

**Servant Leadership: Antecedent to Quality of Worklife of
Customer Service Frontline Employees**

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Abstract:

Contact Centre agents operate in closely monitored and highly controlled environments and their work consists of solving service requests or assisting customers with information on products or services. Consequently their work involves a great deal of emotional labour and stress. It is not surprising then, that the working environment of the Contact Centre is reported to have a negative impact on the levels of Quality of Worklife of Contact Centre agents, and that in the Contact Centre context, it is likely that low levels of Quality of Worklife exist.

It is argued that it is important for organisations to be particularly aware of the Quality of Worklife perceptions of their employees should they want to address Quality of Worklife levels and benefit from the positive consequences of higher levels of the construct. Numerous variables are reported to play either an antecedent, moderating, mediating, or consequential role in relation to the Quality of Worklife construct. A systems model of Quality of Worklife is developed, which illustrates the inter-relationships of these variables and how they affect and are affected by the Quality of Worklife construct. It is argued that leadership is an important antecedent to Quality of Worklife, and this is the antecedent of interest in this study. It is proposed that it is not just any leadership that will contribute to an improved Quality of Worklife, particularly within a challenging context such as the Contact Centre environment. Rather, it is suggested that certain qualities of leaders will have a greater influence on Quality of Worklife. For example, leaders who focus on relationships and are caring – characteristics associated with servant leaders – are deemed more suitable for the Contact Centre context.

The research also proposes that there are close associations between Servant Leadership and Trust, which in turn has the potential to affect Quality of Worklife positively. It is argued, therefore, that Trust mediates the relationship between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife in the customer service frontline context.

While there is a broad base of literature available on servant leadership that focuses on the senior or executive level of leadership, Van Dierendonck and Nuijten (2011) have argued that it is also relevant at the middle level of management and have validated an eight dimensional measure of servant leadership that is suitable for this

management level. The Van Laar, Edwards and Easton (2007) Quality of Worklife model is also argued to be an appropriate model and measure of the Quality of Worklife construct, due to the robustness of the instrument design and the appropriateness of its underlying theory to the context of this research.

Research has shown that leadership can have a significant relationship with Quality of Worklife. Moreover, a review of the literature on servant leadership reveals that trust, satisfaction, general well-being, and commitment to their jobs increases when employees are exposed to leadership behaviours associated with servant leadership.

There is however, no evidence in the literature of any investigation of the relationship between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife, or of research investigating the partial mediating effects of Trust between these two constructs. Research was conducted to test this relationship. A survey questionnaire was administered amongst a sample of 555 Contact Centre agents, who were employed in eight different organisations. Confirmatory factor analysis procedures were conducted in STATA (V15.0), to test and validate the factor structure of Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife models. The research also produced a Servant Leadership, Trust and Quality of Worklife structural equation model that supported the hypotheses of the relationships between the constructs. Mediation analysis confirmed Trust's role as a mediator between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife.

The structural equation model confirmed that synergies between Servant Leadership, Trust and Quality of Worklife exist, and that Trust partially mediates the relationship between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife. It is therefore argued that an increase in Servant Leadership behaviour by the manager or supervisor of frontline staff has a positive association with increases of Trust, as well as positive associations with Quality of Worklife experienced by employees in the frontline context. Moreover, it is also posited that the relationship between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife is partially mediated by Trust of the supervisor. The implications of these results are discussed, and recommendations made for management practice and further research.

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Chapter 1 – Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The work of Contact Centre frontline service agents, or employees, involves a great deal of emotional labour and stress (Cheung and Tang, 2009). Some scholars argue that the controlled environment of the Contact Centre closely resembles a panopticon design (Ferne and Metcalf, 1998), with employees constantly under the scrutiny of supervisory staff. It is not surprising then, that this working environment is reported to have a negative impact on the Quality of Worklife of Contact Centre agents (Danna and Griffin, 1999; Hannif, Burgess and Connell, 2008; Wright and Bonett, 2007). The unique demands that are placed on Contact Centre frontline service agents have implications for the way in which they are led, as well as having an effect on their perceived Quality of Worklife.

This chapter will outline the unique nature of the job of the Contact Centre frontline service agent, as well as describe its impact on several behavioural Quality of Worklife dimensions. The primary goal of doing so is to argue that these employees are likely to be experience lower levels of Quality of Worklife, due to the nature of Contact Centre work and the working environment.

It is suggested that this investigation is important in the context of the South African Contact Centre industry that is a growing industry, and therefore, frontline employees are increasingly working in an environment where lower levels of Quality of Worklife are expected. Methods to improve Quality of Worklife in the Contact Centre context are therefore of both scholarly and applied interest.

The chapter will provide evidence that the leadership approach adopted by the managers of these employees is expected to affect their Quality of Worklife as a whole, as well as the various individual dimensions of Quality of Worklife. It will also be posited that there is literary evidence to suggest that different leadership styles affect Quality of Worklife holistically, and the various dimensions of Quality of Worklife in specific ways (Bradley, Brown, Lingard, Townsend, Bailey, 2009). Therefore, Quality of Worklife is argued to be dependent on leadership style, and furthermore, this research proposes that a relational and caring leadership style is particularly needed in the Contact Centre context. Servant Leadership is offered as

an example of such a leadership style. In other words, it is proposed that if the direct managers or supervisors of Contact Centre employees display Servant Leadership behaviours, this should lead to an improved relationship with Contact Centre frontline employees, who then experience a higher level of Quality of Worklife.

Greenleaf's (1977) seminal works advancing the idea of leadership with the heart of a servant, or rather as Greenleaf (1977) coined it, Servant Leadership, is well described in the literature. Greenleaf (1977:4) describes Servant Leadership by explaining that: "it begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. The difference manifests itself in the care taken by the servant first to make sure that other people's highest priority needs are being served. The best test is: Do those served grow as persons; do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants?"

This research thesis investigates the relationship of Servant Leadership as antecedent to the Quality of Worklife construct, which has its roots in need satisfaction and spill over theory (Sirgy, Efraty, Siegel and Lee, 2001). Quality of Worklife is defined as a quality of life domain within the domain of overall quality of life that is influenced by work in the "widest context in which an employee would evaluate the influence of work on their life" (Van Laar, Edwards and Easton, 2007:326). That is, this research empirically investigates the relationship of Quality of Worklife and Servant Leadership behaviour in the frontline Contact Centre frontline context and argues that this outcome is potentially of scholarly importance, as well as being relevant to the contemporary context that this research thesis is set in.

Servant Leadership is proposed to be antecedent to Quality of Worklife in the Contact Centre frontline environment. Trust in the leader is also introduced as an important variable and one that is proposed to be closely associated with Servant Leadership. Trust is proposed as a mediating variable, mediating the relationship between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife.

As previously mentioned, there is some evidence from the research conducted in various contexts demonstrating that leadership affects the dimensions of Quality of Worklife. However, there is no empirical evidence to date, showing that Servant Leadership is antecedent to Quality of Worklife in the Contact Centre context.

Therefore, this research is positioned to address this gap in the literature and make a contribution to the knowledge of both Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife theory. Moreover, the results of this thesis have the potential to play a significant role in the improvement of the working lives of many frontline Contact Centre service agent employees, who work in a business sector that traditionally has an unfavourable working environment.

1.2 The Research Context

The Contact Centre is often described as a business sector that is plagued by low staff satisfaction, high sick and absenteeism rates, and general employee complaints of high stress levels and burnout (Hauptfleisch and Uys, 2006). Further evidence of this is found in the literature which suggests that Contact Centres form part of a business sector where employees are confronted with routine, repetitive work (Connell and Hannif, 2008; Gorjup, Valverde and Ryan, 2008; Zapf, Isic, Becholdt, Blau, 2010). Employees are also subject to numerous, often stressful, customer interactions (Ashill, Rod, Thirkell and Carruthers, 2009) that require significant emotional labour (Cheung and Tang, 2009). A grounded theory study by Hauptfleisch and Uys (2006) suggested that the Contact Centre work context is affected by issues such as quick changes to work schedules or shifts brought about by levels of uncertainty within the workforce. Leadership or management practice was also found to be somewhat undesirable and this resulted in communicative dissonance between supervisors and frontline service agents.

This research is conducted amongst the staff employed in the Contact Centres of eight organisations, which all have requested to remain anonymous. However, the researcher is able to divulge that three of the organisations are state owned organisations, five are privately owned companies that offer services ranging from financial, telecoms, debt collecting to insurance. One is a Contact Centre outsourcer company, which offers an array of customer services on behalf of several clients. A strategic gap analysis by one of the state organisations revealed that the Contact Centre department was in need of a new leadership approach. The Contact Centre was plagued by issues that are not too dissimilar to those which are found within the literature, such as low staff satisfaction, high sick and absenteeism rates, low job

satisfaction and general complaints of high stress levels. The thesis sample was initially going to be limited to this state owned organisation, but was subsequently broadened to include seven additional organisation's Contact Centres. The expanding of the scope was specifically done to increase the sample size for statistical analysis, and to improve the generalizability in the research findings. Although operating in different industries, each of the organisations supplied inbound and outbound customer services through their Contact Centres.

1.2.1 The Contact Centre Described

The term Call Centre or Contact Centre is used interchangeably within the literature, but generally points to the same operation (Bishop, Gripaios, and Bristow, 2003). Call Centres use telephony technology to interact with customers and Contact Centres use a broad array of telephony as well as other technologies and platforms to interact with customers.

