

SERVICE AS A LEADERSHIP COMPETENCY AT  
DIRECTOR/CEO LEVEL

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## ABSTRACT

Given ethical failures in leadership, the actions and decisions of leaders are receiving renewed attention based on the role business plays in society. Business leaders need to demonstrate their willingness to consider their influence on society and not merely consider the demands and expectations of shareholders. Leaders must consider the ethical lens through which their decisions and actions are perceived. Service as a leadership competency can develop ethical leadership. Currently, service is not clearly defined and understood, and Pearse (2017) proposes five interrelated elements of service as a competency, namely individualised consideration, compassion, motivation to lead, humility and integrated thinking.

The study examined if the five interrelated service elements are present when a leader at Director/CEO level exercises an act of service towards a follower. The study adopted a qualitative deductive thematic approach, collecting data through semi-structured interviews and using the critical incident technique to guide the interviews.

The study's findings support the research proposition that service as a leadership competency consists of the five elements, but with some of these elements expanded. Service as a leadership competency is recommended to develop high-quality social relationships within an organisation, which will positively impact the corporate culture. Organisations can recruit and select leaders based on ethical leadership requirements and integrate these into performance management systems. Recommendations for further research have also been made.

Keywords: service, leadership competency, individualised consideration, compassion, motivation to lead, humility, integrated thinking.

## Declaration

I declare that the Dissertation entitled, SERVICE AS A LEADERSHIP COMPETENCY AT DIRECTOR/CEO LEVEL, which I hereby submit for the degree, MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION at Rhodes University, is my own work. I also declare that this thesis/dissertation has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other tertiary institution and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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Ilse M Chilton

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## 1. Chapter 1: Introduction

### 1.1. Introduction

Pearse (2017) proposes that service as a leadership competency consists of five interrelated elements namely: individualised consideration, compassion, motivation to lead, humility and integrated thinking to resolve competing stakeholder needs. The study aims to identify if the five elements are present when a leader exercises an act of service to a follower. This chapter describes the background and the problem/research statement, defines key terms and explains the study's research design.

### 1.2. Background

The current literature on leadership competencies has focused overwhelmingly on the productive output and performance of an individual leader and not necessarily on the quality of the relationships they form with fellow employees, especially direct reportees (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005a; Boyatzis, 2011a; Pearse, 2017). In general, the studies distinguish between two groups, high-performers versus low-performers and identify the unique behavioural traits and characteristics between the two groups (Boyatzis, 2011a; Pearse, 2017). As the focus is on effectiveness, or productive output and performance, it largely disregards the ethical dimensions of leadership (Pearse, 2017). Consequently, the literature on leadership competencies has neglected ethical approaches to leadership, such as service as a required leadership competency (Pearse, 2017).

### 1.3. Problem statement / Research problem

The leadership competency literature does not fully explain the definition and qualifying characteristics of service as a competency. Pearse (2017) proposes that service as a leadership competency consists of five interrelated elements: individualised consideration, compassion, motivation to leave, humility and integrative thinking to resolve competing stakeholder needs. The study will investigate the presence of the five elements when an executive leader exercises an act of service towards followers (Pearse, 2017).

### 1.3.1. Delimitations of the study

The study consists of participants at the Director/CEO level who have a minimum of four years of experience. The participants were involved in the research in their personal capacity and not as representatives of their organisations. Hence, the study is not located in any particular industry or organisation. The study is further delimited only to identify if the five elements of service as a leadership competency are present in the act of service a leader exercises to a follower, or not (Pearse, 2017). That is, the study will not extend to investigating the developing nature of the five elements or the order in which the elements take place.

### 1.4. Definition of key terms

The key terms used in this study are as follows:

Competence. A description of specific behavioural outputs. Competences are generally treated as dependent variables. For example, intelligence and hard work are required to be proficient or to display competence in physics or mathematics (McClelland and Boyatzis, 1982; Boyatzis, 2009a; Pearse, 2017).

Competency. Generally treated as an independent variable, competencies are those capabilities or abilities that differentiate the behaviour of high performers from others (McClelland and Boyatzis, 1982). They are related but different sets of knowledge, skills and attitudes organised and driven by the underlying intent of the person displaying the behaviour (Grzeda, 2005; Boyatzis, 2009a; Pearse, 2017).

Leadership competency. It consists of both the intrapersonal competencies a leader has developed within him/herself, which, when applied, develop an organisation's human capital, as well as those interpersonal competencies which develop the social capital within an organisation (Day, 2000; Podsakoff, MacKenzie et al., 2000; Boyatzis, 2009a; Pearse, 2017). In the context of this research, the emphasis is on building strong, high-quality social relationships formed within the organisation (Day, 2000; Pearse, 2017).

Service as a leadership competency: Pearse (2017, p. 366) defines service as a leadership competency as “the capacity to behave in such a way that an act of service takes place, with

the intent of empowering, developing, helping, advising or protecting a follower, so that they can perform more effectively and ethically – and by extension, the organisation’s performance is enhanced on these two performance dimensions of effectiveness and ethics”. He further proposes that service as a leadership competency consists of five interrelated elements: (1) individualised consideration, (2) compassion, (3) motivation to lead, (4) humility, and (5) integrative thinking to resolve stakeholder needs for the greater good.

### 1.5. Goal of the research

The study aims to test if the five interrelated service elements are present when a leader exercises an act of service to a follower (Pearse, 2017). The findings will, therefore, either validate or invalidate the research proposition that service as a competency of leaders, consists of these five elements.

### 1.6. Research design

Eight participants with a minimum of four years of experience at the Director/CEO level took part in the study. Semi-structured interviews were held with each participant to probe if the five elements of service are evident when a leader exercises an act of service towards a follower (Yin, 1981; Yin, 2013; Pearse, 2017). The critical incident technique was applied, and the data were analysed using a deductive thematic analysis and pattern matching (de Vos, Strydom et al., 2005; Bell and Thorpe, 2013; Pearse, 2019).

### 1.7. Chapter outline

This study contains the following chapters:

Chapter 1 introduced the research problem, provided a background to the research topic, defined key terms, stated the research goal, and outlined the research design.

Chapter 2 reviews the literature to provide the theoretical context, covering Resource Based Theory and competitive advantage, Social-Exchange Theory, and leadership competencies. It also examines service as a leadership competency and reviews the five elements of service as a leadership competency.

Chapter 3 covers the research design. It first explains the aim and objectives of the study. After that, the research design is described in terms of the research paradigm adopted, the data collection technique employed, the recruitment of participants, and the use of deductive thematic data analysis. Limitations and ethical considerations are also considered.

Chapter 4 presents the key findings from the interviews and the findings concerning the five propositions of the study. The findings are also discussed in light of the literature on the elements of service as a leadership competency.

Chapter 5 concludes the study by summarising the findings, considering the implications for leadership practice and making recommendations. Also, recommendations for future research are provided.

## 2. Chapter 2: Literature Review

### 2.1. Introduction

Resource-Based Theory (RBT) (Barney, 1991; Berg and Wiebe, 1993; Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005a) and Social-Exchange Theory (SET) (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005a) are the theories underpinning this study, and as such, this chapter provides a review on both theories. RBT explains how a firm can gain a sustained competitive advantage over rival firms by developing internal talent and human capital that are difficult to imitate or replicate (Barney, 1991; Yukl, 2008b; Boyatzis, 2011a).

The modern landscape for organisations is rapidly shifting the focus from adhering to shareholder values to leaders called to a higher level of ethical standards, taking the long-term consequences of their actions into cognisance (Kellerman, 2012). Leaders are not only required to lead with integrity, honesty, compassion, and empathy but additionally earn the trust of internal and external stakeholders (Podsakoff, MacKenzie et al., 2000; DeRue and Ashford, 2010; van Dierendonck, 2011a; Kellerman, 2012; Allio, 2013). This places the responsibility on leaders' shoulders to set the trend for an organisational culture that cultivates productivity, creativity and efficiency but within the boundaries of operating ethically (Kellerman, 2012; Pearse, 2017).

SET provides insight and clarity on the importance of the social relationships that are formed between a leader and his/her followers and how these relationships improve productivity, efficiency, loyalty and low staff turnover and absenteeism (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005a). Social relationships develop over time through various actions of reciprocity between the leader and follower (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005a). Despite service identified as an important aspect of leadership theories, it is not clearly defined and explained (Podsakoff, MacKenzie et al., 2000; Avolio and Gardner, 2005; Ilies, Morgeson et al., 2005; Walumbwa, Avolio et al., 2008b; Boyatzis, 2011a; van Dierendonck, 2011a; Allio, 2013; Cropanzano, Dasborough et al., 2017; Pearse, 2017). Foa and Foa (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005a) identify six resources that are exchanged, of which service is one resource. However, Cropanzano and Mitchell (2005a) emphasise that service is not clearly defined nor well understood.

This study focused on Directors and CEOs and the strong relationships that develop between them and their followers over time. In the absence of defined and agreed characteristics

comprising service, Pearse (2017) proposes that service consists of five interrelated elements: individualised consideration, compassion, motivation to lead, humility and integrative thinking to resolve competing stakeholder needs for the greater good. Each of the five elements informs a proposition of service displayed by Directors and CEOs. These five elements are also reviewed in this chapter.

## 2.2. Resource-Based Theory

Resource-Based Theory states that firms can develop a sustained competitive advantage over rival firms by applying business strategies that harness firm resources to improve efficiencies and effectiveness (Barney, 1991). The ability of a resource to provide a firm with a sustained competitive advantage depends on whether the resource meets four specific attributes, namely: valuable, rareness, inability to be replicated, and whether the firm can organise and deploy strategies that optimise these resources, or in short VRIO (Barney, 1991).

Firms' resources that meet the VRIO criteria can be classified into three capital groups: physical, human and organisational (Barney, 1991). Physical capital is the firm's physical technology, plant and manufacturing, equipment and raw materials, including its geographical location (Barney, 1991). Human resources capital is unique because it distinguishes between an individual manager's or worker's value and the social complexities surrounding the collective (Barney, 1991). Therefore, human capital includes the training, insight, experience, intelligence and judgement of an individual manager or worker (Barney, 1991). Organisational capital is the firm's formal and informal planning and reporting structures, how it coordinates systems, and develops informal relations among different parts or groups within the organisation; and within its business environment (Barney, 1991). Applying a business strategy that harnesses these resources to reduce inefficiencies and improve overall effectiveness provides a firm with a sustainable competitive advantage (Barney, 1991).

