purpose of this data set, resulting values were rounded to the nearest whole number, in order to match the valid values for response in the individual surveys.

One last task had to be completed before the quantitative data analysis could start. Both the SLS and PCQ had individual items (questions) that used a reverse scale for evaluation. While both instruments used a 6-point Likert-type scale for evaluation (1- strongly disagree, 2- disagree, 3- somewhat disagree, 4- somewhat agree, 5- agree, 6- strongly agree) there were a few questions on each survey that reversed the language of the question to measure the absence of the variable rather than the presence of the target variable. For example, while most questions on the SLS were worded in a positive manner– "My manager encourages me to use my talents" there were also a few questions

that were worded in a negative manner – "My manager keeps criticizing people for mistakes they have made in their work." Therefore, to accurately reflect each construct (behavior), per the directions of the test authors, the scoring of a small set of the question had to be rescaled and the individual scores reversed (e.g. strongly agree converted to strongly disagree; strongly disagree converted to strongly agree). Once this was complete, then the entire data set was complete, and ready for analysis.

Phase I – Results

Correlation and multiple regression analyses were conducted to examine the relationship between employee's psychological capital and potential predictors (employer's servant leadership behaviors and demographic variables). First, Pearson's Correlation Coefficient tests were used to examine the association between psychological capital and Servant Leadership behaviors and then between psychological capital and employee and employer demographic variables.

Research Question #1

The first question this research project was designed to address is:

RQ1 – What relationship exists between the perceived demonstration of servant leader behaviors by a manager and the self-reported psychological capital (PsyCap) of the subordinate?

To begin to understand if a relationship exists between the independent variables, the perceptions of the manager's eight servant leader behaviors and the dependent variable, employee's PsyCap, a Pearson correlation analysis was applied to the final data set. If the relationship between the independent variable/s and the dependent variable

exists (i.e. is statistically valid), this test reveals both the strength and direction of the relationship (positive or negative). Table 4.14 summarizes the results of the correlational analysis.

Table 4.14
Summary of correlations of each of the servant leader behaviors to PsyCap

	Servant Leadership Behaviors								
	Empower	Stand Bk	Account	Forgive	Courage	Authen	Humility	Steward	SLS Overall
PsyCap	.478**	.353**	.334**	.269**	.311**	.341**	.325**	.370**	.457**
Sig (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
N	212	212	212	212	212	212	212	212	212

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The high level of significance of each of the correlations of the eight servant leader behaviors to PsyCap (sig=0.01 level, 2-tailed) suggests that there is a 99.9% probability that these correlations were not the result of chance. This significant level provides a high confidence level when considering the statistical relationships of the independent variable.

The first stated hypothesis associated with this initial research question is as follows:

> **H1a**. There will be a positive relationship (correlation) between the perceived demonstration of the defined servant leader behaviors and reported PsyCap of the employee.

Table 4.14 shows that each of the eight servant leader behaviors is statically related to PsyCap at a 0.01 level. The relationship between PsyCap and each servant leader behaviors are most likely not due to chance. Additionally, this data shows a positive relationship among PsyCap and each servant leader behavior. Therefore, it can be said that as the perception of manager's behaviors increase, so does the employee's

reported individual psychological capital. The reverse would also be true: as perceptions of these behaviors decrease in managers, so does PsyCap in the employee. The data collected via survey completion by this sample suggests that the perception of servant leader behaviors in a manager does have a positive relationship to the psychological capital of employees.

The strength of the positive relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable vary based on the specific servant leader behavior. The strongest individual variable relationship is between the perception of empowering manager behaviors and the employee PsyCap [r=.478, p<.01]. This represent a positive correlation between variables. Stewardship and Standing Back (i.e. giving priority to the needs of others) followed with [r=.370, p<.01] and [r=.353, p<.01] respectfully. These correlations, along with the remaining servant leader behaviors, represent a lower positive correlation. It should also be noted that the eight servant leader behaviors combined into SLS overall (mathematically combined, per instructions of SLS author) also demonstrated a positive correlation [r=.457, p<.01]. While these correlations are not extremely strong, the data confirms the presence of a positive relationship between the perceptions of each of these servant leader behaviors and employee psychological capital. The hypothesis (H1a) is accepted.

The statistical support for a positive relationship between the independent and dependent variables provided the impetus to dig a little deeper into a regression analysis, described below. If no evidence of a relationship existed, there would be no value in the additional analysis.

The second stated hypothesis associated with this initial research question is as follows:

H1b. There will be no relationship of the collected demographic data with participant reported PsyCap.

In order to understand the influence of the demographic characteristics on PsyCap additional correlations analyses were run. Reported below are only the demographic variables that demonstrated a statistical relationship to PsyCap. Table 4.15 illustrates the demographic variables associated with the survey respondent.

Table 4.15
Summary of correlations of each of the respondent demographic variables to PsyCap

	Age	Gender	Race
PsyCap	.202**	-.026	-.041
Sig (2-tailed)	.003	.709	.552
N	212	212	212

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The only respondent demographic variable to demonstrate a statistically significant result is age. This relationship is a weak but positive correlation. More will be said about this variable both as part of the regression analysis and the Phase Two qualitative results.

The description of the employees' role within their company and the duration of their experience is outlined in the table 4.16.

Table 4.16

Summary of correlations of role categories to PsyCap

	Position Type	Length of Service with Company	Length of service working for this Manager
PsyCap	.268**	.159*	.183**
Sig (2-tailed)	.000	.020	.008
N	212	212	212

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Each of these variables has a weak, but significant positive relationship to PsyCap. The position type is the difference between the accountabilities of the respondent. An individual contributor was distinguished from a manager (who leads the work of others) and the Senior Manager (who sets strategy). In summary, the type of role in which one works (e.g. manager vs. individual contributor), and the length of time working for a specific manager, both have a slight positive relationship with psychological capital.

The descriptions of company the employee works (most recently worked) for yielded no significant relationship to PsyCap scores as illustrated in table 4.17, thus suggesting that the size or industry type (e.g. industry sector in which a company is working) of the company had no relationship on the employee reported PsyCap.

Table 4.17

Summary of correlations of company descriptors to PsyCap

	Company Size by Employee Count	Company Type (For Profit; Non-Profit)***	Company Industry
PsyCap	.012	.114	.-.057
Sig (2-tailed)	.867	.098	.411
N	212	212	212

***. This variable demonstrated a lack of clarity for respondents and poor internal consistency

The last group of demographic categories analyzed for potential relationship to PsyCap was the description of the Manager the respondent assessed in the SLS survey. These results are presented in table 4.18.

Table 4.18

Summary of correlations of estimated manager demographics to PsyCap

	Age	Gender	Race	Length of Service with Company	Length of Service as Manager
PsyCap	.089	-.103	-.044	.026	.139*
Sig (2-tailed)	.198	.133	.528	.707	.044
N	212	212	212	212	212

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Only the length of service as a manager had a significant relationship with PsyCap of the employee, with a weak positive relationship. Additionally, this result suggests that the manager's age, race, or gender had no association to the self-reported level of PsyCap of the employee.

A Pearson's Correlation analysis was run to look for associations between the demographic characteristics (e.g. age, race, gender) of the respondent and their evaluation of the eight servant leader behavior as demonstrated by their manager. There were no significant relationships found among the respondent demographic variables and the servant leader evaluation of their manager. This result suggests that, for this sample, the demographic characteristics of the employee had no association with how they viewed the eight behaviors.

Similarly, a Pearson's Correlation was run to check for the relationships among the characteristics of the company (e.g., size, industry), their individual role (e.g. individual contributor, manager) and the manager (e.g., age, race, and gender), and how

the employee perceived each of servant leader behaviors, as demonstrated by their manager.

For the company characteristics, there were no significant results, with the following exception: the size of the company was negatively correlated to the perception of manager courage [r=.204, p<.01], indicating that the larger the company, the less the manager was perceived to demonstrate courageous behavior (e.g. willingness to take risks, challenge conventional wisdom and tolerate new ways to operate).

The only relationship to be found between the employee's role and the servant leader behaviors was a weak negative association with the behavior of forgiveness [r=.137, p<.05] suggesting that as we climb the corporate ladder from individual contributor to manager, to senior manager, we are slightly less likely to be perceived as demonstrating interpersonal acceptance and forgiveness (as demonstrated by accepting mistakes and offences without carrying a grudge and demonstrating empathy).

In summary, a significant positive relationship was demonstrated between the perception of the demonstration of servant leader behaviors, both individually and collectively, in the immediate (or most recent) manager and the self-reported PsyCap of the employee (survey respondents) within this sample of graduate students who reported to be currently working (or to have worked within the last two years). Additionally, an assessment of the demographic characteristics of the respondents, their role, the company for which they worked and of the manager assessed (via the SLS), yielded only a few weak, yet significant potential mediating relationships that could be influencing the relationship of perception of servant leader behaviors and PsyCap. In order to deepen the understanding of the associations identified through the Pearson's Correlation analysis, a

multiple regression analysis was suggested. In addition to the eight servant leader behaviors, the demographic characteristics of the employee, manager and company would be added to the multiple regression to examine their ability to predict employee PsyCap.

Research Question #2

A second research question sought to clarify further the relationships between the independent and dependent variables in this study.

RQ2 – Does the perception of the manager's demonstration of the eight identified servant leader behaviors, individually or together, predict employee PsyCap?

This research question seeks to be able to examine how much the independent variables predict the independent variable, something that a correlation analysis alone cannot accomplish. The starting point for this deeper analysis required the validation of the servant leader constructs (behaviors) within this sample. In order to understand if these factors individually or in combination could be used to predict an impact on the employee psychological capital, the validity of each factor must first be verified. An exploratory factor analysis was run on the data set to identify the statistical factors in the SLS survey for this sample. The exploratory factor analysis was selected over the confirmatory factor analysis due to the small sample size and dissertation committee recommendation. Principal axis factoring was selected as the extraction method using the Varimax rotation method for data analysis. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy as .931, well above the commonly recommended value of .6 and Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant ($\chi 2\ (435)=4627.289$, $p<.01$). The results of these statistical

tests provide confidence that the data sample meets the criteria to allow confidence in the resulting factor analysis.

From the 30 items in the SLS, five factors were identified. The total variance is illustrated for this five-factor model is table 4.19.

Table 4.19

Summary of factor analysis of eight servant leader behaviors within study sample

	Extraction Sum of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sum of Squared Loadings		
Factor	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	13.255	44.184	44.184	7.618	25.394	25.394
2	1.925	6.431	50.615	3.562	11.873	37.266
3	1.588	5.294	55.909	2.574	8.581	45.847
4	.764	2.546	58.455	2.294	7.647	53.494
5	.728	2.428	60.883	2.216	7.388	60.883

Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring

The rotated factor matrix identified the individual questions associated with each factor. In general, the identified new factors were very closely related to the factors (behavior constructs) identified by the SLS instrument authors (van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2011). This study confirmed four of the original factors: empowerment, accountability, courage, and forgiveness. The fifth factors identified in this sample combined the original factors of humility, standing back, stewardship, and authenticity into one factor. Therefore, for the participants of this study, these four original factors of servant leader behavior were seen as representing the same construct. For this fifth factor with combined SLS behaviors, each of these constructs represents taking an unselfish and other-oriented perspective as a leader: giving priority to the needs of others (standing back); the willingness to serve objective greater than oneself (stewardship); recognizing personal weakness, putting accomplishments in proper perspective (humility); and living personally consistent with overall values (authenticity). The only exceptions to the

perfect alignment of the questions associated with each SLS factor in this factor analysis from the alignment described in the literature of the factors during survey development and testing are: the empowerment factor was missing one of seven assigned questions (included in the new aggregate factor), and the courage factor included one question from the authenticity question set.

Therefore, for the remainder of the quantitative analysis (i.e. the linear regression analysis), the following five servant leadership factors were used as the independent variables: empowerment, accountability, courage, forgiveness, and the new combined factor which will be referred to as other-orientation. In addition to the servant leader factors, the multi-linear regression also included the demographic associated with the employee, the company, and the manager to identify the predictive ability of each variable.

Based on an extensive literature search the following hypothesis was put forth in anticipation of conducting this study:

> **H2a.** The servant leadership behaviors of stewardship and empowerment will have a stronger ability to predict employee PsyCap than the other defined Servant Leadership behaviors.

In order to test this hypothesis and move toward the ability to predict employee psychological capital from the demonstration of servant leadership behaviors, a linear regression analysis was executed. A regression analysis helps to explain how changes in the independent variables will impact the dependent variable. So for this study, the regression analysis allows for the predicting, or forecasting, of psychological capital

based on the changes in servant leader behaviors (factors) and demographic variables of the respondent, company, and manager.

Likert-type scales are often considered ordinal (or category) scales as you cannot assume the distance between each level in the scale is equidistant from the next (i.e. is the distance from strongly agree to agree the same distance that disagree is from strongly disagree). It is, however, common practice to treat Likert-type scales as interval data and take equidistance as an assumption. However, since this study is using the calculated average of several individual Likert items, it produces an interval data point: the average, or mean. It is these means that are used to describe both the independent variables and the dependent variable, therefore, allowing the application of linear regression techniques rather than ordinal regression.

To execute a step-wise multiple regression, dummy (or indicator) variables were created for the individual categories represented for each of the individual demographic variables. These dummy variables control for the assumption of linear regression that each variable is interval data (e.g. a score of "4" is twice the magnitude of a score of "2") by representing each level of each categorical variable as a separate variable. This allows for the regression model to consider each category as an interval variable. The step-wise linear regression allows for the identification of the dependent variable (PsyCap), the independent variables (the new five factors describing Servant Leadership), and the potential intervening variables (the dummy variables describing the individual levels of each categorical/demographic variable). When executed, the regression analysis yielded the results outlined in Table 4.20.

Table 4.20

Summary of 5 factor servant leader regression model results

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std Eror of Estimate	R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig F Change	Durbin-Watson
1	.245[a]	.060	.055	.59	.060	13.39	1	210	.000	
2	.307[b]	.095	.086	.58	.035	7.98	1	209	.005	
3	.453[c]	.206	.194	.54	.111	29.05	1	208	.000	
4	.497[d]	.247	.232	.53	.041	11.32	1	207	.001	
5	.530[e]	.281	.264	.52	.034	9.81	1	206	.002	
6	.559[f]	.312	.292	.51	.031	9.37	1	205	.002	
7	.579[g]	.335	.312	.50	.023	6.94	1	204	.009	2.042

a. Predictors: (Constant) Rep Age (Under 25)
b. Predictors: (Constant) Rep Age (Under 25); Resp Pos (Mgt)
c. Predictors: (Constant) Rep Age (Under 25); Resp Pos (Mgt); Empowerment
d. Predictors: (Constant) Rep Age (Under 25); Resp Pos (Mgt); Empowerment; Accountability
e. Predictors: (Constant) Rep Age (Under 25);; Resp Pos (Mgt); Empowerment; Accountability; Forgiveness
f. Predictors: (Constant) Rep Age (Under 25); Resp Pos (Mgt); Empowerment; Accountability; Forgiveness; Courage
g. Predictors: (Constant) Rep Age (Under 25); Resp Pos (Mgt); Empowerment; Accountability; Forgiveness; Courage; Other-Orientation

Each of the five models created by the multiple linear regression analysis is significant ($p<.01$). Additional statistical tests were executed to test the required underlying assumptions of a valid regression analysis. The Durbin-Watson test was administered, which resulted in a value of 2.04, indicating the desired lack of autocorrelation, indicating randomness of the sample. Appendix L illustrates that the dependent variable (PsyCap) demonstrated a normal distribution per generated histogram, the P-Plot of values represents the desired linear relationship, and the scatterplot of scores demonstrated no defined pattern, as desired. Together, these tests validated the required underlying assumptions and therefore allow confidence in the regression analysis results. Each model described in Table 4.20 includes one or more variables and describes the individual model's ability to explain variations in PsyCap. Model seven, for example,

includes each of the five servant leader factors and the intervening variables of the respondent's age and position. All other variables (e.g. demographic data about respondent, company or manager) did not help to explain variability in PsyCap scores. The most predictive model is model seven (using the adjusted R-square value). Therefore, this model will be used to explain the relationship between the identified variables and PsyCap.

Overall the regression model explains 31.2% of the total variance in reported PsyCap. The five servant leadership factors explain of a total of 22.6% of the total variance. Empowerment explained 10.8%, accountability explained 3.8%, forgiveness explained 3.2%, courage 2.8%, and the other-oriented factor explained an additional 2% of the overall variance in employee self-reported PsyCap. This model explains that 5.5% of the variance in PsyCap is accounted for by respondent age (under 25) and another 3.1% by the employee role within the organization (manager). Due to the small representation of senior managers in the population (6.1%), these individuals were combined with managers (23.1%) to create a new category, called management (29.2) for respondent position demographics. These two categories, individual contributor, and management, were used in this regression analysis.

The Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and coefficients for the final (seventh) regression model is presented in Table 4.21 and 4.22.

Table 4.21

ANOVA Analysis summary model 7 – dependent variable PsyCap

Model	R	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	F	Sig F Change
7	Regression	4.736	7	3.780	14.685	.000[a]
	Residual	74.239	204	.257		
	Total	78.974	211			

a. Predictors: (Constant) Rep Age (Under 25); Resp Pos (Mgt); Empowerment; Accountability; Forgiveness; Courage; Other-Orientation

Table 4.22

Coefficient summary for model 7 – dependent variable PsyCap

Model	Variable	B	Std Error	t	Sig
7	(Constant)	4.754		103.893	.000
	Resp Age (under 25)	-.346	-.198	-3.392	.001
	Resp Role (Mgt)	.273	.203	3.415	.001
	Empowerment	.201	.291	5.052	.000
	Accountability	.133	.201	3.516	.001
	Forgiveness	.128	.183	3.130	.02
	Courage	.114	.168	2.914	.004
	Other-Orientation	.100	.152	2.635	.009

The variance inflation factor (VIF) a statistic measuring potential collinearity (high degree of correlation between predictor variables in a regression model) fall between 1.006 and 1.087 suggesting that the predictor variables within the model are indeed unique constructs.

Each of the five factors of servant leaders, the respondent's position, and age were all significant predictors of PsyCap. A significant regression equation was found ($F(7,204) = 14.685$, $p<.000$), with $R2 = .335$. Employee's predicted PsyCap is equal to 4.754 + .100 (other-orientation) + .114 (courage) + .128 (forgiveness) + .133 (accountability) + .201 (empowerment) + .273 (position - Mgt) - .346 (respondent age – under 25), where the servant leader factors are measured on a Likert-type scale from 1-strongly disagree to 6-strongly agree, position is measured as 1-independent contributor, 2-management, and respondent age is measured as 1-under 25, 2-Over 25. Participant

self-reported PsyCap increased .100 units for each 1 unit increase of other-orientation, .114 units for each 1 unit increase of courage, .128 units increase for each 1 increase in forgiveness, .133 units for every 1 unit increase of accountability, .201 units for every 1 unit increase of empowerment, and on average managers scored .273 higher than individual contributors, and respondents under the age of 25 scored on average .346 less than respondents over 25.

This data suggests that empowerment does have the largest impact on the employee self-reported PsyCap level (10.8%) of the servant leader behaviors, as the H2a hypothesis predicted. However, stewardship, although a contributing factor, was not identified in this sample as having a greater impact on improved PsyCap than other manager behaviors. In fact, for this sample stewardship was combined with the other behaviors of standing back, humility and authenticity as part of a larger other-oriented factor and not identified as a distinct contributing factor. Therefore, the hypothesis (H2a) is partially rejected.

There was a second hypothesis advanced associated with the second research question:

H2b. The servant leader behaviors taken together will be more predictive of subordinate PsyCap than any individual servant leader behaviors alone.

The combination of the five factors of servant leader behavior, which includes the four literature-defined constructs combined into the other-oriented factor, is indeed more predictive of increased PsyCap than any individual behavior factor alone. Together, the servant leader behaviors explain 22.6% of the variance of employee reported PsyCap. The largest single factor contribution was identified in the empowerment factor of 10.6%.

Together, the factors account for an additional 11.8%. The regression explanation above also highlights the individual and combined ability to predict increased PsyCap in employees.

Table 4.23 below describes the null hypotheses associated with the first two research questions for which this study was designed to address. For each null hypothesis, the table outlines if it has been "rejected" or "failed to reject" based on the data collected in Phase One of this study.

Table 4.23
Research questions with null hypothesis results

RQ1 – What relationship exists between the perceived demonstration of servant leader behaviors and the self-reported psychological capital (PsyCap) of the subordinate?		
H_{1a}	No relationship exists between the perceived demonstration of the defined servant leadership behaviors and the self –reported psychological capital (PsyCap) of the employee.	**Rejected**
H_{1b}	A significant relationship exists between the demographic characteristics of the study participants and their reported level of psychological capital (PsyCap).	**Partially Rejected** – although most demographic variables have no effect, there were weak positive relationships demonstrated with respondent age and role.
RQ2 – Does the perception of the manager's demonstration of the eight identified servant leader behaviors, individually or together, predict employee PsyCap?		
H_{2a}	No predictive relationship exists between any servant leadership behaviors and subordinate reported level of PsyCap.	**Rejected**
H_{2b}	The additive (combined) value of the perceived servant leadership behaviors has no effect on the subordinate reported PsyCap.	**Rejected**

Although the data collected in Phase One of this study provided insights into the relationship between the independent variables (servant leaders behaviors) and the dependent variable (psychological capital), the quantitative data collected only speaks to

statistical relationships and not to the specific examples and conditions of this relationship. Phase Two of the study was designed to provide this additional insight

Phase II – Qualitative Data Collection and Analysis

The research objective of Phase Two was to enrich the understanding of the data collected in Phase One. Using the qualitative tools of focus groups and interviews, Phase Two leveraged a group of volunteers to discuss the results of the Phase One analysis. A content analysis of the transcripts generated during these discussions yielded several themes and conclusions about the relationship of the perception of manager servant leader behaviors and the employees' self-reported psychological capital which are presented below.

Phase II – Sample

The target population for Phase Two was a sub-set of the final participants from Phase One of this study. At the end of the Phase One on-line survey, each participant could express their interest in participation in a focus group discussion of the results generated through the qualitative analysis of the survey results. Forty-seven individuals expressed interest in participation and provided their contact information to the researcher. To be selected as a focus group participant, the candidate must have volunteered to be part of Phase Two analysis, completed both the on-line surveys (SLS & PCQ), and be available, either live or via conference call, during the time of the scheduled group sessions. Since it had been one month since the closing of the on-line survey, an additional email invitation was sent to this initial group of interested

individuals briefly explaining the process and objective of the focus group sessions and asking them to validate their continued interest and to identify which of several proposed alternatives for dates and times might enable their focus group participation. Unfortunately, it was discovered through lack of return of automated requested read receipts on the latest invitation email, that over half of the candidates who expressed interest in participation in Phase Two did not read the request within the next three weeks. One possible explanation for the invitation not being read by the potential participants was that the academic semester for these graduate students had ended between the closing of the survey and this additional request for participation in the focus groups. Since the invitation to participate was sent to the potential participant's university email address, and as many of these students may not take summer classes, it appears that they also do not monitor this email during the summer. However, there were seventeen individuals who did respond and agree to participate.

Two separate focus group sessions were scheduled based on participant availability. The proposed focus group protocol outlined in Appendix F was reviewed to prepare for these discussion sessions. Additionally, the Phase One results summary displayed in Appendix H was created in an attempt to describe the core research objective of the study, a brief background and overview of the variables of the study (e.g. 8 servant leader behaviors and PsyCap), a concise outline of the research approach, and a summary of the major findings of Phase One. This summary was handed out to each participant. These findings were summarized related to each of the first two research questions and a "plain English" explanation of the results. Since participation in the focus group sessions could be live or via a conference call line into the session, this summary was distributed

to both live and virtual participants. This document also served as the outline for a description of Phase One of the study delivered by the researcher during the introduction of each focus group session. A separate informed consent form (see Appendix G) was completed by each participant, both live and virtual, in order to participate in this session.

The first focus group session was scheduled for six participants, three in attendance live and three virtually. One individual scheduled to participate live did not show up and one virtual member had to reschedule; therefore, the first group had four members. The second session was scheduled for eleven participants, seven live and four remote. Two individuals, one live and one remote, did not participate. So the second session included six live and three remote participants. It was decided to also conduct additional one-on-one interviews, following the same focus group protocol, for two individuals who had expressed interest in participation but were unavailable for the focus group sessions. As these individuals represented a diverse background (e.g. worked for multiple industry sectors) the researcher believed that their perspective might enrich the data collected.

Table 4.24 summarizes the demographics for the final group of Phase Two participants. In order to best describe this small sample, some of the original categories of demographic variables have been collapsed.

Table 4.24
Phase Two participant demographics

	Gender		Race			Role			Industry[a]		
Category	Male	Female	White	Afr Am	Other	Ind Contrib	Mgr	Sr Mgr	Educ	Non-Ed	Both
Count	4	11	11	2	2	10	4	1	5	4	6
Percentage	26.6%	73.3%	73.3%	13.3%	13.3%	66.6%	26.6%	6.6%	33.3%	26.6%	40%

a: self-identified

Although this small sample size is a recognized limitation of this analysis, the demographic distribution of the final Phase Two participants, built based on volunteers from the larger Phase One participant population, is remarkably similar to the distributions of the Phase One population. Therefore, the Phase Two results can be understood within the same limitations and constraints of the Phase One sample. A large group of participants in Phase One self-identified with the education industry (49.1%). During the focus group sessions, it became clear that association with the education industry represented a broad spectrum of roles from, classroom teacher, to various levels of public school administrators, to individuals that work for academic institutions in non-instructional or administration roles (i.e. office clerical, college recruiter). Additionally, many of those participants who identified with the education industry shared descriptions of work experience outside the education field. Therefore, to represent the variety of work experiences of the participants, they were categorized as education (only have ever worked for education organizations), non-education (working in other industry sectors), and both (worked for the education sector and other industry sectors).

Phase II - Data Collection

Prior to the initial focus group session, the draft protocol was tested via a review by the dissertation chair and a short pilot meeting with a two individuals to ensure the completeness and understandability of instructions and result description. Changes were made to the supporting materials and meeting protocol based on feedback from these reviews.

Since there were remote conference call participants for each session (the two interviews were also conducted via phone call) the informed consent form and the

research summary documents were sent to the participants prior to their participation in an email that also explained the call-in procedures. As the meeting began, each focus group session was initiated by the researcher by a welcome and brief overview of the agenda and rules of engagement for the session. The participants were then reminded that the session would be recorded and once the informed consent documents were signed and collected, the researcher briefly overviewed the research purpose, design, and findings using the above-described research summary document. This same procedure was used to conduct the two phone interviews. After the research overview was complete and any specific questions from the participants were addressed, the researcher initiated the group discussion using the open-ended discuss starter questions, created by the research-based and outlined in Appendix F. This same guide was used in a loosely coupled interview structure that provided an overall framework and flow for the discussion, but also allowed the researcher to probe in more detail specific answers and/or discussion topics. The sessions were facilitated by the researcher to ensure appropriate pacing to move through discussion questions effectively within the one-hour session. At the conclusion of each session, the participants who participated live and via phone were thanked and dismissed.

During the preparation of the results summary from Phase One, the researcher made an error by representing one statement on the summary sheet incorrectly. The statement that read, "employees 25 and younger tend to have higher overall PsyCap levels than those over 25" should have explained that employees 25 and younger tend to have lower overall PsyCap levels than those over 25. Table 4.22 described the relationship of respondent age (under 25) to PsyCap as a negative regression coefficient

(-.346). This error was discovered in the analysis of the transcripts. This error had little impact on the reported results and the analysis of the discussions related to this specific statement of result were collected, coded, and described identifying potential age-related impact on PsyCap (e.g. time in workplace, stage in life, work experience) rather than drawing specific conclusions related to those above or below age 25.

Phase II - Data Manipulation

Both of the focus group sessions, as well as the two interviews, were recorded. These recordings were transcribed, eliminating any specific reference to any individual participant, and any reference to a specific organization, department, or manager. Forty-six pages of transcripts were created. These transcripts became the data against which the coding and thematic analysis was applied.

An interactive process of open coding and analysis based on Tesch's (1990) as cited in Creswell, 2014b) eight-step process was applied to this qualitative data. Participation by the researcher in each discussion, the process of transcription, and (re)reading the transcripts as a whole provided a sense of the whole of the data collected. Looking to identify themes in the transcripts, similar ideas and topics were clustered together across the entire data set, using an iterative process into a new document. These clusters were organized and re-organized as themes began to emerge in the data. This iterative process yielded a preliminary organizing scheme of categories, and associated codes, that was then applied to the entirety of the data set. A short description was created to describe each data category. It should be noted that the coding applied in this case was not a quantitative count of instances in which topics were referenced, but instead a search for the breadth of topics across the discussions. Therefore, some topics identified as data

categories might have been referenced by multiple individuals across the discussion sessions, where other categories may have been created based on a single comment or observation. After the organizing scheme was finally established, the content associated with each category was organized into one place. This allowed for easier analysis as well as identification and connection of overarching data themes. Once established, the organizing schema and thematic categorization were reviewed for face validity (i.e. appears reasonable and effective based on desired research objective) by both the researcher and the dissertation committee chair.

Phase II - Data Results

Phase Two of this study was designed to enrich the understanding and interpretation of the quantitative data of Phase One. The qualitative methods of Phase Two allowed for a deeper exploration of the relationship between the perception of managers' servant leader behavior and employee psychological capital. While the research objective of Phase One was to provide evidence of the statistical strength and direction of a relationship between these variables, the objective of Phase Two was to help explain how these manager perceptions influence attitudes and behavior (employee PsyCap) in practice, and in the words of the employees themselves. Therefore, the research question for Phase Two is as follows:

RQ3 – What are the employee perceptions about their manager's servant leader behavior and its impact their own psychological capital?

A summary of the findings from Phase One were presented to the focus group and interview participants (see appendix H) for discussion. Table 4.25 presents an overview

of the themes and associated sub-themes that emerged from the qualitative data that will be discussed in the remainder of this chapter.

Table 4.25
Summary of Phase Two data Themes and Sub-Themes

Over Arching Themes	Sub-themes of Content
1. Overall group observations and personal experience	a. positive impacts of servant leadership b. negative impacts of (lack of) servant leadership c. perception vs. reality of manager behavior
2. Variables reported to influence the perception of manager behaviors on employee psychological capital	a. amount of interaction/communication b. characteristics of the work c. characteristics of the manager d. characteristics of the employee
3. Work Situations reported to intensify the perception of manager behavior on employee psychological capital	a. first-of-a-kind experiences b. performance feedback settings c. high stress (situations, cycles) d. workplace conflict e. disruptive change

Phase II - Theme #1 – Overall Group Observations

It is important to begin the description of the data collected and analyzed during Phase Two with the general observations the participants had about the survey results and to illustrate their perspectives and experiences with these variables. This initial theme of the data can be organized into three sub-themes.

Positive Impact of Servant Leadership

It was clear throughout the discussion that the results of Phase One illustrated that there is indeed a relationship between the employee's perception of the servant leader behaviors of their manager and their own personal self-reported psychological capital. There are three quotes from the discussion which illustrate the overall support of the participants for the influence of servant leader behaviors on psychological capital:

- "As I was reading [the list of] the 8 characteristics of servant leadership, it… kind of made me realize that some of the favorite managers that I have had throughout my career, and the ones under [which] I felt like I succeeded the most had a lot of those qualities." This participant went on to explain that in her experience she felt that her own personal success and enjoyment within her role was "less dependent on what I was doing and a whole lot more dependent on who my manager was."
- "An individual [manager] who is humble, who is authentic, who encourages people, not only that the person takes risks but encourages others, I really do feel…that, that… naturally influences the psychological capital of the people…um…of that [work] environment. Where they are going to have self-confidence to take risks, they are going to feel good about the work that they're doing, there is going to be a hope and an optimism in what you do along with, hey if something happens that's not good, it's ok we'll figure it out and we'll come together and we'll problem-solve. If you are in an environment where you [do] have leaders who are engaging in those activities and creating that [kind of] culture, I really do believe that it does contribute to others' [employees] individuality…and their beliefs and their psychological capital when they come to work every day."
- "I think that has been clear to me working for different kinds of leaders and bosses that those who take a more servant leadership approach to their position really increase morale, individually and within the organization."

Initially, the group wondered about the overall statistical impact of only explaining 22.6% of the variance in the employee's self- reported psychological capital. Then through conversation each group came to the realization that there are so many variables that might influence an individual's psychological capital, (to include for example, positive and negative life experiences, current economic conditions, personal life situations, family worries, health issues of self or others, social dynamics, working conditions, etc.) that to realize this level of influence from one factor, perception of managers' behavior, was quite an important finding.