The Contact Centre can very broadly be defined as "any communications platform from which firms deliver services to customers via remote, real-time contact" (Norling, 2001:155). Customers these days have several channels with which to interact and communicate with organisations. Traditionally however, organisations have primarily aimed to move from more costly face-to-face interaction contacts, to cheaper interaction types, one of which being a telephony contact type (Bishop *et al.*, 2003). Employees that service customer interactions through telephonic customer engagement are generally, albeit not exclusively, housed in one location (Bishop *et al.*, 2003). In earlier days before the advent of Contact Centres, customer telephony contacts were distributed sporadically throughout the organisation to several departments, which often resulted in non-standard, and sometimes non-customer-focused behaviour (Weinkopf, 2009). Housing interaction contacts under one umbrella department gives the organisation greater control and economies of scale over these contacts (Weinkopf, 2009). Consequently, the establishment of Contact Centres in organisations became a popular business practice. More recently however, there has been a move in the Contact Centre industry towards technologies which include Contact Centres via the cloud technology. Cloud technologies enable Contact Centres access to a shared pool of computing

resources which reduces the need for organisations to invest in their internal IT hardware and software (Willcocks, Lacity and Sauer, 2017). This reduces costs and makes for more agile deployment of strategies (Willcocks *et al.*, 2017).

Typically, the main operational purpose of Contact Centres includes either customer service, telesales, technical support, dispatch, market research, or collections functions (Reynolds, 2003). Contact Centres as departmental or business entities are known to either exist as separate departments within organisations of various industries, which are referred to as in-house Contact Centres as they are housed within the internal organisational structure. However, Contact Centres may also be independent business entities, as some organisations choose to outsource the entire Contact Centre function to organisations which specialise in providing Contact Centre services (Connell and Hannif, 2008). Organisations that wish to contract out any sales or service aspects of their business do so by enlisting Contact Centre outsourcers (Connell and Hannif, 2008).

Although Bain and Taylor (2000) argue that the Contact Centre profession is more of a business sector rather than that of an industry, Weinkopf (2009) posits that due to the recent emergence of Contact Centre outsource businesses, which offer a multitude of business services, the Contact Centre sector can truly be referred to as an industry in its own right. In this industry landscape, Business Process Outsourcers (BPO's) are ever increasingly marketing their ability, as outsourcers of the Contact Centre customer function, to organisations whom deem the Contact Centre function a non-core business function. To these organisations, outsourcing may therefore seem a more viable option to that of establishing an in-house Contact Centre.

Strategically, organisations are moving from the premise that Contact Centres are a means to reduce cost interactions and are becoming the "primary source of contact for customers" (Banks and Roodt, 2011:1). Contact Centres are also becoming a channel that supplies the organisation with vital customer information (White and Roos, 2005). Moreover, several other Contact Centre inbound customer channels (Pandy and Rogerson, 2014), such as e-mail, fax, web, social media, web chat, short message service, and other digital channels have emerged in the Contact Centre business domain and continue to grow the extent to which Contact Centres interact

with customers. Despite these technological developments, Norling's (2001) definition of the Contact Centre still holds true. He posits that regardless of the platform or communication channel, the Contact Centre is an integral organisation function, whose pivotal role is to ensure customer interactions are conducted in such a manner that the needs of new, existing or potential customers, who come into contact with the organisation, are met. Furthermore, Contact Centres are not only developed as a convenient means of directing customer interactions through well managed channels, they also have the important potential to be classified as an organisational differentiating factor (Burgers, De Ruyter, Keen and Streukens, 2000). Contact Centres can differentiate their organisations as they have the ability to gain customer preference, which can be used as a strategic tool (Burgers *et al.*, 2000). For example, in the contemporary business environment, organisations that offer similar retail services such as telecommunications or banking retailers; are able to differentiate their service offered through the proficiency and ease of use of the Contact Centre.

1.2.2 The South African Contact Centre industry

In the South African context, the Contact Centre industry has experienced exponential growth. Pandy and Rogerson (2012) report that since the late 1990's, Contact Centre numbers have grown by some 711%. There are currently over 1500 Contact Centres within the borders of South Africa (Pandy and Rogerson, 2012).

Many of South Africa's Call Centres can be considered as Contact Centres (Rogan, Diga, and Valodia, 2013), although telephony may still be the primary customer contact channel, other channel mediums complement this primary channel so that customers have a choice of channel in which to deal with the organisation.

The South African Contact Centre industry services a multitude of industries - including IT, Financial Institutions, Insurance, Online retail, Utilities, and Health - but vary quite considerably in the size of operations (Rogan *et al.*, 2013). The size of South African Contact Centres range from those who have a little under 20 seats, to those that seat thousands of Contact Centre employees. However, the majority of Contact Centres average below 50 seats (Pandy and Rogerson, 2014: Rogan *et al.*, 2013).

1.2.3 The Contact Centre Organisation

The financial structure of Contact Centres may differ. For example, some are profit centres, which generate income through telesales, while others are treated as cost centres that do not generate income but rather offer other organisation benefits such as customer service (Reynolds, 2003). Typically, work in Contact Centres is divided in four core sections, namely inbound, outbound and back office activities, which are managed and supported by the fourth section, which include specialists and supervisory or managerial staff.

The inbound subdivision of Contact Centres is generally the unit in which inbound contacts are managed through a particular medium or channel by agents in a Contact Centre. Telephony is the primary inbound channel, which is normally used, and agents are scheduled to work in relation to the call workload that is forecasted through the use of work force management principles (Reynolds, 2003). Put differently, call volumes or work load is forecasted well in advance, in the planning process of the work force management process, and then this is followed by a process of designing agent schedules to match the incoming workload (Reynolds, 2003).

The Outbound subdivision of the Contact Centres has the primary function of making calls to customers for whatever business purpose is needed. Outbound calls are usually made with the aid of dialler assist technology to automate the dialling function and connect agents to customers with the least amount of time wasted (Nangu, 2013).

Back Office functions are generally administrative functions. Work items, which have stemmed from customer requests, are directed to back office employees usually via the aid of workflow management or customer relationship management (CRM) systems. These work items are generally the types of work elements that the frontline agents were unable to complete on a first contact basis and therefore additional work is needed to be done by back office agents in order to fulfil the customer interaction need (Nangu, 2013).

The support, or management function of the Contact Centre, usually includes a team leader or supervisory level of employee whose function it is to manage the frontline, outbound or back office employees. Other support roles include specialised functions

such as Quality Assurers, who monitor customer interaction quality and Work Force Management employees, who forecast, schedule and monitor the statistical performance of agents (Reynolds, 2003). The agent level workforce composition is mainly representative of lower skilled *white-collar* employees, a large majority of whom are females under 35 (Bain and Taylor, 2000).

1.2.4 A Description of CC Frontline Jobs

Calls are distributed to agents via the use of an automatic call distributor (ACD), telephony technology, which delivers customer calls to agents via a skills based routing methodology (Nangu, 2013). Customers select certain services at the beginning of the call using the Interactive Voice Response (IVR) unit and the ACD directs the calls to agents who have the correct skills assigned to them on the ACD (Nangu, 2013). The Contact Centre working environment has been described as an electronic assembly line of sorts, as customers enter the organisation telephonically, and computer technology directs (ACD) them to where they will be serviced (Taylor and Bain, 2000). Taylor and Bain (2000) argue that this type of working process is not too dissimilar to the Taylorist assembly line of old.

The core output of a Contact Centre agent requires significant emotional labour (Kinman, 2009). The Contact Centre inbound agent's work largely consists of solving service requests or assisting customers with information on products or services (White and Roos, 2005). The outbound agents however, conduct collections, telesales or research calls (White and Roos, 2005). In order for agents to ensure that they are the vehicle to which the organisation can attain competitive advantage, emotional regulation is paramount, in that agents need to portray the correct attitude towards customers as they remain the *face* of the organisation at all times (White and Roos, 2005). On occasion however, this behaviour is faked, or is acted, in order to adhere to organisational call quality requirements. However, frequently faking or suppressing emotions while dealing with customers can cause real anxiety (Kinman, 2009). Emotional dissonance in service related contexts such as the work of a Contact Centre agent, and other associated employee wellbeing factors are therefore an important element of the Contact Centre job (Wegge, Vogt and Wecking, 2007).

A high percentage of Contact Centre customer interactions are complaint or query-driven; and these interactions are highly monitored as well as routinely assessed (Ashil *et al.*, 2009, Wegge *et al.*, 2007). Interactions are often repetitive and scripted, with agents usually having little off-phone breaks in-between. Notwithstanding the pressures of the job, the Contact Centre profession is generally described as one which offers low pay and which requires a relatively lower level of skilled employee (Rose and Wright, 2005). However, Contact Centre Service agents need to possess

the correct skills and show the required empathy to appease, as well as always being considerate with customers while adequately servicing these calls (White and Roos, 2005). As previously mentioned, Contact Centre agents are often seen as the *face* of the organisation and are therefore expected to address all customer queries with proficiency (White and Roos, 2005), and meet service expectations in a calm and collected manner (Grandey, Dickter, and Sin, 2004). Added to this, very often portions of the query resolution falls outside of the immediate control of the agent (Nangu, 2013).

What follows is a discussion of Contact Centre agents' competencies and the supervisory environment that this type of work is generally exposed to.