For any firm to deploy and implement strategies to gain and maintain a sustained competitive advantage, it relies on one critical resource, managerial talent (Barney, 1991). Managerial talent comprises the abilities and talents of individual managers through which a firm develops a sustained competitive advantage. A specific manager's behaviour is often difficult to understand and explain as it relies on the person's individual beliefs, values, abilities and an objective view of oneself (Barney, 1991; Boyatzis, 2011a; Pearse, 2017). In order to replicate

this advantage, rival firms target strategically placed managers for recruitment to replicate the social phenomena created by the individual manager (Barney, 1991; Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005a). This does not necessarily mean that the rival firm will suddenly be on par with the firm experiencing competitive advantage, as building strong relationships between managers and staff are time-consuming, time-and-space specific and require reciprocity from all parties involved (Barney, 1991; Berg and Wiebe, 1993; Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005a).

Socially complex phenomena within a firm are sometimes challenging to understand and even harder to imitate and copy as the complexities are seldom well understood or clear. Examples are the interpersonal relationships between managers, a firm's reputation with its suppliers and customers, and its culture. Despite rival firms identifying the direct positive impact of a socially complex working environment, developing and imitating socially complex relationships is challenging (Barney, 1991). Socially complex firm resources are not subject to direct management, making these valuable resources nearly impossible to replicate (Barney, 1991).

RBT explains that a firm can gain a competitive advantage over rivals but does not explain the “how” and “what” a firm needs to apply to establish it. The following paragraphs will explain how a firm can gain a sustained competitive advantage by applying Social-Exchange Theory (SET) to develop high-quality relationships between leaders and followers.

### 2.3. Social-Exchange Theory

Social-Exchange Theory (SET) (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005b) identifies two types of relationships that develop between a leader and his/her follower, namely high-quality social relationships and low-quality economic relationships. High-quality relationships that rely on trust are intimate and caring compared to low-quality economic relationships (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005b). Economic relationships are transactional, meaning a follower merely performs his/her duties to receive a salary (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005b).

Findings from SET show that high-quality relationships lead to positive organisational citizenship behaviour and contribute to a work environment that is protective and safe (Schriesheim, Castro et al., 1999; Cropanzano, Dasborough et al., 2017). These caring environments encourage and inspire employees to become the best they can be, and ultimately the organisation benefits from lower staff turnover, less absenteeism and improved productivity

and innovation (Schriesheim, Castro et al., 1999; Cropanzano, Dasborough et al., 2017). Achieving high-quality social relationships is a challenge, as it relies on the social complexities and uniqueness of the company (Barney, 1991), which are difficult to replicate and cultivate as the basis for sustained competitive advantage (Barney, 1991).

#### 2.4. Leadership Competencies

The leader is expected to possess specific competencies, to develop and foster social relationships, which, when activated, lead to the development of high-quality relationships (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005b). Competencies include a variety of skills, traits, attitudes and knowledge. Examples of competencies include: efficiency orientation, concern with impact, proactivity, self-confidence, oral presentation skill, conceptualisation, use of socialised power, managing group processes, emotional self-control, adaptability, teamwork, empathy, influence, systems thinking, pattern recognition, open-mindedness, flexibility, respect for others, sensitivity, networking, communication skills and motivational tendencies (Boyatzis, 2009b; Boyatzis, 2011b; Emmerling and Boyatzis, 2012; Boyatzis, Passarelli et al., 2013; Boyatzis, 2016; Goleman and Boyatzis, 2017).

Competencies can be categorised into two groups, namely, intrapersonal – competencies that the leader has developed within him/herself that lead to the development of human capital; and interpersonal – competencies that are social in nature and develop the organisations' social capital (Day, 2000; Boyatzis, 2009a; Boyatzis, 2011a; Boyatzis, Passarelli et al., 2013; Yamazaki, 2014). Intrapersonal competencies are skills specifically related to self-awareness (emotional awareness, self-confidence, an accurate self-image), self-regulation (self-control, trustworthiness, personal responsibility, adaptability) and self-motivation (initiative, commitment, optimism) (Day, 2000; Boyatzis, 2011a). The intra-personal competencies are necessary to develop a leader's individual knowledge, trust and personal power; all of which are fundamental to leadership imperatives (Zand, 1997; Day, 2000). Inter-personal competencies are social awareness (empathy, service-oriented and developing others), and social skills (collaboration and cooperation, building bonds and handling conflict management) (Day, 2000; Goleman and Boyatzis, 2017). The inter-personal competencies are social in nature and form through the interactions between the leader, follower and the organisation. Despite service being identified as a resource (Foa, 1971) and an inter-personal competency, Pearse (2017) identified that service as a leadership competency is neglected in the existing

literature. The norm is that followers serve their leaders and, in many instances, a ‘servant-master’ relationship forms where the interests of the business or organisation take preference above the development, care and nurturing required to build high-quality social relationships (Avolio and Gardner, 2005; Ilies, Morgeson et al., 2005; Walumbwa, Avolio et al., 2008a; DeRue and Ashford, 2010; van Dierendonck, 2011b; Pearse, 2017). In other words, in the absence of the display of service competency by the manager, social exchanges between a manager and employees will be undermined.

## 2.5. Service as a leadership competency

Pearse (2017, p. 366) defines service as “the capacity to behave in such a way that an act of service takes place, with the intent of empowering, developing, helping, advising or protecting a follower, so that they can perform more effectively and ethically – and by extension, the organisation’s performance is enhanced on these two performance dimensions of effectiveness and ethics”. He further argues that service as a leadership competency consists of five interrelated and interdependent elements through which service takes place, namely individualised consideration, compassion, motivation to lead, humility and integrative thinking to resolve competing stakeholder interests for the greater good (Pearse, 2017). These five elements will now be briefly introduced.

### 2.5.1. Individualised consideration

Individualised consideration is when the leader displays understanding and knowledge of the specific needs of the follower and, therefore, can grasp the follower's position (van Dierendonck, 2011b; Pearse, 2017).

Leaders need to know the people they are serving well to fully understand the individual and unique needs of one person versus another (van Dierendonck, 2011b; Pearse, 2017). Individualised consideration focuses on effective communication between the leader and the follower, sharing, and being vulnerable by openly asking for assistance and help from the leader to address a particular matter or problem (Pearse, 2017).

### 2.5.2. Compassion

Boyatzis (2006) defines compassion as empathy and understanding another person's feelings and state, caring about their well-being and being willing to do something about it. Compassion in the context of the leader serving the follower includes the leader identifying that the follower is experiencing physical and emotional distress and the follower needs help to continue to perform his/her duties effectively and ethically (Boyatzis, 2009a; van Dierendonck, 2011a; Pearse, 2017). There is the caution that the leader needs to be aware that this could also lead to distance. The vertical power relationship between the leader and follower could become tense if the follower feels pitied or loses his/her self-worth during this helping process (van Dierendonck, 2011b; van Dierendonck and Driehuisen, 2015).

Based on this risk of a negative relationship developing between the leader and follower, Pearse (2017) suggests that an appropriate motivation to lead and humility in leadership are required to mitigate this risk.

### 2.5.3. Motivation to lead

The characteristic of motivation to lead involves the leader deploying social power to empower and develop followers (van Dierendonck, 2011b; Pearse, 2017). Social power differs from personal power or self-aggrandizing, exploitive, authoritarian, narcissistic and abusive power). In contrast, social power focuses power away from the leader to followers and the collective (House and Howell, 1992). After understanding the follower's situation, the leader's need for power is activated and motivates the leader to exercise social power to assist the follower (House and Howell, 1992; Pearse, 2017). Social power influence followers by transforming their needs, values, preferences, desires and aspirations into collective interests (House and Howell, 1992). By exercising social power, the leader, by example, causes followers to become highly committed to a common cause or a mission that the leader has in mind, and the followers believe in and are willing to make a significant personal sacrifice or perform beyond normal expectations (House and Howell, 1992). Leaders who exercise social power encourage followers by showing confidence in their abilities and value their contribution to the common cause or mission (House and Howell, 1992). By exercising social power, leaders can increase productivity, innovation, caring, respect, devotion, voluntary compliance and overall satisfaction of followers (House and Howell, 1992). Existing literature does not thoroughly explain this attribute, as the mechanisms, reasons, and associated outcomes of leaders sharing

their power have not received much attention (Pearse, 2017). Due to this gap in the literature Pearse (2017) suggests that humility can shed some light on this dynamic.



#### 2.5.4. Humility

Humility is when the leader can view him/herself objectively, prioritise good relationships with followers, and will avoid instances or behaviour that will seem selfish, self-centred, arrogant or vain (Podsakoff, MacKenzie et al., 2000; van Dierendonck, 2011b; Rego, Owens et al., 2017a; Rego, Owens et al., 2019). The leader willingly admits weakness publicly, encouraging followers to do the same without fearing rejection, ridicule or public embarrassment. In order to demonstrate service as a competency, the leader willingly has to put his/her needs second in order to assist and help a follower in need or distress (Podsakoff, MacKenzie et al., 2000; Pearse, 2017; Rego, Owens et al., 2017a; Rego, Owens et al., 2019). The selfless acts of humble leaders wanting to do good will make them more willing to serve their followers (Denis, Langley et al., 2000; Podsakoff, MacKenzie et al., 2000; Yukl, 2008a). Humility is perceivable after the act of service occurs when the leader maintains the well-being of the follower or the collective is the primary focus and not self-ingratiating (Pearse, 2017).

#### 2.5.5. Integrative thinking to resolve competing stakeholder interests for the greater good

Integrative thinking to resolve competing stakeholder interests for the greater good means that the leader will inevitably face the challenge of more than one stakeholder requiring his/her attention and help simultaneously. In this instance, stakeholders refer to a follower/employee and external stakeholders such as clients, suppliers and possibly shareholders. During this process, the leader has to weigh the quality and social exchange related to each of the different relationships that need attention (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005b; Yukl, 2008a; van Dierendonck, 2011b; Pearse, 2017).

#### 2.6. Chapter summary

This chapter discussed Resource Based Theory (RBT) and explained how individual leaders, and human capital, can develop strong social relationships, social capital, enabling the organisation to have a sustained competitive advantage. The chapter also discussed Social Exchange Theory (SET), emphasising the importance of social relationships compared to merely economic ones. The existing literature on leadership competencies highlighted that individual human capital is dependent on several intra- and inter-personal skills and traits that the leader needs to possess to exercise social power within the organisation. Even though

service is found in SET as an exchange resource and features as an effect in leadership competencies, service is not well understood and examined. Pearse (2017) proposes five interrelated elements that comprise an act of service. These five elements serve as five propositions that the study examined and analysed, and they are set out in Table 2.1.