Beyond the broad perspective that manager behaviors do in fact impact the psychological capital of the employee, the group discussion also provided specific examples of several of the defined servant leader behaviors and their direct impact on employee psychology. Regarding the behavior that the quantitative results suggests provides the largest single amount of variance in employee self-reported PsyCap: empowerment (10.6%), the participants consistently felt that of the eight behaviors, empowerment had the most dramatic impact on their PsyCap. One individual expressed her belief that empowerment directly influenced self-confidence (self-efficacy). She related her experience working for a manager she described as a "micro-manager." She explained that after a while she started to question her own ability because of the style of the manager which drove her to seek his consent and approval before taking any action. She contrasted this with her next manager who expected her to demonstrate greater self-direction. However, the attitudes and behaviors she had developed under the micro-manager based on her own lack of self-confidence had to be un-learned for her to be successful working for the new manager. Within the discussion of each focus group and

individual interviews, there was strong support for the unique role of empowerment in shaping the conditions and opportunities to build psychological capital. Some group members expressed surprise that it did not have an even larger statistical impact, explaining that empowerment is so deeply integrated with other servant leader behaviors like accountability, stewardship, courage, humility and interpersonal acceptance. They described how they saw empowerment directly influencing, self-confidence, optimism, the ability to find new solutions (hope), and recover from mistakes (resilience), each of which directly impacts employee productivity and satisfaction.

The servant leader behavior of accountability, holding self and others personally accountable for individual and group outcomes, also resonated with the group, suggesting that empowerment and accountability go "hand in hand." One individual expressed it this way, "*It is very frustrating when you are held accountable but are not empowered to* do anything about it.... you need empowerment so that empowerment matches your accountability." To be accountable for something suggests that you have a responsibility. To best execute that responsibility requires the confidence to execute this responsibility (self-efficacy), the positive expectation of success (optimism), the ability to learn quickly and bounce back from mistakes (resilient), and the ability to redirect to new paths to ensure future success (hope).

One interviewee shared the following example of a manager's demonstration of interpersonal acceptance (forgiveness) and courage, and the impact that it made in her life:

- "The very first big mistake I made as an [school] administrator…the superintendent put his arm around me and said 'we all do it; we all make mistakes. Let's just learn from it and move on.' That is the kind of leadership you want to work for. The kind of leadership where there is not the expectation for perfection, there is the expectation of increasing what you are able to do and your capacity but understanding that that is not a perfect linear path that there are off roads that we all take when we learn through making mistakes… I am not afraid to admit that I made a mistake to them because they are not afraid to analyze the situation."
- "He [the manager] demonstrated a tremendous amount of courage, because there is a certain amount of backlash when you discipline students from certain connected families [note: she described herself as the school discipline officer]. So if you know without hesitation the answer [from the manager] is always 'every child gets the same treatment from us,' which anybody can say that but to see that really lived out in the moment, without hesitation - truly tells you something about the leadership and where their heart is."

She went on to explain that the acceptance and personal support she has received from her manager, and other managers within this organization, has produced in her a commitment to these individuals and to the organization resulting in higher performance and retention.

Negative Impact of (lack of) Servant Leadership

A second major observation that the group raised was that the positive correlation between perceptions of servant leadership and personal psychological capital implies that

when perceptions of behaviors fall, so does psychological capital. Several of the examples shared by the group representing the latter point. The following are a few excerpts from the transcript:

- "At the time I was filling out your survey, I was in transition myself – leaving an organization that I was with for nine years. One of the reasons I stayed so long was because of my manager… [although] and he did have a number of these servant leadership qualities… and I felt empowered by him… the challenges I had were in the accountability and forgiveness. Within my organization, I was working very hard. I felt like I had a lot of social capital. I feel like I am resilient; however, other people were not held accountable for things that they should have been held accountable… people would hold grudges for a long period of time and there was no interpersonal acceptance, so ultimately I decided to leave my job because there was no courage from my boss who knew that was happening."
- "I have worked in a previous organization where there was definitely more of a negative [missing] servant leadership and it definitely had a culture of very low morale and very low psychological capital."
- In discussing why she left a previous role: "I was in a place [company] where my psychological capital was being negatively affected by a leadership, and now it [psychological capital] is in such a good place, that I am willing to stay in a role for which I am over qualified… because I am very happy with the leader that I have and the relationship that we have so I have not pursued

better options to go outside of this relationship, it has made that much of a difference in my PsyCap."

Although there may be a natural tendency to focus on the positive impact that increases in the perception of servant leader behaviors can have on employee self-reported PsyCap, it is absolutely critical to understand that the defined positive correlation flows both ways. It is just as meaningful to hear session participants relate experiences where they perceived their psychological capital suffered because of their perception of the poor (or absent) demonstration of the eight servant leader behaviors. These experiences also validate the relationship discovered between the independent and dependent variables.

It is important at this point to also address a similar observation from each of the group discussions. A simple correlation between two variables suggests only a relationship (i.e. correlation) and not causation. So although we have been discussing the impact of the perception of servant leader behavior on employee self-reported PsyCap, we have not addressed the possibility of the impact of the employee's own psychological capital on how they perceive the behaviors of the manager. For example, it is logical to expect the optimism level of an individual to color how they perceive the activity taking place around them. Perhaps a more optimistic person might perceive the behaviors of their manager in a different way than a less optimistic person might view the same behavior. Similarly, an individual with higher self-efficacy might look at the actions of another (e.g. expectation/opportunity for the employee to demonstrate self-direction) in light of their own strong self-confidence, whereas someone low in self-efficacy might view this same action by another as vague and frustrating and not as a call to take

ownership (be empowered). While understanding the influence an employee's psychological capital, or one of its component constructs, may have on the perception of managers' behavior is an important and interesting question, it is outside of the scope of this foundational study.

The last general observation made about the results of Phase One is that this data reflects the perception of the employee of their manager's behavior. This study did not include observation of managers' behaviors, triangulated assessment (multiple individual assessing the same manager) nor a manager's self-assessment of their own servant leader behaviors from which to validate employee perception. It is acknowledged that two individual observing the same behavior might perceive it differently. One might view the manager's behavior as a demonstration of standing back (giving priority to the needs of others), while another might perceive this same behavior as political and phony. It is also acknowledged that individual perceptions are influenced by personal history and experience. However, for all of us in our interactions with others, perception is a reality. How one perceives your action and its result dictates their emotional, psychological and even physical response. This study acknowledged the role of perception in personal sense-making and was designed to assess this perception.

Phase II - Theme #2 – Relationship Variables

Discussions during Phase Two data collection yielded a second major theme. This theme recognizes that there are conditions that exist within the manager and employee relationship that may influence the level of impact the observation of a manager behavior may have on the individual's psychological capital. The data associated with the second major theme can be organized into four categories.

Amount of Interaction and Communication

It became evident during the group discussion that there was a wide variety of experiences among participants regarding the amount of time they spend with their manager. At one extreme, one woman described that she worked side-by-side with her manager daily. At the other end of the continuum, another individual suggested that as a classroom teacher, he interacted with his direct manager infrequently, once a year for mandatory observations, periodically for school events, but rarely if ever did he collaborate with his manager on day-to-day activities. These individuals also described very different opinions about the influence of their manager's behavior on their personal psychological capital. This individual with a greater frequency of interactions with her manager reported a perception of a strong influence of the manager's behavior on her psychological capital, and the individual who experienced infrequent interaction with their manager acknowledged a perception of only a minor effect of the manager's behaviors. One woman who had worked as a teacher and now worked as an office worker confirmed how her perception of the importance the manager's behaviors changed as she moved from the school environment (limited interaction) to where she was engaged in work projects with her manager daily. It does seem logical that the more opportunities an employee has to observe the demonstrations of servant leader behavior, the more likely the employee is to associate these behaviors with the manager and to have the manager's actions influence his/her perspectives. One participant summed the potential role that frequency of interaction with manager might play: "I would say probably 50% of the time that I am at work I am interacting with him (my boss) one-on-one or in a group situation

and so absolutely his leadership style will have a greater influence on my PsyCap than if I saw him once a week or (less) or so."

In a similar way, participants spoke of the frequency and preferred communication style of the manager as varying widely across managers and that these factors also had an impact on how the employee might perceive the manager's behaviors. The more frequent and more personal the communication delivery, the greater perceived influence on personal attitudes and therefore psychological capital. Their feedback suggested that a manager who goes out of his/her way to speak to an employee personally about an issue may be perceived very differently (as more of a servant leader) than one who chooses to communicate important news via email, newsletter or general announcements at a company meeting. The participants observed that in today's global economy the rise of the virtual office changes the frequency, expectations, and methods of interaction and communication, which may directly impact the opportunity to observe manager behavior or how a behavior might be perceived. Although additional research is needed to validate this perspective, the comments, and conclusions of the group seem logical.

Defined Work Accountabilities

An initial observation of the participant group was that the nature of the work in which the individual is engaged might have a direct impact on the importance the manager plays in influencing the hope, optimism, resilience, and self-efficacy of the individual. One participant illustrated this point by drawing a contrast between the work accountabilities of an employee: working in a call center, working in a manufacturing plant, and working as a bus driver. In the call center, the employee is constantly

monitored by supervision evaluating their customer interactions and process efficiency as they take orders and handle complaints. In a manufacturing plant, the employee may be exclusively trained to repetitively operate one specific piece of equipment performing just one step within a much larger assembly process. They may only see the shift supervisor to confirm production schedules or if there is a production problem. Supervisor evaluations may focus on the overall productivity of the line (e.g., waste and throughput) rather than individual performance. A bus driver, on the other hand, operates independently away from direct supervision and monitoring. The driver's manager is responsible primary or route scheduling. Each individual has a manager, but the manager's role in the work flow of day-to-day work is very different. Another illustration shared was the accountabilities and daily duties of the classroom teacher. The nature of their work requires a high level of autonomy as they work primarily alone with students and in their own work environment (i.e. classroom). As one individual put it, "You may not get along with your boss… or you could get along great with your boss but should not affect what you do in the classroom with the kids, so that to me that [unique accountability] is the thing that changes everything." Additionally, it was suggested that some jobs, some companies, and perhaps some entire industry sectors may, because of their missions and the outcomes they produce, provide a source of support and development for an individual's psychological capital. For example, the healing mission of healthcare and future orientation of the education industry may directly impact the optimism and hope associated with roles within those industries. Additionally, the stated expectations of the manager to the employee (i.e. expectations for performance) may also influence how the employee perceives their manager and their demonstration of servant

leader behaviors. If these expectations are seen as fair and in one's best interest, the perception may be more positive. Therefore, participants suggested that the specific accountabilities, tasks, and outcomes associated with a specific job itself may dictate the role of the manager in the defined workflow of the employee, and therefore how his/her behaviors shape personal well-being.

Work Environment

In addition to the opportunity for interaction with one's manager and the nature of the work requirements, the transcripts also revealed that the physical work setting and the social interaction available in the work environment may modulate the influence of the direct manager's impact on employee psychological capital. If in the individual work situation there are opportunities for a lot of social interaction with individuals other than the manager (e.g. children for the teacher, work teams, client interactions), the opportunity to be influenced by this other social engagement becomes greater. It was suggested that the personal psychological capital of a teacher may be influenced more by the dynamics and interactions in the classroom and among other teachers than the influence of administration leadership. "I found more of the support from my peers and other colleagues as a teacher rather than administration," was the quote from one individual. Similarly, comments suggest that team-based work settings provide other sources of support for one's personal psychological capital. In fact, one individual described that because of her boss's lack of demonstration of servant leader behaviors (e.g., empowerment, standing back, humility), she turned to her peers, clients, and the community to help bolster her personal hope and optimism. She also suggested that she had learned to look to others to affirm her self-confidence and to help her deal with

adversity, as her boss did not provide the support she needs to maintain a healthy perspective in her job. While additional research is called for to explore other work place conditions that may influence the effectiveness of managers influencing the employees psychological capital, this focus group data suggests that other available sources of social interaction and support may be an important variable, particularly when leaders are not providing the employee the support he/she desires.

Characteristics of the Manager

During the discussions of the Phase One results, the group also pondered the role that the unique characteristics of the manager might play in affecting employee psychological capital. Of course, the manager's leadership style is one variable, but this has been covered in their interest in and ability to demonstrate the servant leadership behaviors. These characteristics are not directly related to their leadership style but more related to those situational attributes that might be unique to a manager. For example, the number of direct reports, their span of control, might directly impact the amount of time they have to work individually with each of their subordinates. It was reported that some organizations represented in the groups have a large span of control (e.g. school administrators to teachers) limiting the amount of time spent with any one direct report. Additionally, the overall workload of the manager might, depending on the manager, drive them to delegate the work and to empower their employees and hold them accountable for execution (servant leader behaviors). For others, a large workload might drive them into seclusion reducing interaction and communication.

One participant explained that she felt that the perception of "distributive justice" which she described as being held to common standards, workload and expected

outcomes, also influenced the perception of the manager's servant leader behaviors of accountability, standing back, and courage. Although the quantitative analysis did not suggest a statistically significant relationship between the length of service of the manager and the level of PsyCap, the group felt that the experience and reputation that one develops as a leader may also influence the employee psychological capital.

Lastly, it was suggested that the level of a manager's own psychological capital may influence their demonstration of these target behaviors and ability to produce desired individual and team outcomes. Some may assume that managers, because they are managers, have more optimism, hope, self-confidence, and resilient ability, and therefore more ability and power. As one individual described it, "My perception is that people think the managers have more of an impact than the managers [come to] realize that they have when they get into a position of power. Managers kind of see to some degree [sic] how powerless they are at times in certain situations, that they are not really the ones making the decisions." So the characteristics of each manager's unique situation may influence the opportunity and motivation to serve others through their leadership and influence the individual employee.

Characteristics of the Employee

It also seems reasonable to believe that characteristics of the employees themselves might influence the relationship with their manager and the perception of their behavior. Here are a couple of quotes from the discussion that illustrates this point.

- "I think it [manager behavior] affects some people differently than others… like me personally, my boss doesn't really affect the things that I do. I would have done the same things either way [sic]… but I have employees under my

direction that I could see clearly want to see the actions done by the leader and it clearly impacts how they work."

- "I have never felt like any manager really had any impact on what I do day to day…if you don't have the inner drive to do it no one is really going to make you do it better…. You have to have that desire on your own and that's the first thing."

The discussion groups agreed that the level of self-motivation of the employee themselves was an important clue in understanding the amount of influence the manager/s behavior might have on them.

The quantitative data revealed a weak but positive relationship of the age of the employee (i.e., on average, those over 25 have a slightly higher PsyCap), and the type of role (i.e., on average, managers have slightly higher PsyCap than individual contributors) they hold with their self-reported PsyCap. The group discussion suggested that time in the workforce, stage in life, specific work experiences, the level of self-awareness, and potentially even birth generation (e.g. millennial) all may influence the perceptions of the actions and attitudes of others well as self. And lastly, this discussion suggested that just like managers, the personal circumstances in which one finds oneself (e.g., health, family, social) can directly influence perceptions and behavior. One quote was particularly enlightening as a participant looked at the employee's psychological capital as having multiple sources, only one of which is their job.

- "I really needed to stay at a place where – cause I was tired, I was mad, I was not seeing my children more often; I wasn't keeping up on friendships; wasn't doing the sort of things that I wanted to do for myself that keep me happy, that

> keep me optimistic, that keep me, me and so I needed to stay at a place where my job was a benefit to me psychologically speaking and not a drain."

Although her quote highlights the role of the job in building/maintaining an individual's overall psychological capital it also implies that these other sources can be leveraged to increased personal psychological capital, when the job, and more specifically the boss, is not demonstrating the behavior to help build employee psychological capital.

This second theme outlined how the characteristics of the work, the manager, the employee, and the manager-employee interaction patterns all may directly affect the opportunity for servant leader behavior demonstration and the magnitude of the impact they may have on employee PsyCap.

Phase II - Theme #3 – Work Situations

One critical observation that quickly arose in each of the Phase Two data collection discussions was the recognition that there are times when the influence of the manager's behavior is perceived to be greater than other times. There appear to be times when the need for the manager to demonstrate the behaviors associated with servant leadership intensifies in the eyes of the employee. In other words, it is not only demonstrating the right behaviors but demonstrating them at the right time. The surveys used in Phase One data collection ask each participant to describe "how you may think about your (current manager for SLS) and (yourself for PCQ) right now." Each instrument is designed to assess a "snapshot" in time. For the survey participants, their snapshot in time may be filled with very different pressures, expectations, successes, and failures.

The Phase One results assume almost an averaging of these individual conditions and unique situations to yield conclusions that are obviously influenced by these individual differences, but assume that on average the reported results demonstrate reality. Although this testing error is recognized in psychological research and associated sampling methods, the results from Phase One were designed to explain a general relationship that is not specific to a defined condition or situation other than "how you feel right now." The richness of the qualitative analysis in Phase Two, however, can add the nuance of context to the discussion to better understand the dynamics of the relationship between the independent variables (eight servant leader behaviors) and the dependent variable (psychological capital). To that end, there appear to be points in time in the employee and manager relationship when the manager's behavior seems to have a greater impact than other times. Additionally, there may be specific behaviors of the servant leader that might inspire performance at that point in time.

This section will describe several of these situations when the participants saw the potential for an exaggerated effect of the manager's behavior on the attitudes and behaviors of the employee. This finding helps to inform the third research question by providing a context within which to understand this dynamic relationship. The content analysis of the transcripts produced the following contextual "hot spots" where the reported positive correlation between variables may be even more intense.