1.2.4.1 Frontline Contact Centre Service Agent Competencies

As previously mentioned, Rose and Wright (2005) argue that most frontline Contact Centre agents can be categorised as those workers that have fairly low to moderate skills levels within the context of the traditional office work environment, however, in order to be effective agents or service differentiators for an organisation, a core set of competencies are needed. According to Rose and Wright (2005), core competencies for a Contact Centre agent include: i) *communication*: the ability to capture and gather pertinent information from customers; ii) *empathy*: the ability to understand the customer's request or predicament and therefore show the required empathy; iii) *attitude*: the correct attitude towards the job, peers and customers is as important as a competency; iv) *consistency*: the ability to be at your best consistently; iv) *knowledge*: having both tacit and explicit organisational knowledge elements as a competency; v) *pace of work*: the ability to work at a pace, is a competency; vi) *ability to adapt*: the ability to adapt to the ever changing and unpredictable nature of the job; vii) *flexibility*: to be flexible enough to deal with all types of customers from differing levels of sophistication and backgrounds; viii) *language proficiency*: to be able to speak the language or languages that are predominant in the market space associated with the product, therefore multilingualism is a competency ; ix) *Stress management*: to be able to deal with stress effectively, x) *goal orientated*: to be driven and goals orientated is a competency xi) *cognitively proficient*: to be a problem solver who likes to work in a team environment is a competency and to xii) *telephony and technology skills*: to be

competent with respect to basic technology as well as possess telephone competency skills.

Personality characteristics and the ability to work as a team are also posited to affect the Contact Centre employee's competency profile, as well as performance (Nicholls, Viviers and Visser, 2009). Nicholls *et al.* (2009) found that of the Big Five personality traits, conscientiousness was a key personality trait that explained to a degree, the level of competency of a Contact Centre service agent.

1.2.4.2 The Electronic Panopticon

Contact Centre supervisors and managers are often paradoxical in their approach to performance management, in that they are often found to relay the importance of customer satisfaction, but are simultaneously preoccupied by strictly managing productivity performance metrics, such as the amount of calls taken and the duration of each call (Banks and Roodt, 2011). This statistical or quantitative measurement, is occasionally at the expense of customer service quality (Banks and Roodt, 2011), which puts significant pressure on the frontline agent to take as many calls, or deal with as many frontline interactions within the time scheduled as they are able to. This does not always allow agents to properly address the required quality aspects of each interaction (Banks and Roodt, 2011), such as achieving an interaction resolution within one contact, or softer quality measures such as agent friendliness or empathy that result in customer satisfaction.

Some scholars argue that the analogy of Contact Centre design closely resembling a panopticon design (Fernie and Metcalf, 1998) can hardly be denied. This, it is argued, is indicative in the working environment and context of the Contact Centre. The frontline Contact Centre employee is constantly under the scrutiny of his supervisory staff. The constant surveillance of these staff is similar to a *Big Brother*, or prison-like surveillance style (Fernie and Metcalf, 1998). Agents are closely monitored on many agent work-behaviour statistics, which are readily available to supervisors and which usually are correlated with quality indicators. Statistical information includes elements such as the number of interactions that were dealt with by the agent; what these interactions were in connection with; and how long these interactions took to complete, to name but a few. Quality measures include the

monitoring of emotional connection with the customer, in that how agents treat customers is paramount. Product knowledge and interaction resolution ability are also key agent performance metrics (Nangu, 2013). These indicators are available on a real time or historical basis, which makes the environment an extremely controlled and observed one. Fernie and Metcalf (1998:8) closely associate the Contact Centre environment to the sweatbox of the industrial age and an electronic “panopticon”. Fernie and Metcalf’s (1998) contend that due to all the electronic surveillance available to supervisors and managers, agents suffer from significant pressures associated with constantly being observed and measured.

1.2.5 The Nature of Frontline Jobs and the Quality of Contact Centre Worklife

Bain and Taylor (2000) suggest that there are two very different views of what working in a Contact Centre constitutes. On the one side there is a depiction of a smiley faced employee who happily interacts with customers within a favourable and professional environment. The polar opposite view is portrayed by an employee who is overly stressed due to constant non-stop engagement with several irate customers, while constantly being monitored by extremely vigilant supervisory staff (Bain and Taylor, 2000). Unfortunately, much of the literature tends to support the latter description of the nature of Contact Centre work. Deery, Iverson and Walsh (2002) posit that service agents in the Contact Centre are often the subjects of customer abuse, which, combined with constant supervisor scrutiny and little task variety leads to emotional exhaustion. In a study on the “nature of work organisation in call centres”, Frenkel, Tam, Korczynski and Shire (1998:957) found a work organisation where managements’ preoccupation with “standardising processes and customising products” enhanced the very bureaucratic nature of the Contact Centre work environment, which had significant negative job satisfaction consequences. This combined with Fernie and Metcalf’s (1998) electronic sweat shop analogy, paints an extremely dreary picture of the nature of frontline Contact Centre service agent work, which is argued to consequently affect the Quality of Worklife of its employees. While it is true that varying levels of Quality of Worklife are to be found in different Contact Centres, the general view is that in the Contact Centre context, lower levels of Quality of Worklife are expected (Connell and Hannif, 2008). Gorjup *et al.* (2008) argue that those frontline Contact Centre service agents who are continuously exposed to several inbound customer interactions each day, which are

not dissimilar from one another, as the Contact Centre service agent is, and added to which, the way in which each interaction of every customer contact is strictly scripted as well as vigilantly monitored, can be considered as lower quality jobs. A study by Vijay, Sekar and Vidhya (2014) revealed that almost half of all Contact Centre frontline employees were dissatisfied with their Quality of Worklife. Parise and Soler (2016) confirmed that there are significant challenges in the Contact Centre environment, which affect and are negatively related to the perceived Quality of Worklife of Contact Centre service agents. Moreover, Van der Berg and Martins (2013) suggest that there exists a relationship between managerial practices, trust and Quality of Worklife.

While it is acknowledged that Quality of Worklife is a construct which is under-researched in the Contact Centre context (Connell and Hannif, 2008), there is considerable literature describing Contact Centre work and its relationship with the dimensions of Quality of Worklife (Hannif *et al.*, 2008). These include Contact Centre work and: job satisfaction, employee wellbeing, stress, work-life balance, reduced feelings of empowerment and Trust in the leader (Bartram and Casimir, 2006; Budwar *et al.*, 2009; Danna and Griffin, 1999; Holdsworth and Cartwright, 2003; Rose and Wright, 2005; Wright and Bonett, 2007).

1.2.5.1 Contact Centres and Job Satisfaction

Job Satisfaction is an important dimension of Quality of Worklife. The Contact Centre working environment is one which is generally closely associated with lower levels of job satisfaction and one which generally allows little scope for advancement or promotion within the organisation (Rose and Wright, 2005). Holdsworth and Cartwright (2003) found that Contact Centre frontline work was less satisfying than other mainstream conventional office jobs. Irrate customers and their propensity to commitment *phone rage* is a major contributing factor to lower levels of Job Satisfaction of Contact Centre frontline workers (Malhotra and Mukherjee, 2004).

1.2.5.2 Stress and Well-Being

As previously mentioned, Contact Centre frontline employees require a considerable number of competencies (Rose and Wright, 2005). This inventory of Contact Centre competencies (Rose and Wright, 2005) is a wide-ranging one, and one which

arguably, does not exist in equal proportions in every Contact Centre frontline employee. It is also plausible to suggest that a lack in one or more of these competencies will inevitably cause problems, both for the employee as well as for the organisation. According to Holdsworth and Cartwright (2003), Contact Centre frontline jobs are more stressful than most other office jobs. It has been touted as one of the most stressful jobs in the so called traditional *white-collar* workplace. Ruyter, Wetzels and Feinberg (2001) argue that the Contact Centre job is one of the ten most stressful office jobs. It is well documented that the Contact Centre frontline job is often associated with high employee burnout rates (Ashill *et al.*, 2009; Budhwar *et al.*, 2009). Moreover, very high stress rates are often generally associated with leadership pressures, performance expectations, customer demands and the ability to resolve interactions with the first contact (Ashill *et al.*, 2009). It is recognised that employee wellbeing in the Contact Centre context is affected by constructs such as anxiety and stress (Wegge, Van Dick, Fisher, Wecking, Moltzen, 2006) which can impact the physiological and psychological elements of employee wellbeing (Easton and Van Laar, 2012). The Contact Centre job has been described as a job with both low task variety as well as low task complexity (Grebner, Semmer, Faso, Gut, Kälin, and Elfering, 2003). Employees are divided into groups that deal with similar customer queries and so tasks are simplified as much as possible through the management of strict process adherence and easily accessible knowledge repositories. This division of labour, low task variety, and complexity, reduces the time needed for training, but has negative consequences on employee wellbeing due to low task variety and complexity (Grebner *et al.*, 2003). These and other root causes, produce psychological ailments that negatively impact the wellness of frontline Contact Centre employees (Budhwar *et al.*, 2009). While there are however, some authors who suggest that some Contact Centre service agent's wellbeing compares favourably to other office jobs when lower levels of supervisory monitoring and control over work methods and procedures is observed (Holman, 2002), but from the literature reviewed, this seems to be the minority view point.

1.2.5.3 Worklife Balance

Budhwar *et al.* (2009) argue that Contact Centre frontline service agents often struggle to balance work expectations and personal life. All members of the organisation, no matter what level they are, have a home life and a work life, each of

which needs concerted attention. Should an aspect of the home, such as caring for a child, demand more attention or energy than is possible to give, which compromises some aspects of the employee's job, and vice versa, this affects the balance between work and life commitments, (Brooks and Anderson, 2005; Van Laar *et al.*, 2007). This factor is particularly relevant in Contact Centres as the working hours of Contact Centre agent are scheduled around customer demand and agents are scheduled to work according to the inbound call profile (Reynolds, 2003). However, this call profile sometimes does not coincide with traditional office hours, so work commitments may spill over into time that is traditionally considered by most to be family time. Contact Centre frontline service agents have very little to no control over when they can work and this contributes to non-desirable work-life balance consequences (Bohle, Willaby, Quinlan, McNamara, 2011).