**Table 2.1 Research Propositions**

<b>Propositions for the research study</b>
P1 Individualised consideration is evident when the leader exercises service as a competency
P2 Compassion is evident when the leader exercises service as a competency
P3 Being motivated to lead with social power is evident when the leader exercises service as a competency
P4 Humility is evident when the leader exercises service as a competency
P5 Integrated thinking is evident when the leader exercises service as a competency

**Table 1** Propositions for the research study (Pearse, 2017)

### 3. Chapter 3: Research methodology

#### 3.1. Introduction

This chapter describes the aims and objectives of this qualitative study and the research design. The chapter presents the research design regarding the research paradigm (i.e., its ontology and epistemology), research method, data collection technique, data analysis and ethics.

#### 3.2. Aim and objectives

The study aimed to investigate if leaders apply the five elements of service derived from Pearse (2017) (i.e., individualised consideration, compassion, motivation to serve, humility and integrative thinking to resolve competing stakeholder needs) when they exercise service towards their followers; and if so, to explain how and why they do so. Each of the five elements of service was investigated by conducting semi-structured interviews with eight Directors/CEOs. The objective of the interviews was to test whether each of the five propositions of service was present when a leader renders an act of service to a follower, and if an element was not present, to explain why (de Vos, Strydom et al., 2005; Pearse, 2017; Pearse, 2019).

#### 3.3. Research design

The research design aims to decide on the appropriate steps to investigate and understand the social phenomenon occurring between the leader and follower (de Vos, Strydom et al., 2005; Pearse, 2017). This research study was deductive, meaning that the existing literature on Resource Based Theory (Barney, 1991), Social Exchange Theory (Berg and Wiebe, 1993; Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005a) and Leadership Competencies (Day, 2000; Podsakoff, MacKenzie et al., 2000; Boyatzis, 2009a; Boyatzis, 2011a; Boyatzis, Passarelli et al., 2013; Pearse, 2017) were used as theoretical background to examine the five elements of service identified by Pearse (2017). The purpose of deductive studies is to expand and add to the existing theoretical knowledge. In contrast, in the case of inductive studies, the analysis and interpretation of the data are informed by the patterns emerging from the data itself, and only afterwards does the researcher identify theories that might explain the social phenomenon that took place (de Vos, Strydom et al., 2005; Pearse, 2019).

### 3.3.1. Paradigm

The research paradigm adopted in this study was post-positivism, as the research is concerned with verifying theory through a qualitative procedure that investigates the multiple perspectives of participants (de Vos, Strydom et al., 2005). Post-positivism is the belief that the experiences and the social phenomenon between the leader and follower can be investigated objectively and analysed in a manner that gives meaning to the experiences (de Vos, Strydom et al., 2005; Bell and Thorpe, 2013).

### 3.3.2. Research method

The research method employed was an explanatory multi-case study design applying deductive thematic analysis (Bell and Thorpe, 2013; Pearse, 2019). Case studies help identify and explain situations and social phenomenon that takes place between a leader and follower to answer “how” and “why” questions (Yin, 1981). Therefore, the explanatory function of case studies informs inferences about the five elements of service (Yin, 1981; de Vos, Strydom et al., 2005; Pearse, 2017).

Multiple case studies provide the advantage of exploring if the same conclusions can be drawn from the cases, where the results from the first case build onto the next case's findings (Yin, 1981). The use of multiple case studies, therefore, allows one to examine the presence of the five elements of service with the result of recommending how service can be developed in an organisation to develop and build human and social capital (Yin, 1981; Barney, 1991; Boyatzis, 2011a; Pearse, 2017).

### 3.3.3. Data collection technique

Data was collected through semi-structured interviews. Participants were provided with a questionnaire to gather basic background information, i.e. age, the industry they work in and years of experience at a Director/CEO level before interviews proceeded. See Appendix B. The participants were all interviewed in their private capacity as a leader. Therefore they do not represent their employer or company. After receiving ethics approval for face-to-face interviews, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, an ethics amendment was submitted to Rhodes University to conduct the interviews remotely. See Appendix A.

The following paragraphs provide further details on the interviews, defining and applying the critical incident technique that guided the semi-structured interviews and data collection.

#### 3.3.3.1. Critical Incident technique

The Aviation Psychology Program of the United States Army Airforce initially developed the Critical Incident Technique (CIT) and, during WWII, used the CIT for the selection, classification and training of military personnel (Fisher and Oulton, 1999). Since then, the CIT method has been applied widely in an extensive range of disciplines collecting quantitative and also qualitative data (Sautter and Hanna, 1995; Fisher and Oulton, 1999; Easterby-Smith, Thorpe et al., 2012; Bell and Thorpe, 2013; Pearse and du Plessis, 2016). According to Chell (2004; p. 48), the CIT method aims to “gain an understanding of the incident from the perspective of the individual, taking into account cognitive, affective and behavioural elements”.

The CIT method has unique advantages as it requires the participant to recollect a specific critical incident, usually very emotional and therefore very different from their everyday routines (Sautter and Hanna, 1995; Pearse and du Plessis, 2016). Since a critical incident is memorable, the incident can be used to infer the leaders' intentions, the reaction of the follower, and the consequences that took place in the incident for both parties (Sautter and Hanna, 1995).

The CIT method was applied by asking the participants in-depth questions about specific incidents where they had provided service to a follower. The descriptions of the incidents were detailed, including the context of the situation and the emotions they felt when the incident took place (Yin, 1981; Sautter and Hanna, 1995; Pearse and du Plessis, 2016; Pearse, 2017).

#### 3.3.3.2. Interview matrix

A question matrix was designed to cover each of the five elements of service with relevant questions and to ensure that all five research propositions were addressed (Pearse, 2017). Refer to Appendix B for the interview questions relating to the five service competency elements. Each participant was asked the questions included in the interview matrix, and the semi-structured approach encouraged additional questions to be asked to probe for further detail. This probing allowed for other elements related to service to be identified that were not considered or known about before.

### 3.3.3.3. Code book

A code book and coding memorandum were designed detailing the definition for each of the five elements of service (Pearse, 2017; Pearse, 2019). Each of the elements was given a code, i.e., Individualised Consideration (IC), Compassion (C), Motivation to Lead (MTL), Humility (H) and Integrative Thinking (IT). For each code, the coding memorandum included a formal definition, a description of occurrence, qualifiers and non-qualifiers. Appendix D contains the detailed codebook and coding memorandum.

## 3.4. Data analysis

The existing literature on RBT, SET and Leadership Competencies informed the propositions that are tested in the study, with the expectation to add credible information and insight to their existing body of literature (de Vos, Strydom et al., 2005; Pearse, 2019). Yin (2014) highly recommends the deductive thematic analysis process, especially when a case study or multiple case studies are used to detect and explain social phenomena. In its essence deductive thematic analysis identifies, analysis and reports patterns and overlapping within the data set (Pearse, 2019). The code book was used to analyse the interview data by identifying content relevant to each code. The participants' responses were weighed and compared to the information in the coding memorandum. Refer to Appendix D for the codebook detailing the qualifiers and exclusions for each of the five elements of service. The process of pattern matching is used to substantiate and provide credibility to the patterns identified in the data (Pearse, 2019). Pattern matching is explained in further detail below.

### 3.4.1. Pattern matching

Pattern matching complements deductive thematic analysis because it identifies patterns of data within multiple case studies, comparing the data of one case study versus the data from another (Yin, 1981; Yin, 2013; Pearse, 2019). Applying this technique not only strengthens the study's internal validity but also improves the accuracy of the interpretation, inferences and findings made for each case study (Yin, 1981; Yin, 2013; Pearse, 2019). In this study, the five elements of service (i.e., individualised consideration, compassion, motivation to lead, humility and integrative thinking), serve as five different themes that are explored within each case study

(Yin, 1981; Pearse, 2017; Pearse, 2019). The qualifiers and exclusions in the code book assist in identifying patterns in the responses from the participants (Yin, 1981; Pearse, 2019). Pattern matching makes it possible to identify sentences or phrases that lead to identifying new elements or themes that were not previously considered as part of the hypotheses (Yin, 1981; Pearse, 2019).

### 3.4.2 Recruitment and selection of participants

Sample sizes with a small number of participants are acceptable for qualitative studies (Braun and Clarke, 2006; Ando, Cousins et al., 2014; Sim, Saunders et al., 2018). In this study, eight participants were selected using the snowball method (de Vos, Strydom et al., 2005; Bell and Thorpe, 2013). The participants had to meet the following three criteria:

- minimum age of 35 years
- experience as Director/CEO for at least a minimum of 4 years
- served as Director or member of an Executive Board for at least a minimum of 4 years

The participants met all the minimum criteria, and the sample profile is further described below. The participants willingly participated in their private capacity as a leader, not representing their organisation or company.

#### 3.4.2.1 Sample profile

The profile of the sample is set out in Table 3.1

**Table 3.1: Description of the sample**

<u>Age</u>	<u>Participants per age group</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Years in post</u>	<u>Business Sector/Industry</u>
35-40	0	-	-	N/A
40-45	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Managing Director</li> <li>▪ Director</li> <li>▪ Unit Head/Company Head for RSA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10+</li> <li>5+</li> <li>10+</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Financial Sector</li> <li>Legal sector</li> <li>Engineering</li> </ul>
45-50	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Executive Director</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5+</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engineering</li> </ul>
50-55	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Managing Director</li> <li>▪ Technical Director/Branch Manager</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>15+</li> <li>25+</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engineering</li> <li>Professional Scientific consulting</li> </ul>
55-60	0	-	-	

60+	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Managing Director/CEO</li> <li>▪ Director</li> </ul>	25+ 20+	Consumer goods manufacturing Local Government
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Source: Author's construction

As the profile summary indicates, the youngest participants (3) are between the ages of 40 – 45 years, while the oldest participants (2) are above the age of 60 years. The lowest years of experience of the participants was five years, and the highest years of experience was over 25 years. The participants represent various sectors and industries. Though three participants are in engineering, they represent three different sectors in engineering.

### 3.4.2. Conducting the interviews

Dates and time slots were arranged with each participant for a virtual interview with an estimated duration of approximately 45 minutes. The participants gave their approval before the researcher recorded the interview on Zoom.