First-of-a-Kind Experiences

A first-of-a-kind experience, like a new job, often brings with it new stresses as the employee encounters new challenges in unfamiliar social and political territory. It stands to reason that when an employee takes on a new role or a new accountability

(either formally or informally) the manager's importance is heightened. During this learning phase, the manager takes on the role teacher and personal coach, setting expectations, explaining processes, and drawing boundaries. One participant shared the excitement and optimism a first-of-a-kind experience, in this case a new job, can bring when she shared the following: "I am new to my position, where I am right now, and I have a new supervisor and she is very positive in herself and she exudes many of the servant leadership qualities… I have never had the opportunity to excel in my leadership, and I know it is based on how upper administration treats their employees." This individual has a heightened sense of awareness of the managers' behaviors and appears to recognize the link between her manager's behaviors and her own leadership capability development. So taking on a new role, a new project, a new team, or a new manager for that matter, may provide a period of time for exaggerated attentiveness and therefore perhaps even greater impact as the employee watches their manager for clues on how to make sense and succeed in these new surroundings. A manager who empowers and encourages taking the risks of new situations (courage) may make these transitions easier.

Performance Feedback Settings

Throughout a career, each employee will have times when they will collect performance feedback. Some of these situations may be formal, documented and planned, such as the annual performance review or teacher observation session, designed to evaluate accomplishments against targets and to address gaps or reward accomplishment. Other moments of feedback may be more informal and casual, such as comments by a manager in a meeting about how an employee saved an account, or perhaps dropped the ball in a recent project. The group discussion recognized the importance of any time

where the employee receives targeted performance feedback as another time when the demonstration of servant leadership traits by the manager can be of heightened importance. The opportunity for the demonstration of empowerment and accountability appear to be particularly important during these times as the manager provides feedback on the past performance and sets goals for the future.

High Stress Situations

Sometimes there are work cycles that bring additional pressure to bear when workload expectations increase and timelines appear to shrink (e.g. end of the financial quarter, end of a long sales cycle, production outages, performance appraisal, a new product launch). The intensity within high-stress situations and certain work cycles was another condition described within the discussion transcripts where perceptions of the manager's words and actions have a greater potential to impact employee psychological capital, to build it up or tear it down. Here are a few exemplary quotes from the group discussion:

- "So I would say there are critical times when you really need that support [manager behaviors] to keep the momentum, to keep your wits about you in order to get through it…I would think in my experience those times most critical when the work is elevated – like the beginning of the year, the end of the year, when the federal government is coming in for a review, these are all high-stress times." [quote from school administrator].
- "I am going to say there are there [are] stress times, in my personal experience, as I said I am new to my supervisory position, I do not go to my supervisor for the day-to-day issues as I have been able to handle them but

when icky or unknown situations that have come up this past year, that's when I reached out to her and then she has given the feedback going "yes, you're on the right track."

- "I am thinking back to one of the managers that I had where I didn't feel like the manager had the servant leadership mentality… it was a difficult time within the organization and there was kind of a lot of conflict between the internal team and the client as to whose responsibility things were [for product/service gaps]. Feeling as though the manager didn't have my back as far as supporting me and having the team's interest at heart - it felt like it was self-serving… the [manager's] influence on psychological capital when things aren't going as well would be greater… then when things are going ok."

These examples, illustrate the perception of the potential positive impact of a manager's servant leader behavior to maintain hope and optimism throughout the stress-filled time. The last quote also illustrates the potential negative impact when the manager is perceived not to demonstrate these other-oriented behaviors (e.g. is not seen to stand back, demonstrate authenticity, or display managerial courage). So the variations of perceived personal stress within the employee's work environment may exacerbate the impact of the demonstration (or lack of demonstration) of servant leader behaviors by managers.

Workplace Conflict

One stressor within the workplace is when conflict arises. Although some conflict can be productive and even energizing if managed properly, it does not reduce the anxiety associated with the anticipation and experience of a conflict situation. The last

quote in the section above illustrated how during conflict times the employee feels uniquely vulnerable and may seek/expect the manager to provide appropriate cover (e.g. "have my back"). One participant explained: "In times of conflict that is usually [sic], whether you made a mistake, or whether it is a simple misunderstanding, how each person [manager] reacts changes your PsyCap overall." The servant leadership behaviors of humility and interpersonal acceptance (forgiveness) appear to be particularly important when mistakes are made (by the manager, the employee or others). The observation of this last quote highlights that our psychological capital may be influenced by how we perceive other's reactions (perhaps particularly our immediate manager) to conflict and mistakes that occur within the workplace.

Disruptive Change

The final condition described to have a potential exaggerating effect on the manager's behavioral influence on employee psychological capital might best be described as disruptive change within the work setting. In one sense the change experienced within the workplace, whether it is changes in markets, workflow, suppliers, technology or even leadership mashes together all the characteristics described in this section in one series of events. Change often represents a new (first-of-a-kind) set of experiences or expectations, introduces stress into existing work practices and feedback that strains relationships sometimes to the point of conflict. The focus groups discussed how in today's business world the potential sources of disruptive change are almost endless, and it appears the speed of these changes is accelerating as well.

The following quotes from the group discussions illustrate not only the volume of change employees are experiencing, but also how the servant leader behaviors from a

manager may build the psychological capital to help an employee cope with disruptive change.

- "We're in quite a bit of turmoil and as a result I really do believe that that really trickles down to this idea of hope and optimism and being able to be resilient through yet another change so I think that consistency and stability and support [demonstrated by the manager] also are significant contributors to psychological capital whether you want to look at it as an individual level or even as a cultural group or team level."
- "My district is going through a major change right now, there is a lot of uncertainty, there is a lot of change coming down the pipe, so to speak, and having somebody who is really the epitome of a servant leader has really made the process a lot smoother than I think it would have been otherwise."
- "I believe that this would really be necessary during periods of change whether it be change in an industry, or a change in leadership, or changes that are coming down that are part of regulatory requirements where everybody has to kind of shift and go in a different direction, and that is really demanding on the individual; but if you're in a culture where those things [servant leaders behaviors] are modeled and that has been created, then I believe it's during those periods of time that it is going to have a direct effect - on a leader that you work with [sic] - how they're going to manage that change; and, how it's going to affect you personally."

One participant observed the connection of psychological capital to her ability to cope with disruptive changes when she explained, "I think that if [sic] in change or some type of adversity, I think that Psychological Capital will by definition help you with resilience. We're actually going through change, and I probably have the least anxiety

about the change than my co-workers, because I feel like I have high Psychological Capital." If her statement is true, and with consideration of the results from Phase One, the importance of the perception of the immediate manager in helping an employee develop/maintain the psychological capital to survive, or better yet thrive, the flood of changes within their work environment is magnified.

Summary of Key Findings

This study, using a mixed method research approach, has generated a rich description of the relationship of the independent variables, the eight identified servant leader behaviors, on the dependent variable, the individual employee's psychological capital. More specifically, several key findings have been uncovered relating to how the perception of the employee's immediate manager's demonstration of servant leadership behaviors impacts the employee's self-reported psychological capital. The following list of key finds are presented associated with the study research questions they address:

RQ1 – What relationship exists between the perceived demonstration of servant leader behaviors by a manager and the self-reported psychological capital (PsyCap) of the subordinate?

- A significant positive relationship was demonstrated between the perceptions of the demonstration of servant leader behaviors, both individually and collectively, in the immediate (or most recent) manager and the self-reported PsyCap of the employee (survey respondents) within this study sample. This confirmed that there is a relationship between the independent and dependent variables of this study.

- No significant relationship exists between the characteristics of the respondent sample (demographics, role, company, or manager) and reported employee PsyCap, with the exception of respondent age, length of service which each had a weak, but significant, positive correlation. Therefore, it can be concluded that the characteristics of the sample, had little to no impact on the resulting employee PsyCap.

RQ2 – Does the perception of the manager's demonstration of the eight identified servant leader behaviors, individually or together, predict employee PsyCap?

- The eight factors or independent variables represented in the servant leadership literature were represented in this sample. While the factors of empowerment, accountability, forgiveness, and courage mirror the literature, the other four factors, standing back, humility, stewardship, and authenticity were combined into one factor based on their common orientation toward the needs of others (called other–orientation) within this study. This helped to establish the validity of results in alignment with established research.
- Together, the servant leader factors explained 22.6% of the total variance of employee self-reported PsyCap: empowerment 10.8%, accountability 3.8%, forgiveness 3.2%, courage 2.8%, and other-orientation 2.0%.
- A regression model was established to predict employee-reported PsyCap. Each of the individual servant leader factors as well as respondent age and role, has a significant predictive relationship to PsyCap. This result further defines the relationship between the independent and dependent variables by establishing predictability.

- The regression model also confirmed that taken together, the servant leadership factors had a greater impact (predictive ability) than any one factor individually.

RQ3 – What are the employee perceptions about their manager's servant leader behavior and its impact their own psychological capital?

- Discussions of the results of the survey data yielded validation for the described relationships in practice and the experience of the discussion participants. Specifically, they were able to confirm the positive correlation between the perceptions of the demonstration of the identified servant leader in their immediate manager and their personal psychological capital. They illustrated this positive correlation by describing both the positive effect on psychological capital of higher perceptions of demonstrated behavior and the lower resulting psychological capital of lower (or missing) perceptions of manager's servant leader behaviors.
- Discussions also identified variables that may modulate the impact of these perceptions of the manager's servant leader behaviors on the employee's psychological capital. These variables include: amount of interaction and communication between manager and employee, the unique characteristics of the specific work assignment (e.g. accountabilities, performance expectations, work environment), the characteristics of the manager (i.e. experience, work load, perceived fairness), and finally the unique characteristics of the employees themselves (e.g. age/experience; self-motivation; personal circumstances and other sources of psychological capital support).

- There were also identified conditions under which the impact of the employee's perception of the manager's demonstration of servant leadership (or lack thereof) might be intensified. These conditions were described as first-of-a-kind, performance feedback, high stress, workplace conflict, and disruptive change. Each of these situations has the potential to magnify the influence of the manager's behavior on the employee's psychological capital.

Chapter V will discuss the implications and potential applications of each of these key findings.

While these findings do help to explain leader behaviors and work conditions that may influence employee psychological capital there are many other variables of leadership and the work environment that are not addressed in this study. This research presents findings and suggests a model of relationships between servant leadership behaviors and employee psychological capital that are worthy of additional research. However, these findings represent only a few threads in the mosaic of the relationship between a leader and an employee.

CHAPTER V – RECOMMENDATIONS

Psychological Capital (PsyCap) is a relatively new construct within the positive organizational behavior movement. Described as the positive psychological state of an individual's development, it is further characterized by self-efficacy, optimism, hope and resilience (Luthans, Youssef & Avolio, 2007). Supporters argue that psychological capital has demonstrated empirical evidence that higher levels of employee psychological capital lead to improved individual performance, job satisfaction, organizational commitment and change readiness (Avey, 2014; Avey, Reichard, Luthans, & Mhatre, 2011; Brocker & James, 2008; Lizar, Mangundjaya, & Rachmawan, 2015). However, much less is known about the factors that shape employee PsyCap (Avey, 2014).

This study was designed to examine if servant leader behavior predicts employee psychological capital. The researcher collected the perspective of the employee through the use of both quantitative assessment and qualitative evaluation regarding manager behavior and personal psychological capital. This final chapter uses the findings of the quantitative analysis and the interpretative conclusions of the qualitative analysis to describe six significant contributions made by this study to the existing literature. Practical applications for the organization, leader, and employee of these research finds are also outlined. Finally, the end of this chapter will introduce suggestions for future research.

Major Research Contributions

The research findings of this study are organized into six major contributions. Since the purpose of the qualitative phase of this study was to enrich and inform the data

collected via quantitative methods, both data sources are used below to explain each study contribution fully. To assist the reader in making the connection between research intent and methodology with the final conclusions, the contributions are presented organized by the research question they most directly address.

> **Research Question #1 –** What relationship exists between the perceived demonstration of servant leader behaviors by a manager and the self-reported psychological capital (PsyCap) of the subordinate?

Contribution 1: Servant Leader Behaviors have significant impact on employee PsyCap

This study is the first to seek an understanding of the relationship of servant leader behaviors to employee psychological capital. To that end, this study provides empirical evidence of a significant positive relationship between servant leadership behaviors and employee psychological capital. Specifically, the stronger the employee's perception of the positive demonstration of servant leader behaviors by their direct manager, the stronger their self-reported psychological capital.

Grounded in the work of Greenleaf (1970, 1977, 1989, 2002) and Spear (2002, 2010), intentional acts of service by a leader towards those for whom they have leadership accountability characterizes servant leadership (Greenleaf, 1970, Linden, Wayne, Zhai & Henderson, 2008; Spears, 2002). Servant leader behaviors are said to demonstrate a positive impact on employee attitudes and behaviors (Hale & Fields, 2007; van Dierendonck & Patterson, 2011). Van Dierendonck & Nuijten (2011) created the Servant Leadership Survey (SLS) to cover the essential servant leader characteristics, as summarized by Spears (2002). The survey measures the perception of the demonstration

of eight specific behaviors: empowerment; accountability; humility; courage; authenticity; standing back; forgiveness; and, stewardship.

The correlation analysis of employees' perceptions of managers' demonstration of servant leader behaviors with employee psychological capital identified a significant positive relationship. As the perception of servant leadership behaviors increased, so did employee psychological capital. Although the strength of the correlation differed across the eight behaviors, a significant positive relationship was demonstrated for each behavior. The demonstration of empowerment behaviors stood out as the strongest relationship to PsyCap [r=.478, p<.01], followed by stewardship [r=.370, p<.01], standing back [r=.353, p<.01], authenticity [r=.341, p<.01], accountability [r=.334, p<.01], humility [r=.325, p<.01], courage [r=.311, p<.01] and finally, forgiveness [r=.269, p<.01]. The validation of the impact of manager behavior on employee PsyCap reinforces the findings by Meuser, et al., (2011) that servant leader behaviors have a positive impact on in-role attitude and performance of their followers.

In addition to the correlation evidence, the results of the regression analysis also demonstrated that each of the defined servant leader behaviors predicted employee psychological capital. Together the servant leader behaviors explained 22.6% of the total variance of PsyCap scores within the sample of this study. Therefore, the demonstration of servant leader behaviors by the employees' direct managers accounted for almost one-quarter of the individual variance in employee PsyCap. Although the results of a factor analysis of the servant leader behaviors combined the variables of humility, standing back, stewardship and authenticity into one factor, called other–orientation, the regression model included each of the five factors of servant leadership in the prediction

model of PsyCap. Therefore, each factor explained some portion of the variability in employee PsyCap. This empirical evidence suggests that how the manager behaves directly impacts an employee's psychological capital.

The fact that each of the eight servant leader behaviors demonstrated a significant positive relationship to employee psychological capital is an important finding from this research. For example, the servant leader characteristic of humility had not demonstrated a significant positive correlation to PsyCap or if it had been excluded from the predictive equation in the linear regression, then one would be forced to conclude that the perceived humility of the immediate manager did not impact the employee self-reported PsyCap. This could call into question the operational definition of servant leadership as including these eight behaviors. To the contrary, each of the eight behaviors demonstrated a significant positive correlation to PsyCap and were included in the linear regression model predicting PsyCap. Therefore, it can be concluded that the model of servant leadership, operationally defined in the SLS, represents a set of behaviors that individually influence employees' attitudes, specifically psychological capital.

It is also clear from both the quantitative and qualitative data analysis that it is not just the positive demonstration of servant behaviors that impacts psychological capital. When the manager's demonstration of these servant behaviors is perceived to be low, or absent, then employee PsyCap falls. The correlational evidence supports this finding. Additionally, the focus group participants described times in their careers when they felt their personal psychological capital was low, when they lacked the resilience to bounce back from a difficult loss or when they had lost their optimism related to their job. In most cases, they also described their perception of their manager as lacking in one or

more of the servant leader behaviors during that period. They described how, for example, a lack of empowerment or willingness to stand back (i.e. give credit to others) by the manager engendered negative emotions and attitudes about how they felt about themselves, their job and their organization. Additionally, they often described their low perceptions of their personal psychological capital as a direct result of the identifiable absence of leader behaviors, specifically those behaviors focused on the needs of the employee.

Servant Leadership theory suggests that to be a servant leader one must focus on the needs and concerns of the follower, giving preference to their needs over the needs of the leader (Greenleaf 1977; Spear 2010). The data collected in the quantitative analysis and during focus group discussions clearly demonstrate that when the needs of the individual employee are not considered or met by the interactions and behaviors of the manager, their psychological capital falls. This finding also raises a rich area for future research, understanding how and why these individual behaviors influence employee psychological capital.