1.2.5.4 Empowerment

The ability of employees to control large aspects of their work is an important factor in the consideration of good Quality of Worklife, and is also closely linked to the amount of stress employees experience at work (Easton and Van Laar, 2012). Holdsworth and Cartwright (2003) posit that Contact Centre frontline service agents experience less empowerment than traditional office jobs. Moreover, most of the interactions of callers are supposedly similar in nature, or request similar services from the organisation. Organisations therefore tend to script the answers that Contact Centre agents need to supply to customers, with very little room for variation in answers allowed (Rose and Wright, 2005). Feeling empowered and therefore in control at work is closely related to the feeling that employees have with respect to the importance of their work, to feelings of self-efficacy, how free employees are to choose how to deliver the work and lastly, if they feel their work makes a positive impact on the organisation (Spreitzer, 1995). Contact Centre agents are given work schedules, which they have to adhere to very strictly and this adherence is controlled through software monitoring devices. Any unplanned deviations are recorded negatively against the agent. Reasons for deviations being frowned upon by the organisation are understandable, as the Work Force Management team spend considerable effort in ensuring that agent schedules accurately reflect customer requirements, or workload (Reynolds, 2003, Nangu, 2013).

1.2.5.5 Summary

As previously mentioned, the nature of Contact Centre work can be described as a job in where employees are confronted with routine, repetitive work (Connell and Hannif, 2008; Gorjup *et al.*, 2008; Zapf *et al.*, 2003); and where Contact Centre service agents are confronted with numerous and often stressful customer interactions (Ashill *et al.*, 2009). A high percentage of Contact Centre customer interactions are complaint or query-driven. Contact Centre agents are also very highly monitored as well routinely assessed (Ashill *et al.*, 2009). Contact Centre Service agents need to possess the correct skill, provide the required empathy to appease customers (White and Roos, 2005), and service calls proficiently, using the required emotional labour (Cheung and Tang, 2009). Agents within the Contact Centre are often seen as the *face* of the organisation and are therefore expected to communicate, with proficiency (White and Roos, 2005) with customers on all of their queries; and agents are expected to meet these customer service expectations in a calm and collected manner (Grandey *et al.*, 2004). Added to this stress, part of the query resolution falls out of the immediate control of the agent (Nangu, 2013). The nature of Contact Centre work negatively affects Quality of Worklife (Connell and Hannif 2008; Parise and Soler, 2016) as well as dimensions of Quality of Worklife such as job satisfaction, employee wellbeing, stress, work-life balance and empowerment (Budhwar *et al.*, 2009; Danna and Griffin, 1999; Rose and Wright, 2005; Ruyter *et al.*, 2001; Holdsworth and Cartwright, 2003; Wright and Bonett, 2007;).

1.3 The Problem Statement

As previously mentioned, the Contact Centre industry in South Africa is a growing industry, which currently employs several thousand Contact Centre frontline workers. The Contact Centre frontline working context is an environment where lower levels of Quality of Worklife are expected. Methods to improve Quality of Worklife in the Contact Centre context are therefore of both scholarly and applied interest.

1.3.1 Leadership as antecedent to Quality of Worklife

The research proposes that the unique demands placed on Contact Centre frontline employees (Menday, 1996), has implications for the way in which they should be led in order to produce a positive effect on their perceived Quality of Worklife dimensions. Said differently, this research examines whether Servant Leadership behavior in the Contact Centre context, has a positive relationship with Quality of Worklife.

It is argued that there exists a relationship between leadership and Quality of Worklife, or that leadership behaviour is antecedent to and therefore affects an employee's Quality of Worklife. There is however, little empirical evidence in the literature which has investigated the relationship between the two constructs.

Sirgy *et al.* (2001) however posit that the type of leadership, or supervisor behaviour, an employee is exposed to, has a substantial impact on the Quality of Worklife of the employee. Connell and Hannif (2008) found that leadership style has significant impact on Quality of Worklife in the Contact Centre context. Notwithstanding Sirgy *et al.* (2001) and Connell and Hannif's (2008) empirical contributions to the understanding of the relationship between leadership and Quality of Worklife, there is a substantial amount of research on how particular leadership behaviours influence individual factors or dimensions of Quality of Worklife. These factors include employee job satisfaction, stress at work, general wellbeing, some of which are discussed below. However, there is very little evidence researching leadership styles and Quality of Worklife.

Podsakoff, Todor, and Skov's (1982) study argues that leadership behaviour has a direct influence on employee satisfaction. This focus of the research was particularly pertinent to the dimension of reward behaviour, in that it was illustrated that leaders who display attributes which champion the positive reinforcement of employees by actively and openly rewarding good behaviours, increase satisfaction of employees (Podsakoff *et al.*, 1982). Supervisory style and job satisfaction were also found to have a significant relationship with one another (Tease, 1983). Tease (1983) argued that supervisors, who seek to actively form bonds and continuously look to improve relationships with their employees, improve levels of satisfaction. Stander and

Rothman (2008) posit that the leadership construct is a predictor of employee satisfaction.

Seltzer and Numerof's (1986) study produced results that confirmed that the supervisory style and relationships formed with subordinates are important considerations in reducing stress at work. Seltzer and Numerof (1986) found there to be a direct inverse relationship between considerate supervisors and organisational stressors, the more considerate supervisors behaved towards their employees, the less stress was observed.

Cohen, Chang and Ledford (1997) argued that employees that are led in a self-management leadership style show higher levels of employee satisfaction over those who experienced conventional employee/supervisor relationships. The dimension of self-management increases feelings of control at work as employees feel that they are able to influence their work in a meaningful manner, and are empowered to make decisions appropriate to goal acquisition (Cohen *et al.*, 1997).

Employees also use implicit leadership theory to judge a manager's performance against his presupposed ideas and in contrast to what a good leader's behaviours or traits ought to be (Epitropaki and Martin, 2005). In other words, implicit leadership theory suggests that an employee's preconceived personal viewpoint is that leadership traits should include behaviours such as thoughtfulness, warmth, sensitivity, amongst many others. If those behaviours are demonstrated by the leader, this corroborated the employee presupposition that the leader is doing the right thing to satisfy his needs and this positively impacts the quality of leader-member exchanges of employees and directly influences staff satisfaction and well-being (Epitropaki and Martin, 2005).

Research has shown that Transformational Leadership (Bradley *et al.*, 2009) and Spiritual Leadership (Bardmili, Siadat and Mohammadisadr, 2013) have significant relationships with Quality of Worklife. Moreover, a review of the literature on Servant Leadership (Barbuto and Wheeler, 2006; Ehrhart, 2004; Laub, 1999) reveals that employee satisfaction, general well-being, and commitment to their jobs increases when exposed to leadership behaviours associated with Servant Leadership.

So notwithstanding that there has been some empirical evidence found to suggest that leadership behaviour, or that particular styles of leadership have relationships with various dimensions of Quality of Worklife, there is very little evidence linking a particular leadership style to Quality of Worklife as a construct. The most recent research on the topic is the study of Nanjundeswaraswamy and Swamy (2015). They argue that Quality of Worklife is dependent on leadership style. Nanjundeswaraswamy and Swamy's (2015) research illustrated a dependent relationship between transactional and transformational leadership styles and factors of Quality of Worklife. The results of Nanjundeswaraswamy and Swamy (2015) showed a highly correlated and significant relationship between transformational leadership and Quality of Worklife, more so than the relationship between transactional leadership and Quality of Worklife. The study illustrated that managers or supervisors that displayed behavioural traits conducive to those of transformational leaders produced higher levels of Quality of Worklife.

This thesis will argue that an approach of leadership that focuses on caring, relationships, as well as the needs and wellness of the individuals that they are leading, is appropriate for the context of this research. It is proposed, and which will be argued in more detail in Chapter Three, that Servant Leadership theory is a theory which is relational and is valuing of caring, and therefore appropriate for the frontline Contact Centre context of this research.

This thesis intends to add to the work of Sirgy *et al.* (2001), supporting their argument that leadership is antecedent to Quality of Worklife. However, it will also add to the literature with evidence that there is a link between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife, or put differently, that there is a significant positive relationship between the two constructs and that Servant Leadership is antecedent to Quality of Worklife.

The research will contribute to literature that, as with Nanjundeswaraswamy and Swamy's, (2015) study, there is a link between leadership style and Quality of Worklife, however adding that it is particularly relevant in the deficient Quality of Worklife context of Contact Centre frontline environment. This is particularly important to this work as it supports the basis of the primary hypothesis of this thesis,

which is that Servant Leadership is antecedent to Quality of Worklife in the Contact Centre frontline environment. Therefore, by implication, if a supervisor is to behave in a manner to which is perceived as being akin to Servant Leadership, or put differently, be perceived as a servant leader, employees will report higher levels of Quality of Worklife. It is here where this thesis proposes to make a significant contribution to knowledge by empirically investigating the relationship between Servant Leadership and its effects on Quality of Worklife in the Contact Centre context.