Each participant was asked to remember and recall a maximum of two incidents where they had served one or more of their direct subordinates. The participants were encouraged to use the incidents they could remember in as much detail as possible. The interview matrix guided the interview, and probing questions were asked to obtain further details and specifics for an incident.

### 3.5. Limitations and delimitation

The study consisted of a small sample of eight Directors/CEOs who were interviewed in their capacity as a leader and did not take into account the specific industry or organisation that the leader worked in. The study was delimited to the perspective and experiences of the individual leaders. It did not include the perception of the follower, fellow employees or external stakeholders, such as clients and customers.

### 3.6. Ethical considerations

An application to conduct a qualitative research study was submitted to Rhodes University's Ethical Review Application System. The application indicated that a qualitative study would be done with Directors/CEOs. Since the leaders participated in their personal capacity, and were not representing their organisation or the industry, it was not necessary to seek gatekeeper

approval from any organisations to proceed with the study. Each participant received a formal invitation with a letter of consent that had to be completed and signed. All information provided in the study was treated as confidential, and the participants remained anonymous. The data gathered during an interview was shared with the participants for them to ensure that none of the information could lead to their identification or that of the follower or the organisation.

### 3.7. Chapter summary

This chapter has described and justified the research design, which is qualitative in its approach, collecting data through interviews and applying deductive thematic analysis. It has also described the research procedure that was followed. The next chapter presents and discusses the research findings.

## 4. Chapter 4: Findings & Discussions

### 4.1. Introduction

From the interviews conducted, eight incidents were selected for analysis. Table 4.1 below indicates the number and title given to each incident, followed by a summary. After that, the data analysis related to the five research propositions is presented and discussed. Finally, the overall pattern of the results is summarised.

**Table 4.1: Summary of incidents**

<u>Number and title of incidents</u>	<u>Summary of the incident</u>
Incident 1 – assisting follower with grief	<p>The leader assisted a follower that was grieving the loss of a parent. The leader had lost both his parents and could relate to the follower’s situation. Emotionally the follower struggled immensely, and the leader personally assisted by holding numerous discussions to help the follower through the grieving process.</p> <p>The leader and the follower had a working relationship stretching over more than ten years. This history provided the leader with in-depth knowledge of the follower, allowing the leader to understand better the follower’s situation and what course of action to take in the moment and the future.</p> <p>The organisation was small, allowing for personal relationships to develop. However, every person’s contribution to the company was meaningful and vital. The employee's workload had to be adjusted with some of the tasks shared amongst co-workers. The leader overlooked the follower’s poor performance for at least nine months. Eventually, out of necessity, the leader had a firm talk with the follower to make him aware that he could not continue indefinitely in this emotional state. This firm talk helped the follower to get back on his feet, and he expressed appreciation to the leader for that. The leader was confident that as a Christian, he would be able to assist the follower, as one believer helping another.</p>
Incident 2 – assisting a follower through grief and stress	<p>A follower suddenly lost her mother and had lost all her siblings in previous years. By default, the follower suddenly became responsible for caring for her sibling’s children, who lived a significant distance away from her, with her mother.</p> <p>The sudden loss and extra responsibility were very stressful to the follower, affecting the follower’s attitude, mood and productivity. The relationship between the follower and her direct manager deteriorated to a level where the situation was unbearable.</p> <p>The leader immediately took action, spending time with the follower to get the full context of the situation. The leader gave the follower numerous opportunities to vent, cry and talk about her situation. The leader emphasised that sometimes all the follower needed was someone to listen to her.</p>

	<p>The leader could relate to the follower’s situation as a mother, understanding the responsibilities of having children. The relationship between the manager and the follower improved. It has since grown into a “mother and daughter” relationship, which the follower needed.</p>
<p>Incident 3 – assist a follower experiencing a personal loss</p>	<p>During a high rainfall event, a portion of the follower’s house collapsed during the night. The follower and her child nearly died and were visibly traumatised.</p> <p>The leader was devastated by the trauma the follower experienced. The leader was greatly concerned about the immediate wellbeing and safety of the follower.</p> <p>As soon as the leader was made aware of the traumatising loss, the leader immediately reported the event to the Company Executive and requested approval to go ahead with collective extra-ordinary measures to assist the follower. Approval was immediately granted to proceed with various actions to assist the follower. The leader initiated collective actions from all the companies’ offices throughout the province.</p> <p>The leader sent a technical team with the follower to assess the area where her existing house was. The leader took it upon himself to approach another company to secure a second job for the follower. By approaching this company and explaining the situation, it had the spin-off effect of the company providing additional finances and building supplies.</p> <p>The leader visited the follower’s house with his personal builder to assess the damage and possible reconstruction costs. The company bought a new piece of land and registered it in the follower’s name. The next step will be constructing a new house for the follower, funded by donations from the company and its employees.</p> <p>The company has a strong ethos of caring for and protecting its staff. The follower’s economic contribution to the firm is small, but the follower interacts with all employees during the day. Sharing with employees her traumatic experience and the level to which the organisation assisted her created a positive awareness amongst followers to know that they can come to the leader for any assistance at any time.</p>
<p>Incident 4 – assisting a follower experiencing a personal loss</p>	<p>As the Office Manager and Head of Operations for South Africa and Africa, the leader was aware that the employee was to be retrenched. The leader had previously experienced the same situation and could anticipate what the follower would be going through.</p> <p>Through direct interaction with the follower, the leader was also aware that this would be the follower’s second retrenchment in a short space of time. The leader had several conversations and interactions with the follower and was aware of the family and financial responsibilities the follower had.</p> <p>The leader showed an exceptional willingness to go the extra mile for the follower using his personal connections with managers in the various offices – within South Africa and Africa. The leader was confident that he would be more successful contacting the managers</p>

	<p>directly instead of leaving the responsibility with their Human Resources Department.</p> <p>The leader persisted until he successfully secured a new contract for the follower. The leader had also considered the organisational units that could benefit from the follower's skills, knowledge and experience.</p>
<p>Incident 5 – assist a follower in increasing productivity</p>	<p>The organisation is in the professional finance sector, and the leader is responsible for a group of followers that need to complete a 3-year internship after their university qualification. One of the followers in the group was struggling to complete tasks and was not progressing at the expected rate. The leader was confident that she was able to assist the follower as it was her field of expertise.</p> <p>After a year, the leader took it upon herself to help the person as best as possible. The follower was placed back onto the mentorship program under the direct supervision of the leader and another senior.</p> <p>The leader noticed that the follower was not passionate about the profession and convinced the organisation to pay for the follower to undergo an aptitude test. The test confirmed that the follower was entirely in the wrong field. He had only entered it due to family pressure.</p> <p>The leader was concerned about the follower's well-being, given the pressure from his family to continue in a career he had no passion for and who had spent much money on his studies. He was not able to meet the expectations of his parents. The leader again tried to assist the follower but attempts failed as the follower was unwilling to cooperate. The follower had developed a drinking problem, and his behaviour was becoming intolerable. The leader asked another senior manager to talk to the follower 'man-to-man', which assisted the follower in opening up and sharing his difficulties.</p>
<p>Incident 6 – assist a follower in increasing critically needed productivity</p>	<p>The follower is of high economic value to the company. The follower developed a medical condition that negatively affected his office performance. The leader noticed the decrease in productivity as it directly impacted the company's finances.</p> <p>The follower eventually confided in the leader, and as a result, they had numerous personal discussions. The discussions helped both parties. That is, the follower explained in detail how the condition affected him, allowing the leader to understand the condition fully. Also, it helped both parties to understand how best to handle it by figuring out what the follower needed from the leader and vice versa. The follower required additional work pressure as he flourishes under pressure. The follower was highly capable and talented, and the leader was willing to do anything to keep the follower.</p> <p>The leader and follower also connected on a deeply spiritual level as Christians. With years of management experience, the leader commented that God gives everybody a unique talent. A manager must find out what that talent is and help the person develop it to the best of his/her potential.</p> <p>This situation has made the leader more aware of the employee's needs, and he now has more appreciation for each employee. As the leader and the follower had a close and personal relationship, the leader was confident that they would be able to resolve the issue.</p>

<p>Incident 7 – assist a follower to resolve conflict</p>	<p>The leader was approached by her follower requesting assistance to resolve conflict within a unit. The working unit was small and intimate, and the stifled relationship between the follower and the subordinate was visible to the whole unit. The productivity and overall performance of the unit decreased significantly, and it was evident and confirmed during performance appraisals.</p> <p>The leader asked both parties to write down their issues and problems. The leader gained insight and detailed knowledge of issues related to work and their private lives. Once the leader saw the problems, the leader was confident that she was best qualified (i.t.o. field of expertise, education &amp; training and experience) to resolve the issues between the follower and her subordinate.</p> <p>The leader focused on rebuilding and re-establishing trust between the follower and her subordinate. The leader provided direct one-on-one assistance to the follower, scheduling weekly meetings with the follower and the subordinate. The leader separated the personal issues between the follower and her subordinate from those that affected their performance. The leader was adamant that the personal issues should not even be considered as it was completely unprofessional and unacceptable in the workplace.</p>
<p>Incident 8 – career advancement</p>	<p>The company has a strong ethos of looking for talent within before recruiting externally. The company has a formal training and developmental programme covering the company's needs from a global perspective.</p> <p>The leader identified a follower in the branch that had the potential to be coached, trained and developed into managerial talent. The follower did not go through the company's formal training programme. Instead, the leader took the follower under his wings for several years.</p> <p>The leader started by increasing the follower's level of responsibility by giving him budgets and projects to manage independently. The leader understood the cultural values of the follower, being incredibly/overly respectful. The leader used this attribute in the follower and developed it by providing him with opportunities to share his knowledge and establish direct contact with clients. His respectful attribute then became a significant competitive advantage to the company.</p> <p>The leader assisted the follower in overcoming the fear and hesitancy of public speaking by teaming the follower up with a junior employee who was comfortable presenting on behalf of the follower. The follower was promoted based on his performance, capabilities and attributes and not based on the ethnic group the follower represents.</p> <p>Developing the follower was a high priority contributing to growing and expanding the business. At the time of this study, the follower was recognised within the office for generating the most income. The leader knew that praising the follower openly in front of employees in the office would encourage and motivate the follower to do the same in the future.</p> <p>Despite the company losing 70-80% of the managerial talent it generates, the company is still committed to the process of developing managerial talent. The company views it as contributing</p>

	to increasing the pool of highly qualified managerial talent in South Africa.
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## 4.2. Individualised consideration

This section presents the findings of individualised consideration as a leadership competency. There were some deviations, and unpredicted findings in the data compared to the initial description of the element of individualised consideration. The findings add to the qualifying nature of individualised consideration.