Contribution 2: Demographic characteristics have limited impact on employee PsyCap

The results of this study demonstrated that the race and gender of the employee do not have a significant relationship with their level of self-reported PsyCap. Although caution should be applied to the interpretation of these results from this study based on the large percentage of white females in this sample, these findings mirror the results conducted in three separate research settings (Avey, 2014).

One notable exception to the lack of significant relationship between employee demographic characteristics to PsyCap is employee age. The age of the employee does

have a weak but significant correlation [r=.202, p<.01] to an individual's PsyCap level. The age of the employee was also included as a predictor variable in the regression model, explaining 5.5% of the total PsyCap variance. This result also mirrored the findings of Avey (2014). Although this study was not designed to explore in depth the relationship of age to PsyCap, the focus group discussion did suggest that the age effect may not be a factor of chronological age alone, rather that age as a variable may be representing other characteristics of this specific sample population. For instance, employee age may have a relationship to variables not collected in this study like the amount of time the employee has spent in the workforce. The older the employee it stands to reason the more time they have spent in the workforce. It may not be their age but their time spent in the workforce that has predictive qualities for PsyCap. Age might also be representing a stage in life, the level of self-awareness, or even birth generation, all of which may have a direct relationship to individual psychological capital. It is clear additional research is required to understand this weak but significant relationship better.

This study collected additional demographic variables including characteristics of the manager and the company for whom the employee works to understand their relationship to perceptions of leader behavior and PsyCap. The descriptive variables collected on the manager for whom the employee assessed their leadership behaviors, included race, gender, age, years of service with the company, and estimated years of service in a manager role. Only a manager's length of service has any relationship to employee self-reported PsyCap, and that relationship was quite weak [r=.139, p<.05]. This finding suggests that it is not the personal characteristics of the manager that influence employee psychological capital. The characteristics of the organization for

whom the employee works, including its size or industry category (e.g., education, healthcare, manufacturing) also does not directly influence their PsyCap level.

This lack of association of the demographic characteristics of the employee, manager and company to employee psychological capital is an important finding. This finding suggests that the results generated within this study were in fact due to the impact of the dependent variables, the servant leader behaviors, on the dependent variable PsyCap. Additionally these finding suggest that the relationship described between servant leader behaviors and employee PsyCap may have application across industries, managers, and employee populations. However, the small sample size and the skewed representation of the education industry in this sample at 49.1% suggest a cautious interpretation of these findings. Additional research with larger samples representing diverse companies and manager demographics is warranted.

There was one category of demographic data collected that did have a significant relationship to employee PsyCap, the descriptive statistics associated with the employee's length of service and position type. A significant positive relationship exists between PsyCap and the length of service of the employee with the company [r=.159, p<.05] and length of service working for this manager [r=.183, p<.01]. Although both of these correlations are weak, they are significant and positive, suggesting that as the amount of experience an employee has with their company and their manager, their psychological capital grows. The focus group discussion raised the observation that the greater the amount of interaction with managers, both their immediate supervisor and other company managers, the greater the opportunity for observation of leadership tendencies and behaviors. The type of position the employee holds, either as an individual contributor or

manager of others, also has a significant positive relationship to their PsyCap [r=.268, p<.01]. On average across this sample, managers had higher PsyCap than individual contributors. Although this project does not shed much light on why this may be true, perhaps they high levels of self-confidence, optimism, hope, or resilience led them to these roles. In addition to this variable, the manager demonstrated servant leader factors and the employee age, contributed to the ability to predict PsyCap levels as described in the defined regression equation, explaining 3.6% of the total variability of employee self-reported PsyCap. This is another ripe area for additional inquiry and research.

This contribution to research made by this study is important as it not only begins to explain the relationship of these individual variables to PsyCap but also as it removes most of these variables from consideration as intervening variables within the impact of the perception of manager behavior on employee psychological capital.

Research Question #2 – Does the perception of the manager's demonstration of the eight identified servant leader behaviors, individually or together, predict increased capacity for the employee PsyCap?

Contribution 3: Empowerment improves employee PsyCap

In addition to the predictive power of all servant leader behaviors described in the first contribution above, this study demonstrated specifically, that perception of empowerment behaviors was the single largest predictor of employee self-reported PsyCap, explaining 10.8% of the variability of PsyCap levels within this sample. As the perception of employee empowerment increases, PsyCap increases.

Leaders who empower their employees are dedicated to helping develop mastery and self-efficacy within the employee (Cogner, 2000; Konczak et al., 2000). Building

self-efficacy, which is one of the four sub-construct within PsyCap, and the perception of self-control within the employee, is identified as a contributing factor to the employee's ability to adapt to stressful or changing situations (Bandura & Locke, 2003). Avey (2014) also identified empowering leadership behaviors as a significant contributor to influencing employee psychological capital levels.

This study demonstrated via both statistical analysis and real-life experiences described by the focus group participants, that the perception of managers' empowerment behaviors directly impacts employees' PsyCap level. When the manager empowers an employee, their psychological capital improves. Combining the managers' ability to enable employees to act (empowerment) with the ability to hold them responsible for the results of that action (accountability) are two servant leader behaviors that are tied directly to employee outputs. While the other servant leadership factors describe an orientation toward supportive leader behaviors, empowerment and accountability are behaviors that demand employee action (van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2011). As such they set expectations and demand responsibility for results. Together, these factors explain 14.6% of the variability in PsyCap scores. This finding suggests that employee PsyCap increases when expectations and resources for taking personal responsibility exists. Conversely, when the employee does not feel empowered to take personal accountability, their PsyCap falls. Focus group discussions confirmed these findings through illustrations of positive personal psychological capital where the focus group sees leaders as empowering. Likewise, they see low psychological capital where leaders micro-managed daily activity, did not provide access to available resources or did not hold themselves and others accountable for results.

The qualitative analysis also uncovered that employee' perceptions of a managers' demonstrated empowerment night be influenced by the amount of direct interaction and communication. The more opportunity for social exchange, the more the intentions for empowerment and accountability can become apparent. Therefore, the defined job tasks and accountabilities may directly influence the perception of the managers' level of empowerment. For example, an elementary school teacher has limited daily interaction with their direct manager and spends most of their time in the classroom personally accountable for class activities; they may perceive their manager as very empowering as they have little influence on daily activities. One the other hand, an employee working on an assembly line within a manufacturing environment may have very little job flexibility and therefore, perceive their manager as low in empowering and accountability servant leader behaviors.

It was also discussed that the perception of a manager's distributive justice (i.e. fairness) as demonstrated through assignment and resource allocation also might impact how others perceived his or her desire and ability to empower employees. Even the magnitude of a manager's workload and their desire and ability to delegate tasks may also influence the perceptions of their empowerment and accountability behaviors.

As empowerment and accountability leadership behaviors have such a strong ability to predict employee psychological capital, dissecting their relationship to employee psychological capital is a rich area for additional research. For example, additional inquiry to understand the impact of the perception of the manager's empowering and accountability behaviors, on the PsyCap constructs of self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience individually would be a worthy inquiry.

Contribution 4: Servant Leadership as a whole directly influences Employee PsyCap

It is also an important finding that the servant leader behaviors taken together were more predictive than any one of the factors individually. The results of the regression analysis demonstrated that it was the combination of the servant leadership factors that was most predictive of PsyCap, explaining together almost one-quarter of the variability of employee PsyCap. This finding suggests that it is the demonstration of servant leadership as a whole, rather than a specific leadership behavior that most impacts employee psychological capital. While there are clearly other factors that also impact employee psychological capital, the ability of the manager to demonstrate servant leadership is a significant workplace influence of employee attitudes. The choice to strive to be a servant-leader is within the manager's direct control. Therefore, managers wishing to impact the psychological capital of employees in a positive way, and the related positive outcomes, should carefully consider and work to demonstrate all the attributes of a servant leader.

Supporting the empirical evidence, the focus group discussions demonstrated how employees react to their managers a whole person, not just to their individual behaviors. Personal success and enjoyment of an employee were described as "less dependent on what I was doing and a whole lot more dependent on who my manager was (sic)." Participants often described their managers along a continuum of servant leadership using the demonstrations, or lack of demonstration, of specific behaviors as evidence for their level of servant leadership. The discussions also revealed an awareness of how the leadership perspective of a manager directly influenced the attitudes of the employee. As one individual put it, "I think that has been clear to me working for different kinds of

leaders and bosses that those who take a more servant leadership approach to their position really increase morale, individually and within the organization."

It is important to raise the point again that it is not just the presence of positive servant leadership that influences psychological capital, but its absence negatively impacts employee psychological capital. The following quote illustrates this perspective, "I have worked in a previous organization where there was definitely more of a negative [missing] servant leadership and it definitely had a culture of very low morale and very low psychological capital."

Although some consider servant leadership as just one of many alternative leadership styles, this study demonstrates both quantitatively and qualitatively its effectiveness in strengthening employee psychological capital. This understanding has an obvious and immediate application for managers. Those who desire to be effective leaders must realize that the demonstration (or conversely the absence) of servant leadership will impact employee attitudes and performance.

This study adds empirical evidence to the growing literature that the servant leadership as a leadership theory has a measurable, positive impact on employee attitudes, and by extension their actions. So servant leadership represents not just preferred behaviors, but essential behaviors when the manager intends to build or maintain an employee's psychological capital.

Research Question #3 – What are the employee perceptions about their manager's servant leader behavior and its impact their own psychological capital?

Contribution 5: Additional factors influence relationship of leader behavior to PsyCap

During Phase II of this study, qualitative data was collected from focus groups, and individual interviews targeted to understand the interpretations and applications of the Phase I quantitative findings. These qualitative findings enriched the understanding of the statistical results by providing examples and nuances. In addition to providing content validity for the relationship of servant leader behaviors and employee psychological capital, these discussions also provided content for understanding these finding. These discussions explained additional contextual factors that influence the direction and magnitude of the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. Specifically, at least two major factors were identified that appear to influence the perception of manager behaviors and therefore employee psychological capital, characteristics of the manager-employee relationship, and the specific work situation.

Manager-Employee Relationship

The relationship between the manager and the employee is a complex dynamic. This study highlighted several factors that might intervene to influence the employee's perception of their manager's behavior. These factors included the pattern of interaction between the manager and employee where the frequency and type of communication between the two can influence the opportunity to observe, and the interpretation of, manager behavior. In addition, the specific accountabilities of the manager, for example, a span of control, areas of accountability and overall workload, may also influence how the manager behaves and is perceived by their employee. Even the manager's own level of psychological capital may have a direct influence on how they are perceived. This

study did not collect data from the manager, only perceptions of the employee. This project also did not collect multiple points of observation (i.e. multiple employees) on any one manager. Both of these perspectives would add richness to this analysis and are recommendations for future research.

Another influencing factor within the manager-employee relationship is a specific definition of the employee's role. The direct manager is often accountable for defining the tasks and deliverables for the employee's role. The focus group discussions highlighted how the characteristics of the job, for example, the tasks, accountabilities, and social interfaces, directly influence the employee's personal psychological capital. The qualitative data described that the work environment, performance expectations and specific task workflows which are unique to each job, influence the attitudes of the employee. The design of the job defines the autonomy, accountability and social interaction for the incumbent. Some roles require close coordination with the others while others may have the employee working more independently. Some roles require close supervision and others do not. Some work environments provide many sources of social connection from which the employee can draw support for their psychological capital development; others do not. For example, the opportunity to reach task mastery in a job may quickly build employee confidence (self-efficacy), but, if the job design is such that it is difficult to build mastery and errors are frequent, this may have a negative impact on the self-confidence and resiliency (ability to bounce back) of the job holder. The characteristic of the role the employee is performing may shape how they view the behavior and intentions of their manager. This finding also suggests the need for

additional research on the relationship of specific job characteristics such as autonomy, social interaction, or performance objectives with employee psychological capital.

It is also true that each employee brings with them to the workplace a rich variety of personal experiences, beliefs and behavior patterns to the workplace. Avey (2014) suggested that individual difference is the single biggest factor influencing the employee's psychological capital. The wide variety of life experiences, both positive and negative, encountered by employees shape their attitudes and behaviors. It is entirely reasonable for part of the unexplained variance in PsyCap (68.8%), identified in this study, to be at least in part based on the individual differences of respondents. These personal characteristics may also dictate how certain behaviors of a leader are perceived and interpreted. For example, the need and desire for direction and guidance often vary across individuals. The focus group discussed how the same behavior of a manager may be interpreted differently by two employees, based on their personal needs and experiences. To one employee a manager's offer to help may be seen as intrusive and micro-managing while to another, it would be welcomed.

Each employee also exists within a social network outside of his or her workplace. These non-work influences also shape the employees' attitudes and behaviors. During the focus group discussions of findings, specific references were made to individuals seeking out positive influences outside the workplace. References to family, social groups, and community networks bolstered one's hope, optimism, self-efficacy, and resiliency. The influence of these outside the organization influences are an important contributor to what the employee brings to work each day. The role of personal

differences within organizational members and their relationship to psychological capital on the job is a fertile area for additional research.

Specific Work Situations

There are also certain work situations that appear to modulate the impact of leader behavior on employee attitudes. The qualitative analysis of this study suggests that when specific conditions occur in any work environment, across most any roles, the magnitude of the impact of the manager's behavior on an employee's psychological capital may be greater. For example, when the employee is trying something for the first time, the manager's servant leader behavior of forgiveness and acceptance may be more important than once the employee has mastered the task. These work situations appear to heighten the employee's awareness of manager servant leader behaviors and seem to provide a stronger influence of those behaviors on employee psychological capital than during other more routine situations. The focus group identified five of these potential situations. In addition to first-of-a-kind situations, high-stress work cycles and workplace conflict situations both may heighten the awareness of how the manager reacts and their other-oriented service behaviors. During times of stress do they demonstrate the courage and humility to drive accountability and forgiveness? Performance feedback settings, like the performance appraisal, is another time when the actions of a manager may have a more dramatic impact than the day-to-day interactions.

These findings suggest that in addition to considerations of the design of the job, there appear to be experiences and work cycles that are common across jobs and work environments that not only call on the employee to leverage their psychological capital but may influence its development. Additional research is warranted to better understand

the relationship of these experiences to the development of psychological capital within employees

Time of disruptive change is another situation when the impact of a manager's behavior may be magnified. When the status quo is shaken, the employee often looks to the manager for clues on how to interpret the change and how to behave in the new world order. This experience is best explained with the following quote from the focus group discussions, "We're in quite a bit of turmoil and as a result I really do believe that that really trickles down to this idea of hope and optimism and being able to be resilient through yet another change so I think that consistency and stability and support [demonstrated by the manager] also are significant contributors to psychological capital whether you want to look at it as an individual level or even as a cultural group or team level."

A second quote illustrates the impact of a servant leader in helping employees cope with the disruptions of organizational change. "My district is going through a major change right now, there is a lot of uncertainty, there is a lot of change coming down the pipe, so to speak, and having somebody who is really the epitome of a servant leader has really made the process a lot smoother than I think it would have been otherwise."

Employee empowerment and psychological capital have both been identified as significant contributors to building an individual employee's readiness to handle disruptive change in their work environment (Lizar, et, al, 2015). This study has illuminated the specific relationship of servant leader behaviors, and specifically empowerment, with positive employee psychological capital. Both of these factors

influence the employees' ability to prepare for and adapt to change within the work environment.

This project helps to begin building a complete picture of how the characteristics of the manager, the employee, the job, the work environment and the unique work situations interact to influence the perception of the servant leader behaviors and employee psychological capital.

Contribution 6: Provides empirical evidence for PsyCap and servant leadership

An overall contribution that this study provides additional empirical support for the research foundations for the theories, applications, and measurable tools associated with both Psychological Capital and Servant Leadership. Using both quantitate and qualitative data collection and analysis methods, this study provides additional richness in the descriptions, associations, and applications of these constructs.

Evidence for Psychological Capital

Positive organizational behavior constructs, must meet three specific criteria: positive, strengths-based; grounded clear theory and sound research; and, be a behavior that can be measured and developed (Luthans, 2002). Psychological capital is built upon the foundation of the individual research underpinnings of hope, self-efficacy, optimism and resilience, as outlined in Chapter II. Psychological capital has begun to build a rich research base of its own as a positive organizational behavior construct. This study contributes to this research foundation as it confirms PsyCap is both state-line (developable) and measurable.

The discussions of the Phase Two analysis validates that employees feel that individual psychological capital varies across time and situation. The participants not

only shared experiences of how their individual psychological capital increased under servant leaders but also how the absence of the servant leader behaviors had a significant and meaningful negative impact on their personal well-being and attitudes. They also defined specific conditions and situations under which they felt the perception of the leader behavior could intensify the impact and influence on their personal psychological capital, thus validating its state-like characteristic.