1.3.2 Trust in the leader as a mediating variable

It is reported in the literature that leadership plays a significant role in the enhancement of trust of employees (Bass, 2002). If leaders display characteristics that display trustworthiness, employees are more likely to trust leaders (Zeffane, 2010). According to Cropanzano and Mitchell (2005), leadership and follower relations in the work context can be understood through Social Exchange theory. The value of relationship building through trust in the Contact Centre context cannot be denied. It is proposed in this research thesis that in the very task orientated and monitored environment of the Contact Centre, leadership that demonstrates that it values caring and is trustworthy will strengthen relationships between its leaders and followers. This will be explained in more detail in a later chapter, however it must be noted that in the Contact Centre context, trust between a supervisor and a service agent is argued to be better developed through a positive, caring and serving leadership attitude. It is to be noted that at the very core of Servant Leadership is the value of caring for followers and trust in the leader (Greenleaf, 1977). Previous research has positioned Servant Leadership as an antecedent to trust, as these leaders display behaviour which that puts their subordinate's interests above their own, and this increases feelings of trust towards leaders (Joseph and Winston, 2005). Burke, Sims, Lazzara, and Salas (2007) suggest that accountability, the importance of values and being fair are integral to enhancing the view that leaders lead with integrity and are trustworthy. Burke *et al.*'s (2007) viewpoint is also in alignment with Servant Leadership theory, as the dimensions that they deem integral are dimensions which also are core factors of Servant Leadership models (Van Dierendonck, 2011). This then supposes there is a close relationship between Servant Leadership and Trust.

There is also evidence in the literature that Trust is positively associated with Quality of Worklife, as well as its associated factors, within the literature. Cook and Wall (1980) as well as Chughtai, Byrne and Flood (2015) posit that trust in the leader is a vitally important ingredient to ensuring the well-being of its employees and that trust is a critical variable when researching the Quality of Worklife of employees. Van der Berg and Martins (2013) confirmed that there exists a positive relationship between managerial practices with trust and Quality of Worklife.

As mentioned earlier, this research proposes to contribute to the literature by proposing that there is a positive association between a leadership approaches, in particular Servant Leadership, with Quality of Worklife, and that this relationship is mediated by Trust in the customer service frontline context.

1.4 The Key Theoretical Constructs

The central hypothesis of the research thesis is that there is a significant relationship between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife in the Contact Centre context. An additional hypothesis to this is that trust mediates that relationship between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife. In addition to the Contact Centre context, which has been explained in the sections above, the other two key theoretical constructs which underpin this research thesis are Leadership, in particular Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife. Trust as the mediating variable is also discussed. Below is a summary of all three constructs; however each of these will be discussed in more detail in the literature review chapters which follow.

1.4.1 Quality of Worklife

Quality of Worklife has its roots in two key theories, need satisfaction theory and spill over theory (Sirgy *et al.*, 2001). Early studies of Quality of Worklife propose that by satisfying the needs of employees through work orientated activities and work environment dimensions, revealed better perceptions of employees' Quality of Worklife (Suttle, 1977).

Van Laar *et al.* (2007:326) developed a broad understanding of Quality of Worklife, viewing it as all-encompassing, influenced by work in the “widest context in which an employee would evaluate the influence of work on their life”. Van Laar *et al.* (2007) described the Quality of Worklife construct as consisting of six factors, namely 1) Job and Career Satisfaction, 2) General Well-Being, 3) Home-Work Interface, 4) Stress at Work, 5) Control at Work, and 6) Working Conditions.

A systems model of Quality of Worklife is proposed in this research thesis. The systems model argues that variables that affect Quality of Worklife in antecedent role behaviour in this context are Work Setting, Work Characteristics and Leadership behaviour, and that Gender, Age, Emotional Intelligence, Personality and Trust moderate Quality of Worklife. Perceived External Prestige, Emotional Labour and Organisational Justice mediate the relationship between Quality of Worklife and several organisational consequences. Organizational Commitment, Job Embeddedness, Job Involvement, Increased Performance, Higher Profit for Organisations, Reduction of Intention to leave, Improved Learning Organisations and Organisational Trust are posited as consequences of Quality of Worklife.

Leadership is argued to be the antecedent of interest of this study and although there is very little literature on the topic of leadership’s styles and their relationship with Quality of Worklife, Nanjundeswaraswamy and Swamy’s, (2015) study does suggest that there is a link. This research argues that the leadership styles which have a relationship emphasis and which value caring, are better suited for improvement the Quality of Worklife of employees, given the task orientated and monitored environment of the Contact Centre context. It implies that if a supervisor is to behave in a manner to which is perceived as being akin to a leadership style that emphasizes the importance of caring for others, and is focused on creating good relationships with its followers, such as the Servant Leadership does, employees will perceive higher levels of Quality of Worklife. The antecedent relationship between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife leads to the central hypothesis for this research, in that Servant Leadership affects and contributes to the Quality of Worklife dimensions of frontline employees in the Contact Centre context.

1.4.2 Leadership

From a review of the literature, it is evident that leadership is an extremely complex and multidimensional construct. Many authors have found it difficult to concisely articulate an all-embracing understanding of the subject (Dubrin, 2001). There are almost “as many different definitions of leadership as there are persons who have attempted to define the concept” (Stogdill, 1974: 259). Dubrin (2001) argues that there have been in excess of 35 000 different journal articles attempting to define the leadership construct, and still there is no single, accepted universal leadership definition that has been agreed upon. However, many leadership definitions do have a shared delineation.

According to Bass (1990:4), leadership is not found in a particular place or time, it is a “universal phenomenon” that originates as far back as humans can recollect. Bass (1990:4) defines the leadership construct as “an interaction between two or more members of a group that often involves a structuring or restructuring of a situation” and, “the perception and expectations of the members”. Leaders are agents of change; they are individuals whose acts affect other people more than other people’s acts affect them. Leadership occurs when one group member modifies the motivation or competencies of others in a group (Bass, 1990).

The mere range in understanding of these definitions suggests that any member of a group can exhibit an amount of leadership, and these leader-members will vary both in themselves and in the timing and extent to which they exhibit leadership (Bass 1990). Khoza (2011) posits that leadership is as old as humankind itself, and argues that it is usually the key differentiator to success in any grouping of people, be it of a small community, organisation or country. Good leaders have the propensity to have stories told about them, to be remembered and create legacies that are left for future generations (Charlton, 1993).

However, within the body of leadership literature, the more contemporary view of organisational leadership is that it is defined as a study of individual behaviour or characteristics within a corporate setting (Avolio, Walumbwa, Weber, 2009), and that it entails an understanding of a myriad of interconnected variables. These variables include “followers, peers, supervisors, work setting/context, and culture, including a

much broader array of individuals representing the entire spectrum of diversity, public, private, and not-for-profit organizations, and increasingly over the past twenty years, samples of populations from nations around the Globe” (Avolio, Walumbwa, Weber, 2009:422).

An all-encompassing definition for the phenomenon that is leadership is therefore, understandably, difficult to concisely articulate. As previously mentioned, many definitions contained within the leadership literature take different approaches on a defined leadership construct. The significance of influence however, is suggested or implied in several readings, and relates to all contexts and cultures (Daft, 1999; Dubrin, 2001; Khoza, 2011; Jooste and Fourie, 2009; Northouse, 2004). Dubrin (2001:3) suggests that leadership is the “art of influencing people by persuasion or example to follow a line of action”. Dubrin’s (2001) definition thereby proposes that given the many variables that influence an organisational situation, the successful leader has both the cognitive abilities as well as the emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1998) to deduce a strategic purpose that will persuade human followers to willingly follow the leader’s will. Northouse’s (2004) understanding of leadership proposes the value of influence as defining criteria, and suggests that leadership is a process that influences members to attain a predetermined objective.

According to Daft (1999), leaders are therefore easily differentiated from others, standing out by the influenced inspiration they cultivate amongst their subordinates and peers. Leaders are able to influence change and instil a shared purpose amongst followers, taking personal responsibility for outcomes. Leaders can also be characterised by the respect they generate within a group, or by the “personhood” of the leader (Khoza, 2011:18).

Contrary to earlier beliefs, Arvey *et al.* (2007) argue against the notion that leaders are innately born with leadership ability. Arvey *et al.*’s (2007) studies shows that seventy percent of leadership abilities are not associated with heredity characteristics, but more with external factors, such as opportunities and exposure to development. Leadership is therefore more an applied science, and an art that can be taught, as well as learnt, a statement that is particularly relevant and important to the recommendations suggested in this thesis.

Durbin (2001:3) posits that successful leadership in the contemporary business environment can be described as a partnership analogy, a “partnership” between the leader and his/her followers; which is contrasting in nature to that of an authoritarian or “parent-child” relationship. In this difference, the dynamics of the relationships of partnership and parent-child are intuitively different. Partnerships produce an atmosphere of collective purpose and goals while an authoritarian approach to leadership behaviour produces something more akin to an environment that stifles initiative and one that is driven by instruction. Dubrin (2001:5) argues that this understanding of leadership is completely contrasted to the “tough minded, analytical, problem solving” transactional mind-set of the manager.

Daft (1999) argues that leadership involves an influence relationship between and amongst leaders and followers, suggesting leadership to be a two way communicative and responsive process of influence that is governed by the nuances of relationships. As previously mentioned, due to the context of this study, relational leadership style is of particular interest to this thesis. Daft’s (1999:5) definition goes on to read that leadership is the relationship amongst leaders and followers “who intend real changes that reflect their shared purposes”. This proposes that leadership involves continuous change on, and at, any organisational level, and that perpetuates towards a mutually attractive future. Daft (1999) supposes therefore that leadership can manifest at any level of the organisation, and is not only left to the upper echelons of management, this is particularly relevant for this study as the level of leadership that this study is positioned to research is at a lower management, supervisory level.