### 4.2.1. Proposition 1: Individualised consideration

The research proposition is as follows: Individualised consideration is evident when the leader exercises service as a competency.

Individualised consideration comprises two dimensions, namely developmental and supportive leadership (van Dierendonck, 2011a; Pearse, 2017). Individualised consideration is about the leader knowing the followers at a personal level and taking into account their knowledge of the current and future needs of the follower (Sosik and Cameron, 2010; van Dierendonck and Driehuizen, 2015; Pearse, 2017). When the follower has a problem, the leader listens to the follower describing his/her situation, problem or need in detail (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005a; Boyatzis and Ratti, 2009). In the literature, individualised consideration is prominent in servant leadership and also falls under the inter-personal competencies identified by Boyatzis (Boyatzis, 1994; Boyatzis, 2009a; Boyatzis and Ratti, 2009; Boyatzis, 2011a; Boyatzis, Passarelli et al., 2013). In instances where the leader and the follower have worked together for years, the foundation for individualised consideration has already been laid (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005a; Boyatzis and Ratti, 2009; van Dierendonck, 2011a; Pearse, 2017). In serving the follower, the leader understands the follower not merely as an employee who contributes to the organisation but as a person, a fellow human being that requires help (Berg and Wiebe, 1993; Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005a; Boyatzis, 2009c).

The study found evidence of individualised consideration in that leaders empathised with the follower's experience, knew what they needed to deal with a current problem and understood their future growth needs. These are reflected in the following quotes from leaders who participated in the study. Firstly, they understood what the follower was experiencing.

- “Knowing how dependent he was on his mother, I knew the grieving process was going to be extra difficult.”
- “I know that this is going to be his second retrenchment in a short space of time.”
- “It was obvious that her behaviour and demeanour changed overnight; she was distressed.”

Secondly, leaders knew what the needs of their followers were.

- “I know she does not have the means to get out of this situation on her own.”
- “It was to their advantage that I knew both of them well, and some of my best skills are being a bridge-builder, identifying issues between people, a problem solver. I am not scared to get assistance in from the outside if I needed it.”
- “We had numerous discussions about his condition to help me understand it how we can manage it together.”
- “It is important that the person who is getting assistance or attention feels that he/she is getting the necessary assistance or attention that they need.”

Thirdly, there was evidence of leaders understanding the growth needs of their followers, including a possible career change or career advancement within the organisation (van Dierendonck, 2011a; Pearse, 2017).

- “He definitely opened up a bit more, especially after the aptitude test was done it was easier for him to admit that this is not what he wants to do.”
- “We’ve been working together for years, I know he is capable, but lacks a bit of self-confidence with public speaking.”
- “The company paid for his post graduate qualifications, Hons and Masters, as there are restrictions within the company to reach certain managerial positions.”
- “The first step is the individual started to identify where he wanted to go. The second is from the company perspective we’ve got upper management, and middle management positions, with goals and objectives that we try and achieve.”

The findings indicate that close and deep relationships require a deliberate intention from both parties to communicate and jointly form a meaningful relationship (Foa, 1971; Bass and Avolio, 1990; Ilies, Morgeson et al., 2005; Boyatzis, 2009a; van Dierendonck and Driehuizen, 2015). Although smaller organisations and working teams have the advantage that it is more noticeable when something is wrong, the quality of relationships is not necessarily dependent

on the organisation's size (Foa, 1971; Barney, 1991; Berg and Wiebe, 1993; Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005a). Instead, they depended on the relationship between the leader and the follower (van Dierendonck and Driehuisen, 2015). The findings indicate that the leaders spent one-on-one time with the follower and attentively listened to the follower explaining his or her situation.

The findings, therefore, support the proposition that individualised consideration was displayed when exercising service, as it is the only way the leader can gain insight into the follower's needs at that particular time and also the future needs of the follower (Pearse, 2017). The findings support the proposition that individualised consideration is an element of service as a leadership competency (Pearse, 2017).

#### 4.2.2. Individualised consideration expanded

The findings in the data indicated that leaders who had personally experienced a similar situation to the follower enabled the leader to relate and connect on a deeper emotional level with the follower. Being able to recall his or her own experience and emotions from a similar trauma or difficulty to that which the follower was experiencing provided the leader with a unique appreciation of the follower's situation. Out of the eight incidents, three of the leaders indicated that they had had experience with a similar situation and that it gave them a better understanding of the follower's situation. The following quotes from the three incidents clearly indicate this finding:

- "I've lost both my parents, so I know how difficult it is to go through this"
- "Being a mother, I can imagine the burden and load suddenly on those two small shoulders"
- "I can relate, as I have been retrenched myself it was a very hard time in my life"
- "Going into this retrenchment losing your ability to support your family is a terrible thing and a tough experience to live through"

The findings indicate the necessity to expand on individualised consideration considering the leader's ability to relate personally to the follower's situation. The current literature on leadership competencies does not provide this dimension (Boyatzis, 2009a; van Dierendonck, 2011a; Cropanzano, Anthony et al., 2017; Pearse, 2017). The study, therefore, adds to the existing body of literature by indicating the need to expand individualised consideration with

the dimension of relatability. As a result of individualised consideration, the leader takes action through compassion, which is discussed next.

### 4.3. Compassion

The research proposition is as follows: Compassion is evident when the leader exercises service as a competency.

This section presents the findings related to compassion, describing how the leader exercises compassion as a competency. There were some deviations and unpredicted findings in the data compared to the initial description of compassion. The findings add to the qualifying nature of compassion, and the findings are presented in their subsection below.

#### 4.3.1. Proposition 2: Compassion

Compassion includes showing empathy, understanding someone's situation and concern for a person's well-being (Boyatzis, 1994; Boyatzis, 2009a). Compassion is a clear demonstration of actions that are taken with the intent of helping a follower in need (Boyatzis, 2009a; van Dierendonck, 2011a). The leader's actions can be to assist a follower experiencing emotional or physical pain, assisting the follower to function effectively and ethically at work (Boyatzis, 2009a; van Dierendonck, 2011a; van Dierendonck and Driehuis, 2015; Pearse, 2017). Actions can include developing a follower's skills, mentoring, coaching, counselling, role modelling, providing necessary support, showing respect and actively listening to the follower (Boyatzis, 2009a; van Dierendonck, 2011a; Pearse, 2017).

The findings from the data support the existing description of compassion as the follower needs the leader to act. The findings noted actions taken by the leader or activating actions from other employees within the organisation. Leaders mobilised the support of others, helped to address performance, arranged mentoring or coaching, and referred the employee for professional help. The following quotes describe the actions of leaders: First, the leader activated socialised power from fellow employees or external stakeholders to assist the follower experiencing trauma (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005a; Pearse, 2017):

- “I was devastated for her as she and her child nearly died. We immediately informed all the staff in the province and asked for contributions of any nature or kind to help her”
- “I also assisted the employee with finding a second job at the premises next door. I went to speak with them, they are in the building industry, they also gathered some money and building supplies together to assist the employee from their side”
- “Some of his work was delegated to other employees to relieve some of his stress”
- “We provided emotional support and everybody else in the office and in the company was obviously alerted to it and were aware of it”

Secondly, the leader identified when the follower needed assistance to perform ethically and efficiently (Boyatzis, 2009a; Pearse, 2017):

- “I placed him on a four-hour working day to help him deal with his emotions and to work himself back up to an eight-hour working day”
- After a year we picked up things aren’t going the way it should and we started spending extra time with him”
- “I asked the senior staff partner to become involved and he became like a father figure to the intern to help him with guidance and advice”
- “To help him get over the public speaking I gave him a youngster that was happy to stand up and talk, so the follower would draft the presentation and notes and the youngster would get up and give the presentation. Just by seeing the level of response the youngster got it changed his perspective”

Thirdly, the leader identified the follower required mentoring and coaching for career advancement within the organisation (van Dierendonck, 2011a; Pearse, 2017).

- “We recognise we have staff within our company that could be innovated to become managers and maybe they need a helping hand”
- “I’ve given him budgets to be able to go out and establish relationships. He is very good once he has met a person, and he has established that relationship, the respectful aspect of his nature becomes an asset”
- “It is my responsibility to worry about day-to-day operations, the bottom line and costs, but there comes a point in time where I need to delegate some of it where the follower can start using it as self-growth and targeting for himself”

Fourthly, the leader recognised when the follower required professional counselling exceeding what the organisation can currently provide (Boyatzis, 2009a; Pearse, 2017):

- “It was clear that he does not have a passion for this as a career and the company paid for him to undergo an aptitude test to try and help him”
- “On a personal level I was adamant that they needed assistance to help them with their personal issues. I had to recommend support groups and professional services because their personal issues affected their performance”

The findings supported the definition and attributes associated with compassion by firstly identifying the follower is in need and requires the leader to take action or initiate collective action (Boyatzis, Boyatzis et al., 2005; Boyatzis, 2009a; Boyatzis, 2011a; van Dierendonck, 2011a; Pearse, 2017). The follower could have experienced personal emotional trauma or distress or merely required assistance to perform his/her duties effectively and ethically (Boyatzis, 2009a; van Dierendonck, 2011a; Pearse, 2017). The findings for compassion included identifying external professional expertise to assist the follower with deeply personal matters of well-being that were beyond the scope of the organisation’s responsibility or expertise (Boyatzis, 2009a; van Dierendonck and Driehuizen, 2015; Pearse, 2017). The findings included identifying followers with the potential to develop their skills and add to the organisation’s managerial talent (Barney, 1991; Day, 2000; Boyatzis, 2009a).

#### 4.3.2. Compassion expanded

The findings in the data provided unexpected findings distinguishing between two dimensions of compassion. Firstly, the leader took action either personally or by activating a collective action within the company, as discussed in Section 4.3.1.

Secondly, there were cases where the leader deemed him/herself best equipped (through experience, formal education, training, and networking) to assist the follower directly and personally. In four of the eight incidents, the leader was confident about his/her ability to intervene and assist. The following quotes from the data support this:

- “I was confident that I would be able to help him man-to-man”
- “I knew that I would get better results by contacting the national and international managers in the organisation directly”
- “I used my personal network and contacted them to try and secure new employment for him”

- “I have years of experience, knowledge, my training and education specifically covered issues like this. This enabled me to read the verbal and non-verbal communication between the two parties”
- “I’ve been with this company for about 17-18 years I’ve got a good network and understanding of the business and connections within various offices”

The findings in the data indicate that two unique themes of compassion are identified. Firstly, where the leaders activated social power to support and assist the follower with collective action, and secondly, where the leaders personally and directly assisted the follower based on self-confidence and self-assurance that they were best equipped to resolve the follower’s situation (Zand, 1997; Boyatzis and Ratti, 2009; Boyatzis, 2011a).