Through the successful application and statistical analysis of the Psychological Capital Questionnaire (PCQ), this study demonstrated the empirical evidence of the ability of this instrument to differentiate perception and measure the overall PsyCap construct. Although the deeper analysis of the relationships of the individual servant leader behaviors to the defined sub-constructs of psychological capital was outside the defined scope of this dissertation project, the survey instrument demonstrated its ability to support this future analysis.

Evidence for Servant Leadership

In additional to these general contributions to servant leadership research, this study also provides additional research validation for the use of the SLS as a tool to measure perceptions of servant leadership characteristics (behaviors). Although the factor analysis of the data collected from this research sample only demonstrated five unique factors of servant leadership (combining authenticity, standing back, forgiveness and stewardship into one factor), each of the questions of the survey aligned with the literature reported factor. The individual survey questions designed to measure courage, for example, did cluster within the factor analysis supporting the claims of the instrument to measure a unique factor of courage. Even the four factors that clustered together into

one factor included the unique questions associated with behavior, with only one exception (included one additional question from empowerment cluster).

Therefore, even considering the relatively small sample size of this study, the SLS proved to be an effective instrument to assess perception of servant leadership behaviors. It is recommended, however, that additional research is conducted to validate the original claims of the unique characteristics of the four variables clustered tighter in the factor analysis in this study. Although this specific results may be a factor of the study sample (i.e. size, make-up), the participants did not see these four servant leadership characteristics as unique from each other, as reported in the regression analysis. The findings from this study provide support for the demonstration of servant leadership as a leadership approach (theory) and more specifically, the model of servant leadership and assessment tools by van Dierendonck & Nuijten (2011).

Suggestions for Practical Implications of Research Findings

While the research finding above is important, the findings from this study also have direct implications to the practitioner. This section describes the applications for practice for the leader, the employee, and the organization as a whole.

Practical Applications for Leaders

This study provides empirical evidence that the behaviors associated with the demonstration of servant leadership (van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2011) have a significant and direct impact on employee psychological capital. Avey, Reichard, Luthans & Mhatre (2011) explained in their meta-analysis of 51 independent samples, that a significant positive relationship exists between employee psychological capital and

desirable employee attitudes (job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and psychological well-being), organizational citizenship; and, measures of employee performance (self, supervisor and objective evaluations). Also, they reported a significant negative relationship between PsyCap and undesirable employee attitudes (cynicism, turnover intention, job stress and anxiety), and employee deviance behavior.

Therefore, the first practical application of this research is evidence that the perception of servant leader behavior in the immediate manager has a positive relationship to the attitudes and behaviors of the employee. Although there is no doubt, there are other influences on employee PsyCap, and by extension employee attitudes and behaviors, this study provides empirical evidence of the significant positive relationship between the eight servant leader behaviors to employee psychological capital. The evidence suggests that leaders who seek to make a positive impact on employee attitudes and behavior (and to reduce the negative) should seek to understand and apply the eight servant leader behaviors.

In practice, the manager's demonstration of each specific behavior enhances the opportunity for improved employee psychological capital. For some managers, these behaviors may be quite natural and are already part of their leader behavior. For others, one or more of these servant leader behaviors may take time and practice to develop. This study also suggests that frequency of interaction and communication between manager and employee may increase the potential for manager behavior to influence employee psychological capital.

This research also suggests there are conditions and situations within the workplace that may magnify the employee's perception of the manager's positive or negative demonstration of servant leader behaviors. There are times when the demonstration of empowerment or humility, for example, may mean more to the employee than other times. The relationship between conditions or situations and psychological capital lead to a second practical implication of this research.

Although every manager-employee interaction is important, there are some situations when the employee may place greater importance on the manager's behavior. Managers should take from this study that there are times when how they (re)act may have a greater influence on employee attitudes than others. They should understand that during times of stress, conflict or novelty for the employee they must be careful to ensure the clear articulation of performance expectations (i.e., accountability); scope of authority (i.e., empowerment); opportunity for personal achievement (i.e., standing back) and the fit to larger organizational and/or social objectives (i.e., stewardship). Also, they should consider how to support risking talking (i.e., courage) and express tolerance for the mistakes present during the normal learning curve (i.e., interpersonal acceptance). How they handle themselves during these times of uncertainty will directly impact the perception and attitudes of the employee. These times of uncertainty that represent the greatest opportunity and greatest risk to building positive employee psychological capital, impacting their hope, optimism, self-efficacy and resilience.

A third practical implication for the manager from this research relates to their unique role during times of organizational uncertainty and added pressure. Certain work cycles may infuse periods with higher performance expectations and added tension (e.g.,

monthly closing of the books, start of the school year). The interpersonal conflict between members of a team or across team boundaries, also may cause anxiety and increased stress. It is at these times when the servant leader behaviors of authenticity, humility, and managerial courage may be most important.

Organizational change events, planned or unplanned, also bring with them a magnifying glass on the manager's behavior. How the manager acts/reacts during disruptions to the status quo, will help to define how the employee will act. The awareness and demonstration of these servant leader behaviors can assist the manager to help the employee through the change, by providing elements of stewardship such as concern for something bigger than themselves; holding the employee accountable for their role in the change, and demonstrating courage through a willingness to take risks on the change. These risks model the behaviors that will allow the employee to step out to support the change process. If the employee sees authenticity, humility, forgiveness, and the willingness to stand back and allow others to take the credit for success, they will be more likely to embrace the change.

Practical Applications for Employees

The results of this research also have applications for the employee. Although none of the participants in the Phase Two focus groups and interviews had heard of psychological capital before their participation in the study, each was able to understand and see applications in their attitudes and behavior quickly. The consideration and self-awareness of the individual sub-constructs of hope, optimism, self-efficacy and resilience provided them a better understanding of their reactions and a language with which to

discuss them. It seems that building awareness of psychological capital may inform their interpretation and understanding of their behavior.

Although this study did not provide participants their individual PsyCap scores, making this information available to employees may serve as one way to motivate and measure individual attitudes. Providing the employee information about psychological capital, its antecedents, and consequences, as well as methods to build the individual skills, may help the individual better prepare using hope, optimism, and self-efficacy, and react to the challenges of the workplace by showing resilience. Explaining that psychological capital has "state-like" qualities can help to set the employee's expectations that it is natural and expected that their attitudes will fluctuate over time and situation. Additionally, these attitudes and related skills can be developed and improved upon. So it follows that the employee can build confidence (self-efficacy) and sharpen their ability to bounce back quickly from disruptive change (resilience).

This study also confirmed Avey's (2014) view that there are various sources, or antecedents, to employee psychological capital levels, including: individual differences (i.e., what the individual brings to their work), the specific job design (i.e., the characteristics/design of the individual's role); and the leader's influence (e.g., the perceptions of manager behavior and intent). Each of these antecedent influences were demonstrated in the study findings. The focus group discussions explained that when one source is not meeting our individual needs, we can look to other sources to supplement and help build individual psychological capital. These sources may be inside or outside the work environment.

Practical Applications for Organizations

Leaders play a unique role in setting the direction and shaping the culture of an organization (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2010; Senge, 1990; Wang, 2008). The success or failure of an organization is, at least in part, dependent on the quality and capabilities of its leaders. Therefore, an important application of the results of this study for organizations relates to the selection and development of its leaders.

When evaluating the candidacy of a potential leader, exploring their experience applying the servant leader behaviors might be an important place to start your inquiry. As these behaviors have a direct impact on employee attitudes, and by extension behavior, it would be critical to assess these characteristics in anyone, internal or external to the organization, before selection into a leadership role. Specifically, the willingness and ability of the potential leader to clearly define the accountabilities and to empower one's employees may be essential behaviors to assess. The culture of the company, as well as the retention of top talent, may depend on the expectation of its leaders to demonstrate these servant leader behaviors. Together the demonstration of the servant leader behaviors represents the willingness of the potential leader to put the needs of the organization (stewardship), and of others (authenticity, courage, interpersonal acceptance) before the needs of the individual leader (humility, standing back).

In addition to applications to leader selection, the results of this research suggest the importance of equipping leaders with the perspectives and skills they need to model servant leadership. Although the variables influencing the leader's ability to both assimilate and integrate these behaviors into their leadership style is beyond the scope of this research, the ability to demonstrate each of the eight servant behaviors can be

developed in leaders. Leadership preparation programs and ongoing training programs could be designed to build awareness in leaders of their behaviors on the attitudes (PsyCap) of employees and to equip them to demonstrate each skill. The model and language of servant leadership can also be an important part of ongoing leadership development and succession.

The assessment of psychological capital, via PCQ, across the workforce could also provide executive management with information to understand the attitudes and potential capability of their employees. In a similar way, the SLS could be used to assess the current perception of servant leadership capability and to plan for organizational and individual skill development. This study demonstrated the application and validity of each assessment tool.

Lastly, as a positive relationship between psychological capital and the employee's readiness for change has been demonstrated, the positive relationship between the perception of manager's behavior and psychological capital has added significance (Lizar, et al., 2015). Practically, this suggests that a servant leader may help the employee be prepared for and react positively to disruptive change within their environment. It seems logical that the optimism of the employee would influence how they might view a change to the status quo. The employee with higher optimism might view the change as an opportunity, whereas those with lower levels might view the change as a threat. An employee with higher self-efficacy or confidence may also be better prepared to take on the novel challenges of the required change. The resilience capability of an employee would also mediate how they absorb and react to the

disruption, and their ability to bounce-back and even thrive from the adversity of the change process.

Then finally the employee with higher hope levels may be better equipped to identify the required new paths to success. Therefore, the ability of an organization to adapt and survive in these times to dramatic and constant change may be in part based on the psychological capital of its employees and its antecedent, the servant leader behaviors of its leaders.

Recommendations for Future Research

The design of this research has a focus on the foundational assessment of the relationship between the independent variables of the perceptions of the demonstration of the eight servant leader behaviors and employee self-reported PsyCap. As such it confirmed some established findings and suggested a few new ones. However, additional research is required to explain the complexity of this relationship. Future research should look beyond the limitations of this study to explore broader populations and different assessment techniques. Future research, for example, should include the assessment of employees and managers from diverse industry groups and consider data collection within a single organization to enable additional control over cultural and managerial variables. Additionally, it would be recommended to assess PCQ before SLS as a way to check for order effects.

Additional analysis is required to understand the other contributing factors to shape the employee work PsyCap, in addition to servant leadership behaviors. The ability

of other manager behaviors to predict PsyCap, in addition to the eight studied here, would also be an interesting area for additional analysis. For example, this study did not collect the amount of interaction or communication the employee had with their manager which may moderate the perception and impact of demonstrations of servant leadership. Additionally, comparing the perceptions of the employee to those of the manager or as a way to direct observation processes might help to remove employee bias from the analysis.

The research findings reported above suggested support for the additional antecedents of job design/characteristics and individual differences shaping employee reported PsyCap. However, very little is understood about their influence. Similarly, how the characteristics of the manager and certain situational or task conditions the relationship between the independent and dependent variables is worthy of additional research.

This study looked at the influence of perceptions of leader behaviors on employee psychological capital. Additional research is warranted to understand the influence the employee's current psychological capital level may have on their perception of leader behavior. For example, what impact does the optimism level of the employee have on their perception of manager empowerment behaviors? Does the resilience level of an employee influence their perception of managerial courage or authenticity? How does the self-efficacy of the employee relate to how they perceive attempts to empower? Additionally, the specific impact of servant leader behaviors on the sub-constructs of psychological capital which includes hope, optimism, self-efficacy, and resilience was out of scope for this project but warrants additional analysis.

Finally, it would be useful to be able to assess the specific influence of servant leader behaviors and employee psychological capital directly on employs readiness for change. The accelerating rate and magnitude of disruptive change facing organizations of all types and sizes today, calls for greater understanding of the antecedents impacting the employee's willingness, capability and capacity to embrace the change. Although this study did not measure employee readiness for change directly, the results from this study taken together with the research of Lizar, et al., (2015) suggests that both psychological capital directly and empowerment indirectly may positively influence the employee's readiness to manage disruptive change within their workplace. This may be an important finding if we understand the role of the manager's demonstration of servant leader behaviors, including but not limited to empowerment, as influencing employee psychological capital and therefore, readiness for change. In addition to the other outcomes empirically demonstrated to be at least in part driven by the employee's psychological capital, readiness for change may be one more. This project helps to begin to build a more complete picture of how the characteristics of the manager (e.g., perceptions of behaviors, frequency of communication, workload), the job and work environment (e.g., specific work accountabilities, performance expectations, social opportunities), the unique work situation demands (e.g. business cycles, stress level,) and the individual's own trait-like characteristics (e.g., age, role within company, self-motivation level) interact to influence their psychological capital, and perhaps by extension then their readiness to adapt and/or bounce-back from disruptive workplace changes. Therefore, this study helps to inform and suggest future research on building readiness for change in the workforce.

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Appendix A

Appendix A – Email Solicitation for Participation – Phase I

INITIAL EMAIL

Hello, My name is Jim Ice. Like you, I am a graduate student at Point Park University. I am working toward a doctorate in leadership in the Education department and need just a little bit of help from you.

I am requesting graduate students to complete a short two-part on-line survey as part of my dissertation research. The on-line survey will only take about **10 minutes to complete**. The anonymous survey will ask questions about your current (most recent) work/employment situation. The survey is explained in more detail on the first page (informed consent) of the survey.

At the end of the survey, in consideration for your time/completion of the survey, you can optionally enter into a random drawing, for five (5) $20 gift cards. This drawing will be held at the completion of the survey data collection.

You can take the survey now by selecting the following hyperlink:
https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Y5WXS6P

Please consider completing the survey as it will help me (my research) greatly... and give you a chance to win a gift card. If you have questions about the survey, I can be reached at jwice@pointpark.edu. Thank you so much for your prompt consideration in this matter,

FIRST REMINDER EMAIL

Hello,

Last weekend, I sent you an email request to take a quick on-line survey to support my doctoral research. To-date, twenty percent (20%) of graduate students at Point Park completed the anonymous survey. THANK YOU very much.

If you have not yet taken this opportunity to share your experience, **please consider taking 10 minutes to complete the simple survey.** Your perspective is important and I want to be sure it is included in this research. Simply select the link below to launch the survey.
https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Y5WXS6P

Remember that in consideration for your completion of the survey, you can enter into a random drawing, for **five (5) $20 gift cards**. Invest 10 minutes for a chance to win dinner; or coffee for a week; or that book you want; or some other treasure you desire... not a bad deal. Thank you for your kind support. If you have questions about the survey, I can be reached at jwice@pointpark.edu.
Thank you,

SECOND REMINDER EMAIL

Hello,

Hello again. This is my final appeal for your kind support in completing a quick on-line survey to help me with my doctoral research. The anonymous survey will take less than 10-minutes to complete and will help inform research on how our managers influence our attitudes at work.

In consideration for your participation I will hold a drawing of those who completed the survey for five (5) $20 gift cards.

I will be closing the survey on **Saturday 4/23/16** - so PLEASE consider taking just a few minutes to complete the survey. You can take the survey by selecting the following hyperlink: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Y5WXS6P **THANK YOU** for your kind consideration/participation in this project.

FINAL REMINDER EMAIL

POINT PARK
GRADUATE STUDENTS

WE WANT YOU

to complete a
10-minute survey
for a chance to win
one of five (5) $20 gift cards

My name is Jim Ice. Like you, I am a graduate student at Point Park University. I am working toward a doctorate in leadership in the Education department and need just a little bit of help from you.

I am sending a request to each **graduate student** at Point Park University to complete a short two-part on-line survey as part of my dissertation research. The on-line survey will only take about **10 minutes to complete**. The anonymous survey will ask questions about your current (most recent) work/employment situation. The survey is explained in more detail on the first page (informed consent) of the survey.

At the end of the survey, in consideration for your time/completion of the survey, you can optionally enter into a random drawing, for five (5) $20 gift cards. This drawing will be held at the completion of the survey data collection. You can take the survey by selecting the following hyperlink sent to you in a recent email from me – jwice@pointpark.edu. Please consider completing the survey as it will help me (my research) greatly... and give you a chance to win a gift card.

If you have questions about the survey, I can be reached at jwice@pointpark.edu. Thank you so much for your prompt consideration in this matter

Appendix B

Appendix B – Email Solicitation for Voluntary Participation – Phase II

INITIAL EMAIL

Hello,

I want to thank you for completing my recent on-line survey and expressing interest in more information about the follow-up discussion of results. I truly appreciate your interest and support. So here is a quick status update:

I have completed my data collection - 253 graduates students @ Point Park completed the survey. Over the next two to three weeks I will be analyzing my data and expect to schedule two 60-minute focus group sessions to discuss the finding and implications of the results. It is my hope to conduct these focus group sessions before the end of May.

I will communicate to this email list (individuals who expressed interest in Phase 2 of my study) within the next week the target dates and times for the focus group sessions; and, if interested/available, you can sign-up to participate in one of the two sessions. It is my current intent to conduct these sessions live AND via remote technology which will allow remote access to the discussion.