Yukl’s (1989:253) definition is more specifically related to influence in that he argues that leadership can be broadly described as individuals who busy themselves with “influencing task objectives and strategies, influencing commitment and compliance in task behaviour to achieve these objectives, influencing group maintenance and identification, and influencing the culture of an organization”. However, after several studies, and in a later publication, Yukl (2012:66) has managed to condense this understanding of influence by arguing that leadership is in essence preoccupied with “influencing and facilitating individual and collective efforts to accomplish shared objectives”.

The leadership definition that this research aligns itself to is a leadership approach, which is focussed on relationships (Greenleaf, 1970; Van Dierendonck, 2011), is values-based (Copeland, 2014), and relevant for the middle to lower management or supervisory levels (Daft, 1999;). This thesis develops its understanding of leadership under these key concepts. The leadership that this research positions itself within the current body of literature is that of leadership being relationship focused and caring for people. This thesis argues that an approach of leadership which focuses on caring, influence, relationships, as well as the needs and wellness of the individuals that they are leading, and is relevant for the middle to lower management or supervisory levels, is appropriate for the context of this research. It will be argued later in the thesis, that Servant Leadership is such a leadership approach. What follows is a short summary of Servant Leadership.

Servant Leadership

The prosperous contemporary organisation is typified as an organisation that accomplishes better returns and is a more competitive entity through its focus on employee wellness and innovation (Van Dierendonck, 2011). Servant Leadership provides followers with a leader that endorses a participative culture and promotes the empowerment of employees (Melchar and Bosco, 2010). The very core of Servant Leadership promulgates the notion that above all, the good of the followers must supersede any self-related interests of the leader (Laub, 1999). A follower-service centric culture, within the collective leadership of an organisation, is resultant of leaders who are motivated to care for, and serve their employees, and through such service, achieve organisational goals (Greenleaf, 1977; Spears, 1995).

Servant leaders are characteristically occupied with the relationships between themselves and followers, in that real concern is demonstrated in the development of followers in order that they “grow healthier, wiser, freer” (Greenleaf, 1977:13). This is in contrast to leadership behaviour that is predominantly preoccupied with meeting only organisational objectives (Sendjaya and Pekerti, 2010). A Service Leadership perspective is one that emphasizes, and holds important, the leader-follower relationship dimensions of leadership (Greenleaf, 1977), and so a service orientated approach to leadership is argued to develop relationships in a positive manner.

Servant Leadership is argued to be both caring and relationally focused and appropriate for the frontline context.

Van Dierendonck and Nuijten (2011) argue that the construct of Servant Leadership within the contemporary leadership environment is not a very new one. Spears (1995), Laub (1999), Russell and Stone (2002), Patterson (2003), Barbuto and Wheeler (2006), Linden *et al.*, (2008) and Sendjaya and Pekerti (2010) have all made valuable contributions to the seminal works of Greenleaf (1970). While there is a broad base of literature available on Servant Leadership that focuses on the senior or executive level of leadership, Van Dierendonck and Nuijten (2011) have argued that it is also relevant at the middle level of management, and have validated an eight dimensional measure of Servant Leadership that is suitable for this level. The eight factors are: standing back, forgiveness, courage, empowerment, accountability, authenticity, humility, and stewardship (Van Dierendonck and Nuijten, 2011).

1.4.3 Trust in the Leader

Cook and Wall (1980) argue that the success and stability of an organisation is largely determined by the amount of trust that employees have in the organisation, as well as the trust they have for their superiors. Cook and Wall (1980:39) define trust as "the extent to which one is willing to ascribe good intentions to and have confidence in the words and actions of other people." Trust is regarded as a critical element for groups or organisations to function (Mayer, Davis and Schoorman, 1995). Mayer *et al.* (1995:712) define Trust within the organisational context as "the willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other will perform a particular action important to the trustor, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control that other party". Willingness to be vulnerable implies a reasonable amount of risk on the trustor's part (Mayer *et al.*, 1995). Employees risk a certain amount of themselves in order to trust, so risk is argued as an essential component of trust (Mayer *et al.*, 1995). Risk is reciprocal however, for example in the Contact Centre context, supervisors will risk that their team members will perform well when dealing with customers on every shift, and service agents risk trusting the advice and training received from their leaders. The risk, which is referred to here is specifically interpersonal relationship risk, or risk taking in relationships rather than all risk-taking behaviour. Agents risk that acting on

the words and actions of their supervisors with confidence will benefit them as well as benefit the organisation.

Joseph and Winston (2005) describe trust is a multidimensional. Joseph and Winston (2005) posit that trust could include interpersonal trust, inter-organizational trust, political trust, societal trust, trust of peer's in the workplace, trust between superiors and subordinates and organizational trust. Cook and Wall's (1980) influential paper, also describes trust as multidimensional, with a focus on trust in colleagues as well as trust in leaders. It is important at this stage to highlight however, that this research is solely focused on the employee's trust of the leader.

Mayer *et al.* (1995) suggest that the antecedents of trust in the leader include ability, benevolence, and integrity. The suggestion that a leader's ability is an important element in trust, and proposed as an antecedent to trust, is one which is also not too dissimilar to Cook and Wall's (1980) views. Contact Centre service agent's need to have trust in the abilities of supervisors and managers, or put differently, supervisors need to be able to display evidence that they are indeed themselves competent in the area of work that they are supervising before they will earn the trust of their subordinates. Agents will not be very trusting of any advice given to them by supervisors they deem to be lacking in technical skill or organisational knowledge. Benevolence suggests that the trustor trusts that the trustee's motives are good, and by listening to them or acting on their advice, this will be in the trustor's best interests (Mayer *et al.*, 1995). The Contact Centre environment requires a significant amount of coaching (Reynolds, 2003), and agents need to feel that the coaching that they are receiving from their supervisors is truly for their development and benefit, with no ulterior motives which would possibly exclusively benefit the supervisor more. Selflessness, altruistic behaviour is an important component and the antecedent of benevolence (Mayer *et al.*, 1995). If agents deem the supervisors actions to be for their benefit exclusively, this will heighten the levels of the trust relationship. Integrity involves that the "trustee adheres to a set of principles that the trustor finds acceptable" (Mayer *et al.*, 1995: 719). This proposes that the Contact Centre agents will trust supervisors whose principles are congruent, or are superior to their own; alternatively, they will not be trusting of supervisors who display behaviour that suggests alignment with inferior morals and principles.

Burke, Sims, Lazzaro and Salas's (2007) paper on trust in leadership added to the seminal work of Mayer *et al.* (1995) by concurring that there is an unmistakable association between leader behaviour and trust of employees. Burke *et al.* (2007) proposed, within the benevolence component of Mayer *et al.*'s (1995) trust framework, that the provision of expert coaching and a supportive context is paramount to building trust in the leader. Building a supportive context was described through several types of leadership behaviours or styles that unequivocally display the perception of caring and concern by the leader towards their followers. "Leaders that show respect and concern for their followers" (Burke *et al.*, 2007: 616) are regarded as more trustworthy.

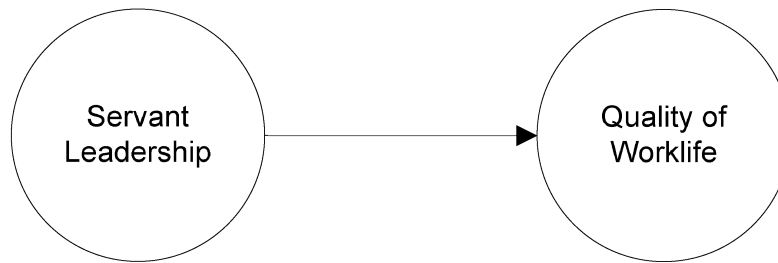
It is these views that clearly suggest to researcher that there are close associations between, Servant Leadership and Trust, which in turn has the potential to positively affect Quality of Worklife in the customer service frontline context. The next section therefore deals with the proposed goals and hypothesis of this assertion based on this viewpoint.

1.5 The Goals, Hypotheses and Intended Contribution of the Study

There is no published evidence of a study being conducted to investigate the influence of leadership on the Quality of Worklife construct in the South African context, and no published evidence of any research anywhere exploring the relationship between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife in any context, as is intended in this study.

As illustrated in simple path diagram in Figure 1.1 below, this research will develop and test a model that denotes the relationship between the independent variable Servant Leadership and the dependent variable Quality of Worklife in a Customer Service operational environment. In doing this, this study will not only contribute to the current body of knowledge of both Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife, but will also be of potential significant value to management practitioners.

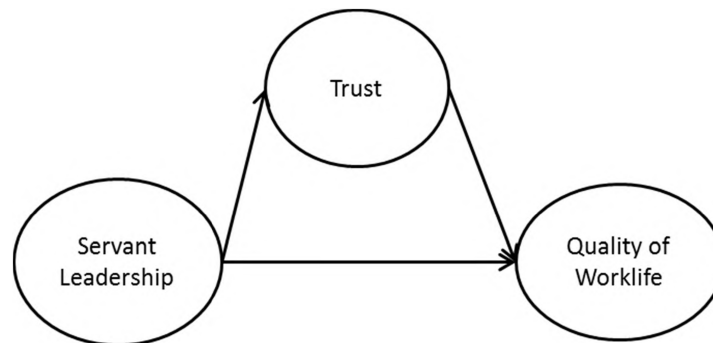
Figure 1.1: Simple Path Diagram of Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife



Source: Researcher hypothesis

In addition to this, as illustrated in simple path diagram in Figure 1.2, this research will develop and test a model that includes Trust as a mediating variable between the independent variable Servant Leadership and the dependent variable Quality of Worklife in a customer service operational environment.