#### 4.4. Motivation to lead

The research proposition is as follows: Being motivated to lead with social power is evident when the leader exercises service as a competency.

As was the case with the last two elements that have been discussed, the findings in the data generated some unexpected findings distinguishing between two dimensions of motivation to lead. The findings add to the qualifying nature of motivation to lead as a leadership competency, and these expanded findings for motivation to lead are discussed in their subsection.

##### 4.4.1. Proposition 3: Motivation to lead

As part of exercising service as a competency, it is expected that the motivation to lead involves the leader exercising or deploying socialised power and can be displayed in stimulating collective actions to assist the follower with his/her situation (House and Howell, 1992). Social power influences followers by transforming their individual needs, values, preferences and aspirations towards contributing to a common cause or mission (House and Howell, 1992). Leaders that activate social power can increase productivity, caring, respect, voluntary compliance and satisfaction towards colleagues (House and Howell, 1992). The data were analysed by identifying the leader's actions that contrasted socialised power with personalised

power. Personalised power is portrayed as self-aggrandizing, exploitive, narcissistic, abusive, and authoritarian (House and Howell, 1992; van Dierendonck, 2011a; Pearse, 2019).

The following quotes describe what leaders did to assist followers in need: First, the leader activated socialised power within the organisation for collective support to the follower (House and Howell, 1992; Pearse, 2017)

- “Everybody in the company was made aware of what he was going through and some of his work had to be given to other employees”
- “We all immediately rallied to support her. All the employees in the province were asked for donations in any manner or form. An account was opened for her into which employees could donate money”

Secondly, the leader exercised socialised power to contain the situation within a particular team (Bass and Avolio, 1990; Pearse, 2017):

- “When I saw what the issues are and I realised that this was not going to be punitive, it was to restore their relationship”
- “It was obvious that if this was not resolved it would affect the entire unit and possibly the entire Directorate. Restoring their relationships and rebuilding trust between the two of them was key”

Thirdly, the leader wanted to prevent a negative perception of the organisation to employees and external stakeholders:

- “The employee would’ve felt very negative towards the company, after asking help and not receiving any. That negativity rubs off on others and there is nothing more destructive than a negative attitude at the office”
- “The company has a very strong ethos of taking care of our staff. If either myself, or the company did nothing, it would’ve required an explanation to the staff”

The findings support the proposition that motivation to lead as a leadership competency require the leader to deploy socialised power and not personal power (House and Howell, 1992; Pearse, 2017). The data indicated that certain situations required collective action from various or all employees (House and Howell, 1992; Pearse, 2017). The emphasis remains on the requirement that the leader does not dominate or misuse the situation to aggrandise him/herself while the follower is suffering and struggling (House and Howell, 1992; van Dierendonck, 2011a; Pearse, 2017).

#### 4.4.2. Motivation to lead expanded

The data revealed a second dimension to motivation to lead, where the follower is of significant economic value to the organisation (Barney, 1991). This high economic value provides additional motivation and persistence from the leader to resolve the follower's situation (Barney, 1991; Berg and Wiebe, 1993; Boyatzis, 1994). The economic value of a follower was displayed firstly in the person's individual economic/financial input and contribution to the organisation and, secondly, in the level of influence and direct communication the follower had with fellow employees (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005a). The risk of a negative perception and attitude within the organisation amongst employees would quickly gain momentum if the follower became dissatisfied (Barney, 1991; Day, 2000; Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005a; Yukl, 2008b). The possibility of low morale could result in an overall decrease in productivity among all the employees and negative perceptions of the organisation amongst external stakeholders (Boyatzis, 2009a; Boyatzis, 2011a; van Dierendonck, 2011a; Yamazaki, 2014; Pearse, 2017). The following quotes from the interviews demonstrate that the leader considered the negative economic or financial impact on the organisation and took extraordinary measures to resolve the situation (Barney, 1991; Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005a; Yukl, 2008b): Firstly, the leader considered the financial implications on the organisation:

- “She assists the highest fee-earner in the company, when she is not performing the fee-earner cannot bill. This has a negative impact on the finances of all the units in the company”
- “This follower, is an assistant to a high fee earner, when she is not performing or assisting her manager, they cannot invoice or bill and they do not generate income for the firm”
- “If I can get him to a level where he is operating at the levels I am operating at, it alleviates pressures on me to look at other avenues, and finding another like him to build the business because growth is key to any business”

Secondly, the leader considered the possibility of a decrease in productivity and output (Podsakoff, MacKenzie et al., 2000):

- I had to recommend support groups and professional services because their personal issues affected their performance”

- “Service delivery in the public service for me is of the outmost importance. The Directorate and the staff must know that sometimes you need to walk the extra mile”
- “I can see when staff get demotivated, depressed, I pick up non-verbal communication immediately. If you do not attend to it immediately you lose productivity completely”

Thirdly, the leader considered the reputational risk of the company by external stakeholders or authorities (Barney, 1991):

- “If I don’t assist him as an overall evaluator, the organisation stands the chance to lose its accreditation as a training office, which means the organisation will not be able to take in future interns”
- “While travelling to work every day people share how their day at the office was, and to have that negativity out there towards the company we cannot afford it”

Fourthly, the leader considered the social power and sphere of influence of the follower within the organisation (House and Howell, 1992; Podsakoff, MacKenzie et al., 2000; Yukl, 2008b; Pearse, 2017):

- “This employee has a relationship with all the people in the office. If she asked for help and we didn’t assist her it would raise questions from the staff”

The literature distinguishes between high-quality social and low-quality economic relationships (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005a; Boyatzis, 2011a). The study's findings indicate that high-quality social relationships are formed to increase an employee's economic value (Foa, 1971; Berg and Wiebe, 1993; Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005a; Cropanzano, Anthony et al., 2017). Depending on the situation, the social complexities within the company, and the existing leader-follower relationship, the leader can be motivated to develop a high-quality social relationship quickly. This was done to resolve a follower’s situation because of the negative economic impact the follower’s situation has on the rest of the company. This illustrates how the motivation to lead can be activated when the situation potentially has a direct and adverse economic impact.

The findings support the differentiation between intrapersonal (emotional awareness, personal responsibility, initiative, commitment, self-control, accurate self-image) and interpersonal leadership competencies (developing others, collaboration, cooperation, building bonds and conflict management) and the necessity of the leader to make use of both in order to resolve a

situation, either personally or encouraging and driving a collective approach to resolving the follower's situation (Day, 2000; Boyatzis, 2009c; Boyatzis, 2009a; Boyatzis, Passarelli et al., 2013; Yamazaki, 2014).

Therefore, motivation to lead is a vital element of service as a competency. Furthermore, the financial impact of the follower's situation on the company provides additional motivation/energy for the leader to resolve the situation.

#### 4.5. Humility

The research proposition is as follows: Humility is evident when the leader exercises service as a competency.

In this section, the findings on humility are examined and discussed in relation to the literature. Humility is characterised as the leader prioritising good relationships and avoiding instances of acting out of selfishness, vanity or aggrandising (Podsakoff, MacKenzie et al., 2000; Avolio and Gardner, 2005; Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005a; Ilies, Morgeson et al., 2005; van Dierendonck, 2011a; Pearse, 2017). In order to consider humility as a leadership competency, the leader has to put the needs of the follower or the collective first (Pearse, 2017). The following quotes from the participants are in support of the definition and characterisation of humility as a leadership competency:

Firstly, the leader was willing to delay or put off his/her own work and prioritised the needs of the follower (Podsakoff, MacKenzie et al., 2000; van Dierendonck, 2011a; Rego, Owens et al., 2017b; Rego, Owens et al., 2019):

- “I had to set time aside, which is not part of the normal day-to-day running of the office, to spend extra time with him.”
- “I arranged meetings, discussions and even arranged and attended interviews with him and the other office managers.”
- “I spent so much time with him, trying to assist him. Every six months I did a review to see whether he is on track or not and if there are shortcomings we help.”
- “I think in the end he realised I put in a lot of effort.”
- “The business has been going through numerous retrenchments the past few months. Wherever I can, I always try and go the extra mile to see what I can do to help”

Secondly, the leader demonstrated public appreciation for the follower and interdependence with the collective (Podsakoff, MacKenzie et al., 2000; van Dierendonck, 2011a; Rego, Owens et al., 2017b; Rego, Owens et al., 2019):

- “There are instances where you see those special moments, they are not always clearly visible. One example was when we gave him a mouthpiece to share his knowledge and the way in which the people responded to him. He was visibly buoyed.”
- “The type of firm we are, we walk a path with a staff member and to really help as far as you can. We are a second family.”
- “The day we promoted him he was overjoyed, that is a special moment for me, because it shows success. He thinks it is a special moment for him, but in fact it is a special moment for me.”
- “Being a small company, everybody’s input is important, it was noticeable when he dropped things a few times. We had to overlook it and just be kind to him.”
- “I am a great believer that everybody has some strength and some area that he can contribute. The trick and task for people who manage people is to find that strength and work within those parameters.”

Thirdly, the leader displayed humility by viewing him/herself objectively (Rego, Owens et al., 2017b; Rego, Owens et al., 2019):

- “I’m not the best manager and I do not always get it right.”
- “Nobody becomes a manager overnight. In the corporate world I was fortunate enough to be under a great manager, who showed and taught me how to work with people.”
- “I’m not better or more important than any of the staff because I’m a director. I started at the bottom just like many of the staff.”

Fourthly, the leader was concerned about maintaining the high-quality relationship formed with the follower (Podsakoff, MacKenzie et al., 2000; Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005a; Pearse, 2017; Rego, Owens et al., 2017b; Rego, Owens et al., 2019):

- “The relationships have definitely improved, where it was ‘Morning Ma’am’ before we now drink a cup of tea together, I also pop in at their office during the day to make sure that they are still okay.”
- “It was his birthday last week, and I called him to congratulate him. He was delighted that I called him.”

- “The staff don’t always realise everything we do and think we are not going the extra mile; they don’t know why you’re in a meeting or why are you busy in your office with a client. It is easy to judge if you don’t know all the details.”