So thanks again for completing my survey and be on the lookout for a follow-up email describing the next steps. If you have questions, please feel free to reach out.... thanks,

FOLLOW-UP EMAIL

Hi

Thank you so much for expressing interest in participating in my focus group session as part of my dissertation study. As you might imagine, I am having a little trouble building a sizable group.

Although I know you expressed that a session on Saturday or Sunday was best for you....as I look at the times most folks are available to participate, they were:

- Sunday 6/26 from 3:00p-4:00p
- Monday 6/27 from 2:00p-3:00p

Can you please look again at your schedule and let me know either way via return email or phone call by Wed 6/22 if you can attend one of these two sessions - either live or via call in.

Thank you so much and I really appreciate your support!

thanks,

Appendix C

Appendix C – Permissions to Use Assessment Instruments

Psychological Capital Questionnaire

James Ice

mind garden

To whom it may concern,

This letter is to grant permission for James Ice to use the following copyright material:

Instrument: ***Psychological Capital (PsyCap) Questionnaire (PCQ)***

Authors: ***Fred Luthans, Bruce J. Avolio & James B. Avey.***

Copyright: ***"Copyright © 2007 Psychological Capital (PsyCap) Questionnaire (PCQ) Fred L. Luthans, Bruce J. Avolio & James B. Avey. All rights reserved in all medium."***

for his/her thesis/dissertation research.

Three sample items from this instrument may be reproduced for inclusion in a proposal, thesis, or dissertation.

The entire instrument may not be included or reproduced at any time in any other published material.

Sincerely,

Mind Garden, Inc.
www.mindgarden.com

SERVANT LEADERSHIP SURVEY (SLS)

RE: Request to use the Servant Leadership Survey in my Doctoral Research

To: Ice, James W
Monday, December 21, 2015 6:43 AM

You replied on 12/21/2015 3:42 PM.
Dear Jim,

Yes, you have my permission to use the SLS for your research. The full survey is depicted in one the tables. We use a six-point answering scale (no neutral category)

Good luck with your study. Kind regards,
Dirk van Dierendonck

Appendix D

Appendix D – Informed Consent Form Phase One – On-line Surveys

Consent to Participate in Research

Employee Psychological Capital

On-line Surveys

Introduction and Purpose

Hello - My name is James (Jim) Ice. I am a graduate student at Point Park University, working with my faculty advisor, Dr. Helen Sobehart to complete a doctorate in Leadership and Administration in the department of Education. I would like to invite you to take part in my research study, which relates to your experiences in the workplace.

Procedure

If you agree to participate in my research, you will be asked to complete two on-line short surveys. Your response to these surveys will be anonymous. Upon completion of the surveys, you will be provided the opportunity to submit your contact information to be registered for the drawing of two $50 American Express gift cards and if you are interested in participation in the survey follow-up activity.

a. The first survey will ask you to indicate your level of agreement with twenty-four (24) statements describing your perspectives on your current work/employment situation. For example:

"I can think of many ways to achieve my current work goals."

1-Strongly Disagree; 2-Disagree; 3-Somewhat Disagree; 4-Somewhat Agree; 5-Agree; 6-Strongly Agree

b. The second survey will ask you to thirty (30) questions about the behaviors of your immediate supervisor (i.e. the person to whom you take the most job related direction). For example:

"My manager has a long-term vision."

1-Strongly Disagree; 2-Disagree; 3-Somewhat Disagree; 4-Somewhat Agree; 5-Agree; 6-Strongly Agree

At **no** time during the study will you be asked the name of your organization or your boss. Instead, you will be asked only to select categories to describe the organization (i.e. industry; large/medium/small size) and your boss (i.e. gender, age range) for research analysis and comparison.

Participation in research is completely voluntary. You are free to decline to take part in the project. You can stop taking part in the project at any time.

Confidentiality

To minimize the risks to confidentiality, all study-related material will be encrypted on a password protected drive, and no identifying information will be connected with your on-line responses. Only the lead researcher, Jim Ice will have access to the study data.

Benefits

Although there is no direct benefit to you from taking part in this study, this research will add to the understanding and practice of leader and employee development. Additionally, upon completion of the survey you will be given the option to enter your contact information into a random drawing of two $50 American express gift certificates.

Questions

If you have any questions about this research, please feel free to contact me. I can be reached at *jwice@pointpark.edu.*

If you have any questions about your rights or treatment as a research participant in this study, please contact the Point Park University Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Dr. Brent Robbins, chair of the IRB, email address or 412-xxx-xxxx.

THANK YOU for considering to participate in my study!

Jim Ice

****

AUTOMATED CONSENT

If you wish to participate in this study, please select the "I agree" check box below- which will launch the surveys.

____ I **agree** to participate – will launch survey

____ I **do not agree** to participate – will return you to Point Park Website

Appendix E

Appendix E – Demographic Data Collected

Descriptive data was collected on three variables in this study: the participant; their organization and their direct supervisor. The following data will be collected as part of the on-line survey data collection:

Participant Demographical Data:

Data Element	Potential Values
Age Category	1 – under 25; 2 – 25-35; 3 – 36-45; 4 – 46-55; 5 – over 55; 6 – prefer not to report
Gender	0 – male; 1 – female; 2 – prefer not to report
Length of service in current company	1 – under 6 months; 2 – 6 months to 2 years; 3 – 3-5 years; 4 – 5-10 years; 5 – 11-25 years; 6 – over 25 years
Length of service under current supervisor	1 – under 6 months; 2 – 6 months to 2 years; 3 – 3-5 years; 4 – 5-10 years; 5 – 11-25 years; 6 – over 25 years

Organizational Description Data:

Data Element	Potential Values
Number of employees	1 – under 10; 2 – 11-50; 3 – 51-100; 4 – 101-250; 5 – 250-1000; 6 – over 1000
Profit/ Non-Profit	0 – for profit; 1 – non-profit
Industry (from Bureau of Labor Statistics supersector list)	0 – natural resource and mining; 1 – construction; 2 – manufacturing; 3 – trade, transportation and utilities; 4 – information; 5 – financial, insurance and real estate; 6 – professional services/consulting; 7 – education; 8 – health services; 9 – leisure/hospitality; 10 – other

Direct Supervisor Demographical Data:

Data Element	Potential Values (if applicable)
Age Category	1 – under 25; 2 – 25-35; 3 – 36-45; 4 – 46-55; 5 – over 55; 6 – prefer not to report
Gender	0 – male; 1 – female; 2 – prefer not to report
Length of service in current company	1 – under 6 months; 2 – 6 months to 2 years; 3 – 3-5 years; 4 – 5-10 years; 5 – 11-25 years; 6 – over 25 years
Length of service as a manager (career)	1 – under 6 months; 2 – 6 months to 2 years; 3 – 3-5 years; 4 – 5-10 years; 5 – 11-25 years; 6 – over 25 years

Appendix F

Appendix F – Focus Group Protocol

The following document outlines the proposed protocol for the focus group sessions (2) to be conducted as Phase Two of this research study.

Meeting Objectives:

- briefly share initial research findings; in order to;
- engage participants in an additional discussion of their perceptions and interpretation of the research findings and the influence of managers on the perceptions and behaviors of their direct reports.

Focus Group Participants:

- The potential focus group participants (for both sessions) will be selected randomly (using a table of random numbers) from the total individuals that expressed interest in participation via the online request form at the end of the on-line survey (see appendix E – Follow-up Request). The communication of the invitation to participate along with the specific dates, times and location for each session will be communicated via email to the potential participant. Return confirmation, via email, will be requested.
- From the available population the final selection of participants will be made based on order of confirmation limiting each session to no more than twelve (12) participants.

Meeting Agenda

(Note: a dry run of this agenda will be conducted with a small group of non-research participants in order to test/modify communication process and discussion flow for clarity and desired discussion output.)

Meeting pre-work

- The informed consent form see appendix B - Informed Consent Form Phase Two Focus Group) will be sent ahead of time along with brief description of session objectives agenda (start/end times) and directions to meeting location. If appropriate the phone instructions be sent as well. The selected participant will be asked to bring the signed form with them to the meeting. Additional copies will be available at the meeting as well.

Meeting Flow

Introduction (3-5 minutes)

- Brief introduction by researcher of self as well as the objectives and agenda for the meeting.
- Explanation that the session will be recorded for data analysis purpose.
  - all references to individuals and/or organizations will be removed from the data transcripts. Once transcribed the recording will be destroyed.
- Begin recording...
- Reminder about completion and collection of the informed consent forms.
- For the sake of time and confidentiality we will NOT take time to introduce each participant.
- Briefly set ground rules for discussion, including:
  - Respect all participants
  - Be candid, share your ideas/perspectives
  - Limit war stories
  - Confidentiality of discussion – do not use specific references

Data share (5-8 minutes)

- Using powerpoint slides (target max of 6) the high-level results from Phase One of the study will be shared with the participants. A copy of the powerpoint will be provided to the participants for reference during the discussion (and collected at the end of the discussion).
- A short question/answer session will be conducted to ensure understanding of the shared results.

Discussion (40-45 minutes)

- Through a semi-structured focus group discussion the participants will engage in a conversation about their analysis, interpretation and potential application implications of the research results.
- In order to facilitate discussion between the participants a few discussion starter questions will be shared by the researcher. Although the final list and order of these questions may change based on the research results from Phase One, the following primary questions and secondary probing questions (listed below) illustrate the overall intent and flow for the conversation. The researcher will also chart these ideas on flip chart for reference during discussion.

  - Question #1 - What did you find most meaningful in the shared results?
    - Why?
    - What surprised you? Why?
  - Question #2 – Do you think your manager influences your PsyCap (hope; optimism, efficacy and resilience)?
    - Why? Why not?
    - How? In what ways" With what behaviors/actions?
    - When? Are there times when they are more/less influential?
    - What about during times of disruptive change?
  - Question #3 – Do you think that your PsyCap helps you handle disruptive change in your work environment?

- If yes, How; If not, Why not?

- Question #4 – What do you think are the implications of these conclusions?
  - For leaders?
  - For followers?
  - For selection and training of leaders/followers?
- Question #5 – Now that you understand PsyCap, what other work related conditions you do you think impact your PsyCap?
- Question #6 – What should we have asked you about your managers influence on your PsyCap and your ability to handle disruptive change? What else should we know?

Conclusion (3-5 minutes)

- Research will conduct a quick summary of the major points of the discussion
- Express thank you for participation.
- Offer follow-up for clarification or additional questions.
- Adjourn (on time)

Appendix G

Appendix G – Informed Consent Form Phase Two – Focus Group/Interview

Consent to Participate in Research

Employee Psychological Capital

Focus Group

Introduction and Purpose

My name is James (Jim) Ice. I am a graduate student at Point Park University, working with my faculty advisor, Dr. Helen Sobehart to complete a doctorate in Leadership and Administration in the department of Education. I would like to invite you to take part in my research study, which relates to your experiences in the workplace.

Procedures

Associates with this research project you have completed two on-line surveys and expressed interest in participation in the research follow-up focus group discussion activity. Thank you for your continued interest and support of my research project.

If you agree to participate in the second phase of my research, you will be asked to participate in one 60-minute focus group discussion. The objective of this session is to enrich the understanding of the research results by engaging the research participant exploring reactions, interpretations and applications of reported results. This session will bring together individuals, like yourself, who completed the surveys and were interested in participation in the focus group activity. The focus group session will involve a brief review of the results by the researcher and then an open forum discussion of the results. Several 'discussion starter questions' will be developed to assist the group in exploring the implications and application of the results.

The session will be recorded so as to facilitate better analysis of the results. Any specific references to organizations and or individuals will be removed from all session notes and/or transcripts.

The group will be asked questions about personal perspectives on your own capabilities and the capabilities of your direct manager (i.e. the person to whom you take the most job related direction). Although we will take precautions in the discussion to avoid references to specific companies and/or supervisors, as with all research, there is a chance that confidentiality could be compromised. However, we are taking precautions to minimize this risk (described below). You are free to decline to answer any questions you don't wish to.

Participation in research is completely voluntary. You are free to decline to take part in the project. You can stop taking part in the project at any time before or during the session.

Confidentiality

To minimize the risks to confidentiality, all study-related material (including focus group recording and transcripts) will be encrypted on a password protected drive, and no identifying information will be connected to any individual. Only the lead researcher, Jim Ice will have access to the study data.

Benefits

Although there is no direct benefit to you from taking part in this study, however your participation may enrich your understanding of the impact leaders have on employees. It is hoped that this research will add to the understanding and practice of leader and employee development.

Consent to Participate in Research

Employee Psychological Capital

Focus Group

Questions

If you have any questions about this research, please feel free to contact me. I can be reached at *jwice@pointpark.edu.*

If you have any questions about your rights or treatment as a research participant in this study, please contact the Point Park University Institutional Review Board (IRB), Dr. Brent Robbins, chair of the IRB, (brobbins@pointpark.edu or 412-392-8183.

THANK YOU for considering to participate in my study!

Jim Ice

****

WRITTEN CONSENT

If you wish to participate in this study, please sign and date below.

_____

Participant's Name *(please print)*

_____ _____

Participant's Signature Date

Appendix H

Appendix H – Summary Document for Phase Two – Focus Group/Interview Discussions

Servant Leadership's Impact on Employee Psychological Capital
Jim Ice Dissertation – Focus Group Notes

This document provides a brief overview of background and the major finding of Phase 1.

CORE RESEARCH QUESTION: *This research project seeks to understand how the perceptions of a manager's demonstrated 'servant leader behaviors' influence the reported 'psychological capital' capabilities of their employee.*

BACKGROUND: Grounded in the literature, this study is based on the following elements:
Servant Leadership (serves as the independent variable for this study)

- First articulated by Robert Greenleaf, servant leadership has become a popular approach to the responsibilities of the leader. Servant leadership is defined as: "an understanding and practice of leadership that places the good of those led over the self-interest of the leader, emphasizing leader behaviors that focus on the follower [employee] development and de-emphasizing the glorification of the leader" (Hale and Fields 2007, p.397).
- Servant leadership was selected as the leadership model for this study because of the unique claims to focus on building capability/skills in the employee as the primary focus of the leader (Luthans & Avolio, 2003); and, as servant leader behaviors can be developed in leaders (vs. traits innate to leaders).
- Van Dierendonck & Nuijten (2011) outlined eight dimensions of servant leadership and created a 30-item survey instrument, the **Servant Leadership Survey (SLS)** to assess the demonstration of these dimensions. This 30-item survey uses 6-point likert-type scale (strongly disagree to strongly agree) to describe the employee's perception of their direct manager on the following dimensions:
  - **empowerment** – behavior aimed to foster a pro-active, self-confident attitude among followers and gives them a sense of personal power;
  - **accountability** – holding people accountable for performance both individual and team that they control;
  - **standing back** – to give priority to the needs of others first and to give the necessary support and credit;
  - **humility** – acknowledgement of personal weaknesses, mistakes, and strengths, and the ability to put personal accomplishments and capabilities in proper perspective;
  - **authenticity** – the ability of the leader to live consistent with their inner thoughts and feelings;

- **courage** – the willingness to take risks, challenge conventional wisdom and create (tolerate) new ways to operate;
- **interpersonal acceptance** – (also called forgiveness) being able to consider the perspective of others, accept mistakes or offences without caring a grudge, and to demonstrate compassion, empathy and forgiveness; and,
- **stewardship** – the willingness to serve objectives larger them those related to their own personal self-interest.

Psychological Capital (serves as the dependent variable for this study)

- Psychological Capital (also called PsyCap) is a core construct of positive organizational behavior. It is defined as: "an individual's positive psychological state of development that is characterized by the following:
  - having confidence (**self-efficacy**) to take on and put in the necessary effort to succeed at challenging tasks;
  - making a positive attribution (**optimism**) about succeeding now and in the future:
  - persevering toward goals, and when necessary, redirecting paths toward goals (**hope**) in order to succeed; and,
  - when beset by problems and adversity, sustaining and bouncing back and even beyond (**resiliency**) to attain success." (Luthans, Youssef & Avolio, 2007 p3.).
- Psychological Capital is a "state-like" construct, suggesting that it can be influenced and will change (be developed) based on the conditions and influences within the situation. (Luthans, Youssef & Avolio, 2007, p.326)
- PsyCap is measured by the24-item **Psychological Capital Questionnaire** (PCQ) which uses a 6-point likert-type scale (strongly disagree to strongly agree) to assess the employee's self-reported: self efficacy; optimism; hope and resilience. Together, the score on the individual scales combine to product an **overall PsyCap score**.