Figure 2.2: Simple Path Diagram of the mediating relationship of Trust between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife



Source: Researcher hypothesis

1.5.1 Research Goals, Hypotheses and Intended Knowledge Contribution

Objectives:

The central hypothesis and *primary* objective of the study however is to test whether Servant Leadership behaviour has a significant and positive causal relationship with Quality of Worklife in the Contact Centre frontline context.

This research project also included five *secondary* goals that it wished to achieve which included:

- I. *To validate the SLS and WRQWL instruments that measures both Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife in the South African Contact Centre frontline context.*
- II. *To use Structural Equation Modelling to measure the relationships between Servant Leadership, Trust and Quality of Worklife.*
- III. *To assess whether Trust played a mediating role in the relationship between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife.*
- IV. *To measure if there were any differences in Servant Leadership, Trust and Quality of Worklife.*
- V. *To identify potential problems that could result due to deficiencies found in Servant Leadership behaviour that may lead to a lower Quality of Worklife.*
- VI. *To make recommendations to the organisations to assist frontline leaders to improve the working lives of Contact Centre agents.*

1.5.2 Hypotheses:

There are five key hypotheses of this research thesis that are positioned to support the goals and objectives of the research by empirically testing the assumptions that are made from the study, these are listed below:

Hypothesis 1:

Null Hypothesis (H₁₀): There is no statistically significant causal relationship between Servant Leadership behaviour and Quality of Worklife in the frontline customer service context.

Alternative Hypothesis (H1_a): Servant leadership behaviour has a statistically significant and positive causal relationship with Quality of Worklife in the frontline customer service context.

Hypothesis 2

Null Hypothesis (H2₀): There is no statistically significant causal relationship between Servant Leadership behaviour and Trust in the frontline customer service context.

Alternative Hypothesis (H2_a): Servant Leadership behaviour has a statistically significant and positive causal relationship with Trust in the frontline customer service context.

Hypothesis 3

Null Hypothesis (H3₀): There is no statistically significant causal relationship between Trust and Quality of Worklife in the frontline customer service context.

Alternative Hypothesis (H3_a): Trust has a statistically significant and positive causal relationship with Quality of Worklife in the frontline customer service context.

Hypothesis 4

Null Hypothesis (H4₀): Trust does not mediate the relationship between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife in the frontline customer service context.

Alternative Hypothesis (H4_a): Trust is a statistically significant mediator of the relationship between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife in the frontline customer service context.

Hypothesis 5:

Null Hypothesis (H5₀): There is no statistically significant difference in the level of Servant leadership, Quality of Worklife and Trust experienced by the frontline employees with respect to the following:

- i) Between Organisations (Servant Leadership: H5.1, Quality of Worklife: H5.2, Trust: H5.3);
- ii) Between Age of Respondents (Servant Leadership: H5.4, Quality of Worklife: H5.5, Trust: H5.6);
- iii) Between Gender of Respondents (Servant Leadership: H5.7, Quality of Worklife: H5.8, Trust: H5.9);
- iv) Between Age of Supervisor, (Servant Leadership: H5.10, Quality of Worklife: H5.11, Trust: H5.12);
- v) Between Gender of Supervisor, (Servant Leadership: H5.13, Quality of Worklife: H5.14, Trust: H5.15);
- vi) Between Type of Job, (Servant Leadership: H5.16, Quality of Worklife: H5.17, Trust: H5.18);

Alternative Hypothesis (H5_a): There is a statistically significant difference in the level of Servant leadership, Quality of Worklife and Trust experienced by the frontline employees with respect to the following:

- i) Between Organisations (Servant Leadership: H5.1, Quality of Worklife: H5.2, Trust: H5.3);
- ii) Between Age of Respondents (Servant Leadership: H5.4, Quality of Worklife: H5.5, Trust: H5.6);
- iii) Between Gender of Respondents (Servant Leadership: H5.7, Quality of Worklife: H5.8, Trust: H5.9);
- iv) Between Age of Supervisor, (Servant Leadership: H5.10, Quality of Worklife: H5.11, Trust: H5.12);
- v) Between Gender of Supervisor, (Servant Leadership: H5.13, Quality of Worklife: H5.14, Trust: H5.15);
- vi) Between Type of Job, (Servant Leadership: H5.16, Quality of Worklife: H5.17, Trust: H5.18).

1.5.3 Intended Knowledge Contribution Objectives:

As illustrated in Table 1.1 below, this research thesis intends to make both scholarly contributions to knowledge, as well as applied contributions to knowledge. The research will argue that the theoretical model proposed, which illustrates the relationship between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife, and the mediating role of Trust in this relationship is a significant scholarly contribution to the body of knowledge. The body of knowledge on Servant Leadership, Quality of Worklife and Trust will be supplemented by the results of this study, particularly with reference to the proposed model as well as the context of the study.

The potential problems that could arise due to deficiencies in Servant Leadership behaviour and Trust are recognised. In particular, that this could lead to a lower Quality of Worklife. Therefore any recommendations of mitigating actions that are proposed in the study, would contribute to the Applied Knowledge of Servant Leadership, Quality of Worklife and Trust, in that management practitioners will be better equipped to improve the Quality of Worklife of their employees, and thereby benefit from the consequences.

Table 1.1 Intended Contributions of the Study

Scholarly Contributions	Applied Contributions
Validation of a SEM model denoting the relationships between Servant Leadership, Trust and Quality of Worklife	Identification of potential problems that could result due to deficiencies in Servant Leadership behaviour that could consequently lead to a lower Quality of Worklife.
Assessing any differences in Servant Leadership, Trust and Quality of Worklife between the Contact Centre sites researched thereby arguing some levels of generalizability.	
Servant Leadership is a developing theory and the results of this study will add to the literature.	Recommendation of mitigating action to the organisations

<p>There is currently very little customer service Contact Centre Servant Leadership research to date, as well as very little Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife research in the South African Context. This research is positioned to advance the current body of knowledge of both Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife.</p>	
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Source: Researcher's own construction

1.6 The Research Methodology

1.6.1 The Research Paradigm

The paradigm adopted for this research is post-positivism (Guba and Lincoln, 1994). Quantitative statistical data techniques are used to reject or not reject the null hypotheses (Guba and Lincoln, 1994).

1.6.2 The Research Design

Figure 1.3 below illustrates the methodology of this research paper, which is diagrammatically presented representing the systematic and chronological approach that was adopted in relation to the research aim, ontology, epistemology, research method, data collection and analysis, and interpretation of results.

Figure 1.3 Research Methodology



Source: Developed by author from Guba and Lincoln (1994); Gray (2014)

1.6.3 The Research Sample Population

The population parameter is 555 Contact Centre Department employees. The respondents include all the frontline customer service agents who make up approximately 90% of the department. A vast majority, 99%, of the employees in the sample group had a minimum educational background of at least Grade 12, with a large portion, 44%, having a tertiary qualification, and all of the employees in the sample could read, speak and write English fluently.

1.6.4 The Research Instruments

The servant leadership questionnaire used for this research was a combination of the Servant Leadership Survey - SLS (Van Dierendonck and Nuijten, 2011), the Quality of Worklife was the Work-Related Quality of Life Scale - WRQoLS (Van Laar *et al.*, 2007) and the Trust Scale ((Cook and Wall (1980) adapted by Bartram and Casimir (2006)).

1.6.5 The Data collection process

Respondents were requested, by e-mail to complete the surveys during scheduled off-phone periods (this time is usually used for personal administration or development). The surveys were completed by clicking on a link on the email, which directed respondents to an online answer sheet. The questionnaire was distributed to all Contact Centre frontline staff via email addresses. The questionnaire was completed by clicking on a link on the email, which directed the respondents to an online survey.

1.6.6 The Research Data Analyses

The information supplied by the respondents of the instrument is stored in a data base repository (Turban, King, Viehland and Lee, 2006) and was extracted by the researcher and analysed using the following statistical procedures:

- I. Reliability and Validity analyses for the different instruments using Cronbach's Alpha, Exploratory Factor Analysis and Confirmatory Factor Analysis.
- II. Structural Equation modelling to determine the causal relationships;
- III. Mediation Analysis;

- IV. A statistical description of the current levels of Servant Leadership, Quality of Worklife and Trust in each site;
- V. The identification of any significant differences in the mean scores using ANOVA.

1.6.7 Ethics

The front page of the questionnaire mail explained that participation in this research is voluntary and that the respondents will be free to opt out at any stage if they want to. Researchers are ethically obligated to their respondents (Babbie and Mouton, 2001); and Bassey's (1999) respect for persons, democracy and truth were a guiding influence for the researcher. Anonymity of the respondents was preserved and the findings of the research was thoroughly investigated and truly reported.

1.7 Structure Of The Study

Below is a summary of each chapter to inform the reader of the structure of this research thesis.

1.7.1 Chapter 1

Chapter One is an introduction to the study where the research problem statement is clearly defined. Chapter One summarises the context and scope of the research with reference to the key theoretical concepts and research sites. Hypotheses are proposed and the methodological process to test these hypotheses is summarised. Chapter One also explains the importance of the study and sets out the intended scholarly and applied contributions.