The findings in the data support the definition of humility that a leader develops interdependence with followers and staff instead of being self-reliant (Podsakoff, MacKenzie et al., 2000; Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005a; Pearse, 2017; Rego, Owens et al., 2017b; Rego, Owens et al., 2019). Leaders were aware that sometimes followers do not know the context and details of an incident and judge them prematurely. However, leaders are willing to endure this criticism because they value high-quality relationships. In those incidents, the leaders waited until the time was right to share details to ensure the organisation members regained social harmony. In all eight incidents analysed, humility was present while assisting the follower. After the follower’s situation improved, the leader was willing to maintain the high-quality relationship that developed during this process (Podsakoff, MacKenzie et al., 2000; Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005a; Yukl, 2008b; van Dierendonck, 2011a; van Dierendonck and Driehuizen, 2015; Pearse, 2017; Rego, Owens et al., 2017b; Rego, Owens et al., 2019). All the leaders were willing to go beyond normal expectations and take extra measures to make a difference in the follower’s life (Zand, 1997; Podsakoff, MacKenzie et al., 2000; Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005a; Yukl, 2008b; Pearse, 2017). Assisting the followers required extra time and attention; at times, the leaders had to reprioritise their tasks for the follower's benefit.

Humility is therefore evident as an element of service as a leadership competency. Furthermore, it was present during and after the leader exercised an act of service to the follower.

#### 4.6. Integrative thinking to resolve competing stakeholder interests for the greater good

The research proposition is as follows: Integrated thinking is evident when the leader exercises service as a competency.

In this section, the findings of integrative thinking are presented and discussed as a leadership competency. The leader had to identify various stakeholders and how the quality of the economic and social exchange with each stakeholder is considered during the process of assisting the follower (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005a; Martin, 2007; Pearse, 2017). The leader had to indicate that a prioritisation process took place based on the impact on the relationship during the time of serving the follower (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005a; Martin,

2007; Pearse, 2017). The following quotes support integrative thinking to resolve competing stakeholder needs: Firstly, the leader considered the follower and his/her immediate family after the follower experienced a significant traumatic event (Martin, 2007; van Dierendonck, 2011a; Pearse, 2017):

- “Immediately. Drop everything and get some balls rolling in the right direction to help the follower. The first step was to make sure that she and her child has a safe place to stay.”
- “The little children lost their caretaker, it is traumatic for them as well.”
- “He was in a position where he could lose everything, his house, cars, not being able to provide for his household.”

Secondly, the leader considered the economic impact on the firm at that present moment of time or the potential future growth and development of the business (Barney, 1991; Martin, 2007; Pearse, 2017):

- “The appointments with clients had to be honoured, as those were the hours we bill.”
- “It simply could not go on like this any longer. To lose this amount of money every month will have an impact on the overall business and everyone’s salary.”
- The fact that this follower needed my attention was a priority in order to grow the business.”
- “This follower was working directly with my clients. The last thing you want is for a client to know about this internal problem you are having.”

Thirdly, the leader considered the reputation and credibility of the organisation by external stakeholders and accreditation agencies (Martin, 2007; Pearse, 2017):

- “The company cannot afford a negative perception of the company out there among people.”
- “The company could lose its accreditation as a training office which will prevent us from taking interns in the future.”
- “The high fee earner is part of the top ten in the province and part of the top 100 in the country; as rated by one of the largest banks in South Africa and Africa.”

Fourthly, the leader considered the productivity and workload within a team and the collective (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005a; Martin, 2007; Pearse, 2017):

- “This problem had the potential to affect the whole Directorate and service delivery is of utmost importance.”
- “I was aware that other staff had to perform his duties, so I knew I cannot be as demanding as I wanted to be.”
- “My personal assistant was directly affected as she handled most of the interventions for me.”
- “There were times that I wanted to ask him to do something, and I think, you know what, let me rather not be demanding, and I’ll rather do the work myself. Some of his work were delegated to other employees to complete.”
- “It was not a matter of reprioritising; it was a matter of prioritising. I would schedule time with them in my diary. I did get frustrated and annoyed when they either one of them didn’t show up, as they wanted to avoid each other. Their productivity was directly affected by this situation.”

Integrative thinking as a leadership competency is supported by the findings in the data indicating that the leader had to systematically decide which stakeholder to prioritise and for what reason (Martin, 2007; Pearse, 2017). The data indicated that leaders weighed the financial impact in terms of billable hours and the long-term financial impact on the firm (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005a; Martin, 2007; Pearse, 2017). The firm needed to develop new managerial talent and prioritise it for the company to grow (Barney, 1991; Martin, 2007; Pearse, 2017). The majority of incidents indicated that the company could not afford a negative perception of the firm internally, and an external negative perception will be more severe and had to be avoided at all costs (Barney, 1991; Martin, 2007; Pearse, 2017).

#### 4.7. Service as a leadership competency

The findings in the data support the definition of service as a leadership competency comprising five interrelated elements: individualised consideration, compassion, motivation to lead, humility, and integrative thinking. All five elements were present when a Director/CEO provided service to a follower (Pearse, 2017). The findings also provided some unexpected findings for three of the five elements, namely individualised consideration, compassion and motivation to lead.

Firstly, the data indicated that when the leader experienced the same situation as the follower, the leader connected on a deeper emotional level with the follower, adding to the qualifying nature of individualised consideration expanded.

Secondly, there were incidents where the leader had compassion for the follower and deemed him/herself best qualified to assist and help the follower. This finding adds to the qualifying nature of compassion.

Thirdly, it was evident in most of the incidents that while the leader was motivated to lead, the leader considered the financial and economic impact on the organisation. This fuelled the leader to take extraordinary measures, either personally or collectively. The findings indicated that where the motivation to lead is strongly influenced by either a positive or negative economic impact, either within the performance of a unit or the organisation, the leader was motivated to establish high-quality relationships with followers in a short time. The challenge for leaders will be to maintain and sustain high-quality relationships over time to gain a positive impact.

Each of the leaders displayed humility while exercising service to a follower. Leaders showed this by acting out of concern for others and placing the follower's needs above his/her own. Humility is present after the leader exercises service to a follower. The relationship between the leader and the follower improved during the process of assisting or helping the follower. The leaders displayed an interdependence with the follower and appreciated the unique circumstances each follower was experiencing.

Table 4.2 provides a summary of these findings. The table below reflects the number of incidents and their grouping by theme. The table also shows whether or not the five elements of service and the expanded interpretation for three elements of service were present in an incident. The table indicates that a minority of leaders personally experienced the situation of the follower and were able to connect on a deep emotional level with the follower. The majority of incidents indicated that the leaders were confident and self-assured that he/she is the best equipped and experienced to resolve the situation with the follower, either as an individual or by garnering collective action to assist the follower. Most incidents indicated a strong relationship between motivation to lead due to the financial, economic or reputational impact on the organisation.

**Table 4.2: Hits and misses for components of service**

<b>THEMES</b>	<b>Incident Number</b>	<b>Description of incident</b>	<b>IC</b>	<b>IC-E</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>C-E</b>	<b>MTL</b>	<b>MTL-E</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>IT</b>
GRIEF	1	Assist subordinate with grief	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	✓
GRIEF & STRESS	2	Assist subordinate with grief and significant additional family responsibilities	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
TRAUMATIC PERSONAL LOSS	3	HIGH SOCIAL POWER OF THE FOLLOWER, Assist subordinate with personal loss (home)	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	4	PERSONAL LOSS – FINANCIAL Assist subordinate to find other work before being retrenched	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
INCREASE PRODUCTIVITY	5	COMPANY ACCREDITATION RISK Assist subordinate to perform his duties	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	6	Assisted follower with medical problem in order to increase critical productivity	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CONFLICT RESOLUTION	7	Resolve strained relationship in a team	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CAREER DEVELOPMENT	8	Provide career guidance and support to a subordinate	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

## 5. Chapter 5: Conclusion

### 5.1. Introduction

The study aimed to investigate and determine if the five elements of service (i.e. individualised consideration, compassion, motivation to lead, humility and integrative thinking) are present when a Director/CEO exercises an act of service towards a follower (Pearse, 2017).

### 5.2. Summary of findings

The following five research propositions were examined and analysed in the study:

- P1 Individualised consideration is evident when the leader exercises service as a competency
- P2 Compassion is evident when the leader exercises service as a competency
- P3 Motivation to lead with social power is evident when the leader exercises service as a competency
- P4 Humility is evident when the leader exercises service as a competency
- P5 Integrated thinking is evident when the leader exercises service as a competency

The findings from the study indicated that all five propositions and elements of service are evident when a leader exercises service to a follower as a leadership competency. The findings from the data also had new insights that provided an expanded interpretation of some of the elements, thereby adding to the conceptualisation of individualised consideration, compassion and motivation to lead.

### 5.3. Leadership implications and recommendations

The study supports the importance of high-quality social relationships between leaders and followers versus pure economic-transactional relationships. High-quality relationships had a positive effect on resolving difficult situations requiring both individual and collective actions to assist a follower. The findings indicate that the leader considered each circumstance's financial and economic impact on the organisation. These considerations included decreased productivity, reputational and accreditation risks, and relationships with external stakeholders. Directors/CEOs have significant social and personal power that can influence situations and activate internal and external actions to assist a follower in need. Developing service as a

leadership competency will positively impact the corporate culture of the organisation. RBT states that developing managerial talent is difficult to imitate and replicate as it depends on an individual manager's skills, talents, abilities and competencies. Organisations can promote service as a leadership competency, as it requires intra- and inter-personal skills which build and develops managerial talent. This leads to lower absenteeism, positive morale, a conducive environment for ideas, innovation and efficient use of resources. This creates corporate loyalty, which leads to lower staff turnover and reduces additional costs to an organisation.

Organisations can draw up criteria they require of leaders, which will assist with the recruitment and selection processes of either identifying managerial talent within the organisation or externally. These criteria can also reinforce the corporate values and culture the organisation is either busy developing or trying to maintain.

Performance management systems, such as 360° feedback, allow employees to rate individual leaders based on their ethical behaviour and the quality of the relationships they develop. This performance management system is highly effective as it identifies blind spots leaders have in their behaviour and how to grow and develop their leadership skills, abilities and competencies.

Service as a leadership competency can be formally introduced in training programmes, and the feedback received via 360° assessments can indicate the impact service has on the corporate culture, identity and performance of the organisation. Yamazaki (2014) found that the higher a leader's position and responsibility, the more critical relationship skills become compared to analytical and perceptual competencies.

#### 5.4. Research recommendations

Given the study's delimitations and limitations, the section looks at the recommendations for future studies.