Research Approach

- Graduate students, who are currently working or have within the last two years, used the SLS and PCQ survey instruments to assess their perception of:
  - the demonstration of the EIGHT SERVANT LEADER DIMENSIONS (independent variable) by their direct manager; and,
  - their own level of PSYCHOLOGICAL CAPITAL (dependent variable)
- Select Demographic Summary:
  - 212 participants – of total 771 invited to participate - 27.5% response rate
  - Participant Demographics
    - Gender = 74.5% - Female; 25.5% - Male
    - Age = 14.2% under 25; 50.9 – 25-35; 19.3% - 36-45; 15.6% - over 45

  - Race = 79.2% - White; 12.3% - African America; 8.5% - Other
  - Role = 70.8% - individual Contributor; 29.2% - Management
  - Tenure with Company = 23.6% - 1 yr or less; 48.6% - 1-5 yrs; 27.9% - over 5 yrs
- Company Demographics
  - Industry = 49.1% Education; 14.6% - Health; 36.3% - Other
  - Size (employees) = 35.4% - under 100; 42.4% - 100-5000; 22.2% - over 5000
- Manager Demographics
  - Gender = 48.1% Female; 50.9% - Male
  - Race = 87.7% - White; 7.5% African America; 4.7% - Other
  - Experience as Manager = 11.8% - under 2 yrs; 23.6% - 2-5 yrs; 30.2% - 5-10 yrs; 26.4% - 10-25 yrs; 7.1% - over 25 yrs

MAJOR RESEARCH FINDINGS: Phase 1 of this study generated the following major findings:
Research Question #1: *What relationships exists between the perceived demonstration of servant leader behaviors by their manager and the self-reported psychological capital (PsyCap) of the subordinate?*
Findings:

- *Each of the eight Servant Leader Survey (SLS) dimensions demonstrated a significant (sig=.000) positive correlation to the Overall PsyCap of the employee (participant).*
  - ***In summary:*** *as the perception of the manager's demonstration of servant leader behaviors increase the employee's Overall PsyCap increases.*
- *None of the demographic variables of the participant (employee), company or manager demonstrated a significant relationship to the overall reported PsyCap of the employee – except the under 25 employee group which had higher Overall PsyCap scores.*
  - ***In summary*** *– the level of employee PsyCap is NOT a function of the demographics of the employee, their manager or their company.*
  - *However, employees 25 and younger tend to have higher Overall PsyCap levels than those over 25.*
  - *Additionally, managers, on average, have slightly higher Overall PsyCap scores than individual contributors (non-managers).*

Research Question #2: *Does the perception of the eight identified servant leader behaviors, individually or together, predict increased capability for the PsyCap construct?*
Findings:

- *The dimensions of the servant leadership explained* ***22.6%*** *of the variance (adjusted R-squared) of Overall PsyCap scores.*
  - ***In Summary:*** *The perception of a manager's demonstration of servant leadership behaviors together accounts for approximately one quarter of the factors influencing the PsyCap of the employee.*

- *For this study sample, four of the eight SLS dimensions (empowerment; accountability; forgiveness; and courage) were represented as separate independent variables each positively impacting the employee's PsyCap (confirmed via explanatory factor analysis).*
  - ***In Summary:*** *Four of the eight servant leader dimensions were more powerful in predicting (influencing) the Overall PsyCap of the employee. The other four variables for this study (sample) were seen by respondents as measuring very similar concepts (and therefore were combined).*
  - *empowerment accounted for 10.8% of the overall variance of PsyCap.*
  - *accountability accounted for 3.8% of the overall variance of PsyCap.*
  - *forgiveness accounted for 3.2% of the overall variance of PsyCap.*
  - *courage accounted for 2.8% of the overall variance of PsyCap.*
  - *remaining dimensions combined (stand back; stewardship; humility and authenticity) accounted for 2.0% of the overall variance of PsyCap.*

Research Question #3: *What are the reported employee perceptions of the impact of the leader's behavior on their own psychological capital?* *Focus group discussion topic*

Appendix I

Appendix I – Psychology Capital Questionnaire (PCQ)

Psychological Capital Questionnaire

Below are statements that describe how you may think about yourself right now.
Use the following scales to indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with each statement. (1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = somewhat disagree, 4 = somewhat agree, 5 = agree, 6 = strongly agree)

1. I feel confident analyzing a long-term problem to find a solution.
2. I feel confident in representing my work area in meetings with management.
3. I feel confident contributing to discussions about the company's strategy.
4. I feel confident helping to set targets/goals in my work area.
5. I feel confident contacting people outside the company (e.g., suppliers, customers) to discuss problems.
6. I feel confident presenting information to a group of colleagues.
7. If I should find myself in a jam at work, I could think of many ways to get out of it.
8. At the present time, I am energetically pursuing my work goals.
9. There are lots of ways around any problem.
10. Right now I see myself as being pretty successful at work.
11. I can think of many ways to reach my current work goals.
12. At this time, I am meeting the work goals that I have set for myself.
13. When I have a setback at work, I have trouble recovering from it, moving on.(R)
14. I usually manage difficulties one way or another at work.
15. I can be "on my own," so to speak, at work if I have to.
16. I usually take stressful things at work in stride.
17. I can get through difficult times at work because I've experienced difficulty before. 18. I feel I can handle many things at a time at this job.
19. When things are uncertain for me at work, I usually expect the best.
20. If something can go wrong for me work-wise, it will.(R)
21. I always look on the bright side of things regarding my job.
22. I'm optimistic about what will happen to me in the future as it pertains to work.
23. In this job, things never work out the way I want them to.(R)
24. I approach this job as if "every cloud has a silver lining."

Note: R indicates reverse scoring.
Luthans, Fred; Youssef, Carolyn M.; Avolio, Bruce J. (2006-08-04). Psychological Capital: Developing the Human Competitive Edge (pp. 237-238). Oxford University Press.

Appendix J

Appendix J – Servant Leadership Survey (SLS)

Servant Leadership Survey

Below are statements that describe how you may think about your current manager right now.

Use the following scales to indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with each statement. (1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = somewhat disagree, 4 = somewhat agree, 5 = agree, 6 = strongly agree)

Empowerment

1. My manager gives me the information I need to do my work well.
2. My manager encourages me to use my talents.
3. My manager helps me to further develop myself.
4. My manager encourages his/her staff to come up with new ideas.
12. My manager gives me the authority to take decisions which make work easier for me.
20. My manager enables me to solve problems myself instead of just telling me what to do.
27. My manager offers me abundant opportunities to learn new skills.

Standing back

5. My manager keeps himself/herself in the background and gives credits to others.
13. My manager is not chasing recognition or rewards for the things he/she does for others.
21. My manager appears to enjoy his/her colleagues' success more than his/her own.

Accountability

6. My manager holds me responsible for the work I carry out.
14. I am held accountable for my performance by my manager.
22. My manager holds me and my colleagues responsible for the way we handle a job.

Forgiveness

7. My manager keeps criticizing people for the mistakes they have made in their work (r)
15. My manager maintains a hard attitude towards people who have offended him/her at work (r).
23. My manager finds it difficult to forget things that went wrong in the past (r).

Courage

8. My manager takes risks even when he/she is not certain of the support from his/her own manager.

16. My manager takes risks and does what needs to be done in his/her view. .89

Authenticity

9. My manager is open about his/her limitations and weaknesses.

17. My manager is often touched by the things he/she sees happening around him/her.

24. My manager is prepared to express his/her feelings even if this might have undesirable consequences.

28. My manager shows his/her true feelings to his/her staff.

Humility

10. My manager learns from criticism.

18. My manager tries to learn from the criticism he/she gets from his/her superior.

25. My manager admits his/her mistakes to his/her superior.

29. My manager learns from the different views and opinions of others.

30. If people express criticism, my manager tries to learn from it.

Stewardship

11. My manager emphasizes the importance of focusing on the good of the whole.

19. My manager has a long-term vision.

26. My manager emphasizes the societal responsibility of our work.

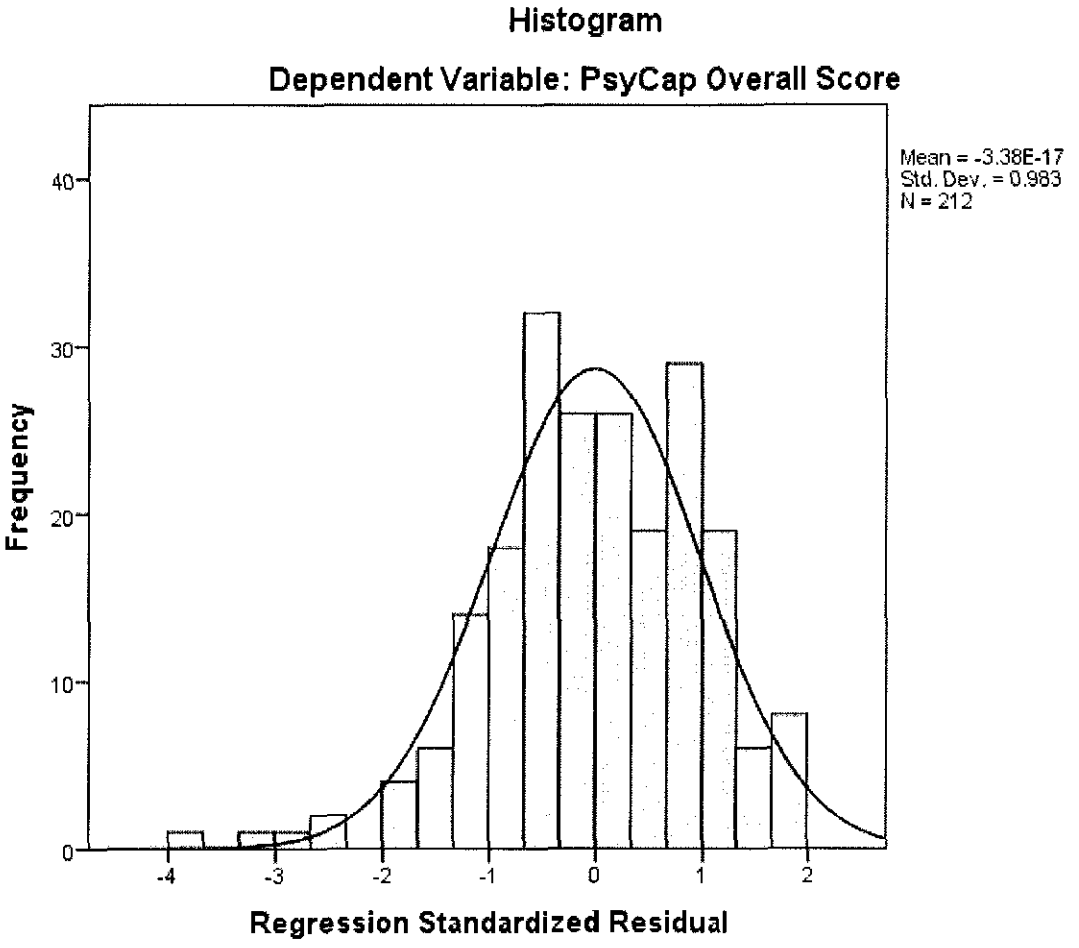
Appendix K

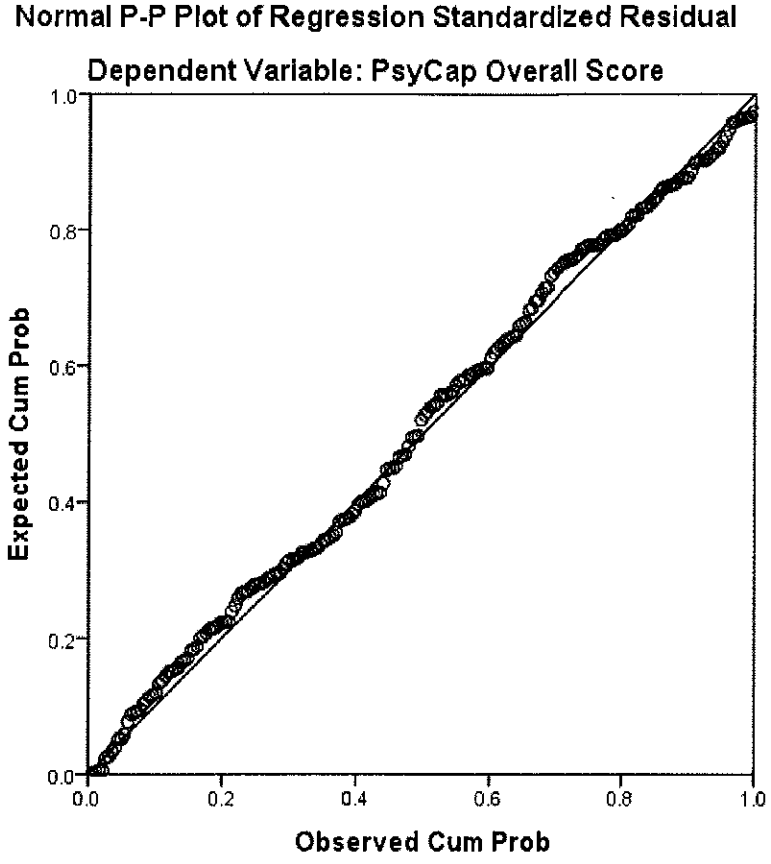
Appendix K – Research Implementation Timeline

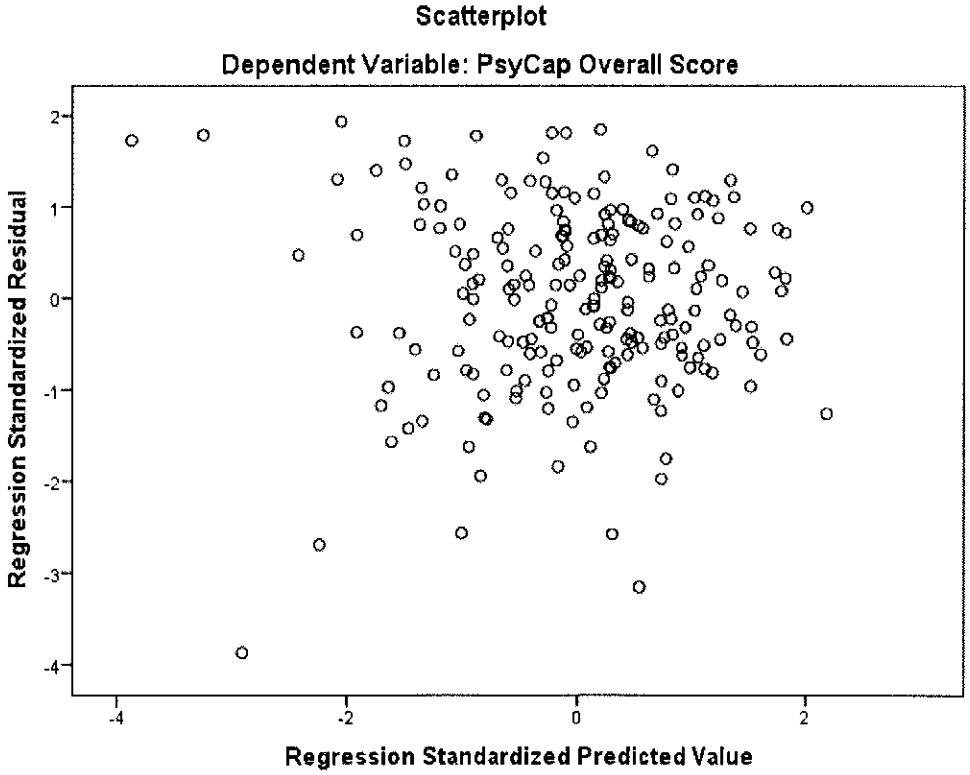
Task	Date
Proposal Defense	March 7, 2016
Institutional Review Board (IRB) Submission	March 8, 2016
IRB Approval	March 31, 2016
PHASE I	
Pilot of Phase I Data Collection	April 1, 2016
Open On-line Survey & Invitations Sent	April 2, 2016
Email Reminder #1 Sent	April 7, 2016
Email Reminder #2 Sent	April 14, 2016
Final Email Reminder Sent	April 23, 2017
Survey Closed	April 26, 2016
Phase I Data Analysis Begun	April 27, 2016
Phase I Analysis and Documentation Complete	June 10, 2016
Build Phase II Protocol	June 10, 2016
PHASE II	
Pilot Phase II Protocol	June 14, 2016
Focus Group Session #1	June 26, 2016
Focus Group Session #2	June 27, 2017
Interview #1	June 30, 2016
Interview #2	July 7, 2016
Phase II Data Analysis Begun	July 7, 2016
Phase I Analysis and Documentation Complete	August 7, 2016
Dissertation Defense	Sept 22, 2016

Appendix L

Appendix L – Data Normal Distribution Histogram, P-Plot and Scatter Plot




Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual
Dependent Variable: PsyCap Overall Score
Expected Cum Prob
Observed Cum Prob
0.0
0.2
0.4
0.6
0.8
1.0


Scatterplot
Dependent Variable: PsyCap Overall Score
Regression Standardized Residual
Regression Standardized Predicted Value
2
1
0
-1
-2
-3
-4