##### 5.4.1. Delimitations

The study considered high-level executives at Director/CEO level. The participants were interviewed in their personal capacity and not as a representative of their specific organisation. The findings are one-dimensional as it considers the leader's perspective and not the follower

or other stakeholders. Further studies can explore service as a leadership competency within different units representing employees on varied levels of responsibility and accountability, especially middle and lower management.

#### 5.4.2. Limitations

The sample size was small, comprising eight participants from various sectors and industries. Future studies could expand the number and variety of research participants.

The responses from the participants were analysed in light of service as a leadership competency and did not reflect a specific organisation or organisational behaviour and corporate culture unique to each organisation. Future studies could adopt a case study approach and analyse the effect of leaders helping and serving within an organisation.

#### 5.4.3. Contribution

The study confirms the presence of the five elements of service, individualised consideration, compassion, motivation to lead, humility and integrative thinking. The study identified expanded interpretations adding to the qualifying nature of individualised consideration, compassion and motivation to lead. Further studies can build on this contribution and explore the components and expanded versions of the five elements of service as a leadership competency.

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## 7. Appendices

### 7.1. Ethic forms



## RHODES UNIVERSITY

### **INFORMED CONSENT FORM**

#### **Rhodes Business School**

<b>Research Project Title:</b>	Analysing service as a leadership competency at a Director/CEO level
<b>Principal Investigator(s):</b>	Ilse Chilton
<b>Participation Information</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• I understand the purpose of the research study and my involvement in it</li><li>• I understand the risks of participating in this research study</li><li>• I understand the benefits of participating in this research study</li><li>• I understand that I may withdraw from the research study at any stage without any penalty</li><li>• I understand that participation in this study is done on a voluntary basis</li><li>• I understand that while information gained during the study may be published, I will not be identified and my personal results will remain confidential</li><li>• I understand that I will receive no payment for participating in this study</li><li>• I give permission for the interview to be recorded and converted to mp3 format only</li><li>• I give permission for the interview to proceed with the condition that member checking of the interview summary or findings will take place to ensure accuracy of the information</li><li>• I understand that my personal information and the information of my followers/employees will be confidential</li></ul>	
<b>Information Explanation</b>	
The above information was explained to me by: <u>Ilse Chilton</u>	
The above information was explained to me in: <input type="checkbox"/> English <input type="checkbox"/> Afrikaans <input type="checkbox"/> Other: and I am in command of this language	

--

**Voluntary Consent**

I \_\_\_\_\_, hereby voluntarily consent to participate in the above-mentioned research.

Signature:

Witness signature:

Date:    /    /

**Investigator Declaration**

I, Ilse Mercia Chilton, declare that I have explained all the participant information to the participant and have truthfully answered all questions ask me by the participant.

Signature:

Date:    /    /

7.2. Appendix B – Questionnaire for basic information

**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR BASIC BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION**

Please complete the following questions and submit together with the signed letter of consent.

1. Kindly indicate your age group

35 - 40

40 - 45

45 - 50

50 - 55

55 - 60

60+

2. Please indicate your total number of years of employment.

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3. What is the most senior position you held?

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4. How many years did you serve in that position?

---

5. In which sector did you hold that position?

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### 7.3. Appendix C – Interview question matrix

Opening Questions	General background and qualifier	Individualised Consideration 1	Compassion 2	Motivation to lead 3	Humility 4	Integrative thinking 5
Can you please identify an incident where you were helping someone who was a subordinate who reported to you. Please explain to me what happened and how you helped them. Why did you help the person? What was your reason for helping them? [Probe further to understand the context and incident]	x					
How did you know the person needed help? How did you know to help them in the way that you did?		x				
Why did you decide to help this person rather than asking someone else to help? Why did you not ignore the situation?			x	x		
Given that you are the leader of this person, why did you take it upon yourself to help them?				x		
Did you have to re-prioritise or postpone things in order to help this person? After you had helped this person, did your relationship with them change in any way?					x	
What else and who else did you consider when you decided to help this person?						x

Table 2. Semi-structured interview matrix. Source: Author's construction

7.4. Appendix D – Codebook

<b>Code</b>	<b>Element</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Description of element</b>	<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Exclusion</b>	<b>Reference</b>
IC	Individualised Consideration	The leader acknowledges and understands the follower’s current situation and needs; and also considers the future needs of the follower.	<p>Leader listens and pays attention to the follower describing and experiencing his/her situation.</p> <p>IC has 2 dimensions: developmental and supportive leadership. It implies that the leader has insight into current and future needs of followers</p>	<p>Direct interaction and communication with the follower</p> <p>Understanding the follower’s situation, problem, predicament, future aspirations.</p>	<p>No direct interaction with the follower</p> <p>Leader is more concerned about the productive output of the follower and the effect on the organisation’s overall performance than the personal needs of the follower.</p>	<p>Pearse (2017), Van Dierendonck &amp; Driehuizen (2015)</p> <p>Bass &amp; Avolio (1990), Sosik &amp; Cameron (2010)</p>
C	Compassion	<p>As the leader comprehends the follower’s situation, the leader is willing to take action to help the follower.</p> <p>The leader shows empathy for the follower’s feelings, situation and well-being and subsequently action is taken to help the follower.</p>	<p>The leader shows empathy and caring by taking action to help the follower. There is a clear/obvious intent to assist or help the follower with his/her situation.</p> <p>Compassion fuels the capacity of the leader to execute an act of service to the follower.</p> <p>The leader’s actions can be to assist the follower experiencing emotional/physical pain, distress or the follower merely requiring help to continue functioning effectively and ethically.</p>	<p>The follower needs the leader to take action and subsequently compassion motivates the leader to take action.</p> <p>The leader helps the follower to develop his or her potential through: mentoring, coaching, counselling, role modelling, supporting, respecting and listening.</p> <p>Leader personally assisted the follower or activated actions from others to assist with the situation.</p>	<p>The leader’s action is purely economical and based on the individual’s contribution and importance to the organisation.</p>	<p>Pearse (2017), Boyatzis &amp; McKee (2005), Boyatzis et al (2006), Goetz et al (2006), Melwani et al (2012)</p>
MTL	Motivation to lead	<p>The leader deploys socialised power to help/assist the follower with his/her situation.</p> <p>The leader’s actions demonstrate the intent and motive of the actions are focused on serving the follower and the collective.</p>	<p>The intent of the leader is to help the follower with his/her situation. The leader’s action is egalitarian, for the greater good and not self-serving.</p>	<p>Leader’s action is with the intent of helping the follower. Action taken is focused on the needs of the follower and not about the rank or how the leader will be perceived by doing the action.</p> <p>The leader displays socialised power: doing this for the sake of others.</p>	<p>The motivation was purely economical in terms of performance of the organisation.</p>	<p>Pearse (2017), House &amp; Howell (1992), McClelland (1975)</p>
H	Humility	<p>Humility entails “how leaders tend to view themselves (more objectively), others (more appreciatively), and new information or ideas (more openly)” (Owens and Heckman, 2012, p. 789).</p>	<p>The leader views him/herself objectively in those self-perceptions are aligned with the perceptions of others.</p> <p>Humble leaders develop interdependence with others, rather than self-sufficiency.</p> <p>The leader is more appreciative of others and develops strong social bonds.</p> <p>Relationships are not hierarchical and emphasise relational rather than transactional/economical transactions.</p> <p>The leader is open to the ideas, perceptions and approaches of others and refrains from being controlling or becoming egotistical.</p>	<p>Humility is evident <b>after</b> having been of service to a subordinate.</p>	<p>Humility is not about the leader’s motive to serve, or a display of compassion in actual service.</p> <p>Constraints or limitations on serving that arise from considering the expectations and needs of other stakeholders, does not constitute a lack of humility.</p>	<p>Pearse (2017), Nielsen et al. (2010), Ou et al. (2014)</p> <p>Owens and Heckman (2012)</p>
IT	Integrative thinking	<p>The leader has to consider the needs and expectations of other stakeholders at the same time that the follower needs assistance/help.</p>	<p>The leader recognises other stakeholders/persons that require attention at the same time that the follower needs assistance.</p> <p>The leader therefore needs to systematically decide how best to meet the different or competing expectations and needs.</p>	<p>The leader clearly indicates who else was recognised and how their expectations had to be considered during the process of assisting the follower.</p> <p>The leader weighed up the expectations of various stakeholders, including those of the individual, when deciding on a course of action.</p>		<p>Pearse (2017), Freeman (1984), Donaldson and Preston (1995)</p>

7.5. Appendix E - Lists of figures and tables

7.5.1. Table 3.1: Description of the sample

<b><u>Age</u></b>	<b><u>Participants per age group</u></b>	<b><u>Position</u></b>	<b><u>Years in post</u></b>	<b><u>Business Sector/Industry</u></b>
35-40	0	-	-	N/A
40-45	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Managing Director</li> <li>▪ Director</li> <li>▪ Unit Head/Company Head for RSA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10+</li> <li>5+</li> <li>10+</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Financial Sector</li> <li>Legal sector</li> <li>Engineering</li> </ul>
45-50	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Executive Director</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5+</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engineering</li> </ul>
50-55	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Managing Director</li> <li>▪ Technical Director/Branch Manager</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>15+</li> <li>25+</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engineering</li> <li>Professional Scientific consulting</li> </ul>
55-60	0	-	-	
60+	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Managing Director/CEO</li> <li>▪ Director</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>25+</li> <li>20+</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consumer goods manufacturing</li> <li>Local Government</li> </ul>

7.5.2. Table 4.2: Hits and misses for components of service

<b>THEMES</b>	<b>Incident Number</b>	<b>Description of incident</b>	<b>IC</b>	<b>IC-E</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>C-E</b>	<b>MTL</b>	<b>MTL-E</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>IT</b>
GRIEF	1	Assist subordinate with grief	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	✓
GRIEF & STRESS	2	Assist subordinate with grief and significant additional family responsibilities	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
TRAUMATIC PERSONAL LOSS	3	HIGH SOCIAL POWER OF THE FOLLOWER, Assist subordinate with personal loss (home)	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	4	PERSONAL LOSS – FINANCIAL Assist subordinate to find other work before being retrenched	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
INCREASE PRODUCTIVITY	5	COMPANY ACCREDITATION RISK Assist subordinate to perform his duties	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	6	Assisted follower with medical problem in order to increase critical productivity	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CONFLICT RESOLUTION	7	Resolve strained relationship in a team	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CAREER DEVELOPMENT	8	Provide career guidance and support to a subordinate	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