1.7.2 Chapter 2

Chapter Two presents a thorough review of the Quality of Worklife literature. The chapter begins with the origins of Quality of Worklife and clarifies its association with Quality of Life. The chapter then defines Quality of Worklife and differentiates it from similar theoretical concepts such as Job Satisfaction, Employee Wellbeing and Wellness. The chapter proposes a contribution to knowledge by developing a system's model of Quality of Worklife that is derived from several authors in the literature. Various Quality of Worklife models are discussed and the justification of the Van Laar *et al.* (2007) model is substantiated.

1.7.3 Chapter 3

Chapter Three contains a literature review of Servant Leadership. In this chapter, earlier to the more contemporary models of leadership are presented and Servant Leadership is argued as the construct of choice due to its relational and caring focus. The Van Dierendonck and Nuijten (2011) Servant leadership construct is differentiated from other similar Servant Leadership theories and its suitability for this particular research's context is argued. Chapter Three also introduces Trust as an important variable to this study, and one that is closely associated with Servant Leadership. Trust is then positioned as a possible mediator between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife.

1.7.4 Chapter 4

Chapter Four describes the research methodology that was followed. The chapter begins with the declaration of the researcher's philosophical standpoint, after which the description of the research process is outlined. In Chapter Four, the sample size, data collection and statistical analysis procedures and research ethics are explained.

1.7.5 Chapter 5

Chapter Five presents the results of the analysis. Reliability and Validity results of the instruments used is presented with the aid of Cronbach's Alpha, Exploratory Factor Analysis and Confirmatory Factor Analysis. A SEM model of Servant Leadership, Trust and Quality of Worklife is presented. Furthermore, in this chapter, the results of the Hypotheses are tested and their results presented.

1.7.6 Chapter 6

Chapter Six discusses the research problem in relation to the research findings, which were presented in Chapter Five, and discusses them in context of the literature previously reviewed. The chapter considers the literature of the previous chapters previously reviewed and discusses whether the findings of this research confirm the existing literature or pose possible differences, and where these differences exist, reasons are proposed.

1.7.7 Chapter 7

In Chapter Seven, a conclusion of the study's purpose, results and significant findings are presented along with recommendations to both the academic and management fraternity on both the theoretical and applied implications of the study. The chapter also acknowledges however, that this study is of limited scope. This along with various other limitations, are also mentioned in the chapter. The chapter also suggests areas of related future research, which aim to further enhance the understanding of the two principle constructs of Quality of Worklife and Servant Leadership.

1.8 Conclusion

This chapter explained the research context, the problem statement, the key theoretical concepts that will form the theoretical basis of the research, as well as the research design. The chapter argued that given the nature of the job, the working context of the frontline Contact Centre service agent is an extremely challenging one. It is therefore suspected, as well as argued by other scholars, that Quality of Worklife may be impacted by this. This makes Quality of Worklife a variable of particular interest within the Contact Centre context and therefore worth researching.

It is suggested that in this deficient Quality of Worklife context, leadership behaviour is reported to be antecedent to Quality of Worklife. However, it is not any leadership which is argued to be best suited for the Contact Centre context. A relationship focussed and caring for people style is posited to be more appropriate. Servant Leadership was proposed as such a leadership style. Moreover, it was also proposed that Trust may also play an important role between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife, in that it is supposed that Trust may act as a mediating variable, mediating the relationship between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife.

The next chapter discusses the concept of Quality of Worklife in some detail, in relation to its origins, theoretical structure and measurement instruments, as well as its relation to the Contact Centre context.

Chapter 2 – Quality of Worklife

2.1 Introduction

This chapter has several objectives. Firstly, it introduces the concept of Quality of Worklife. It investigates and clarifies the construct of Quality of Worklife, its relationship with leadership and the importance of it within the Contact Centre context. This literature review also serves to review Quality of Work Life theory from the perspective of Needs Theory and recognising the Spill Over approach. It also differentiates it from other similar theories, such as Quality of Life, Employee Satisfaction, Wellness and Employee Well-Being.

Secondly, the chapter also highlights the importance of Quality of Worklife for organisations in general and for Contact Centres in particular. Organisations need to be aware of the Quality of Worklife perceptions of their employees should they want to address Quality of Worklife factors and benefit from the positive consequences of higher levels of Quality of Worklife. These consequences include increased performance, organisational commitment, job embeddedness, as well as other important variables which will later be discussed in the chapter. Furthermore, an argument is made that it is particularly important for organisations with Contact Centres, and for Contact Centre organisations, to be particularly vigilant of Quality of Worklife levels, as it is argued that in the Contact Centre context, it is likely that low levels of Quality of Worklife exist.

Thirdly, numerous variables are reported to play an antecedent, moderating, mediating or a consequential role of the Quality of Worklife construct. A systems model of Quality of Worklife is developed, which illustrates the inter-relationships of these variables and how they affect and are affected by the Quality of Worklife construct. The chapter argues that leadership is an important antecedent to Quality of Worklife, and also notes that it is the antecedent of interest in this study. Moreover, it is also proposed that it is not just any leadership that will suffice, particularly within a challenging context such as the Contact Centre environment. The chapter offers a position that it is certain qualities of leaders which have more

influence on Quality of Worklife. It is suggested that leadership that is relationship focussed and is caring - such as Servant Leadership - is best suited for the Contact Centre context, and it is also proposed that the relationship between leadership and Quality of Worklife is mediated by trust in the leader, although this is discussed in more detail in Chapter three.

Finally, prominent Quality of Worklife measurement instruments, which are currently available, are presented and arguments on their suitability are tabled. The argument for the selection of the Van Laar *et al.* (2007) instrument is presented. This chapter also investigates a selection of Quality of Worklife models in relation to their theoretical dimension structure, ranging from Quality of Worklife models of the 1970's to the more contemporary, with particular attention paid to the emergence of over-arching themes and theoretical congruencies of related dimensions of the models. The Van Laar *et al.* (2007) model is once again argued to be an appropriate model due to its theoretical alignment with the context of this research.

2.2 The Origins of Quality of Worklife

The working population spend a considerable portion of their lives at work. In relation to this, there could be some debate as to whether there is any personal satisfaction gained from this time spent working. Or alternatively, if the time spent working is mostly concerned with the objective of earning remuneration then little consideration is given to whether there is any life quality experiences gained while occupied at work (Martel and Dupuis, 2006). It is these and other similar questions which are of great interest to researchers (Martel and Dupuis, 2006).

According to Goode (1989), the first mention of Quality of Worklife was made by a General Motors employee named Irving Bluestone at a conference in the 1960's. The General Motors Quality of Worklife programme that Bluestone developed was an organisationally driven initiative designed to improve employee satisfaction ratings (Goode, 1989). The Quality of Worklife programme entailed giving employees some control over their working conditions (Goode, 1989). The main purpose of the exercise however, was to assess employee needs and to try to have these needs

dealt with as best possible, in order to influence a sense of need fulfilment, and thereby influence employee satisfaction. This programme aimed to suggest that employees are important, if not the most important asset in an organisation, and so fulfilling their needs is of importance to both the employee as well as the organisation. Martel and Dupuis (2006) argue that the literature often refers back to the General Motors programme as the birth or root establishment of Quality of Worklife; and that the results from this programme have formed the foundation for Quality of Worklife. The Bluestone conference is argued to have been the catalyst to many other related research initiatives (Martel and Dupuis, 2006).

The initial works of Quality of Worklife suggested a Job Satisfaction centric viewpoint. It seemed that when Quality of Worklife was initially described by authors, what was in fact being described is a construct which was possibly closer to Job Satisfaction than Quality of Worklife. However, later works expanded the theoretical makeup of the construct, which included an element of self-actualisation (Davis and Cherns, 1975). The addition of self-actualisation suggested that needs, and in particular, higher order needs, are an important element of the Quality of Worklife construct; and also implied that self-actualisation needs are higher in order when compared to needs that satisfy only Job Satisfaction. It was argued that employee satisfaction or dissatisfaction, when measured on its own, limited the discussion to only the dimensions of Job Satisfaction and by adding the element of self-actualisation broadened the need-based structure of the construct (Davis and Cherns, 1975). Seashore (1975) supported this thinking by suggesting that the Quality of Worklife construct was a complicated psychological construct, one that is the consequence of a myriad of many interconnected variables. Seashore (1975) posited that Quality of Worklife was not only concerned about the individual factors, such as personality traits of workers, but also included extrinsic dimensions such as working environment and conditions.

According to Loscocco and Roschelle (1991), work attitudes are an embedded dimension of job satisfaction, job involvement, work commitment and Quality of Worklife. These work attitudes are influenced by the extent to which the individual employee's needs are satisfied (Loscocco and Roschelle, 1991). In its broadest sense Quality of Worklife is an indication of employees work attitudes towards need

satisfaction (Efraty and Sirgy, 1988). Efraty and Sirgy (1988) posit that these needs can primarily be grouped into four need types. i) Survival needs, which are the most basic types such as remuneration and security; ii) Social needs, which include interpersonal and membership needs; iii) Ego needs, including the recognition of value added and empowerment; and iv) Self-actualisation needs. According to Efraty and Sirgy (1988), Quality of Worklife is therefore an experience of need satisfaction in all four need groups.

Martel and Dupuis (2006) posit that between the 1970's until the late 1990's, there was much debate as to whether the Quality of Worklife construct was an objective one, or not. In other words, it was hoped that it could be constructed as an objective, organisationally focussed measure that could be influenced by programmes that the organisation developed to improve Quality of Worklife. This would mean that Quality of Worklife programmes could be designed with specified outputs that are managed through a project management process. Contrary to this thinking, questions arose as to whether Quality of Worklife was purely a subjective measure. This would imply that if Quality of Worklife was subjective, and was expressed as the perceptions of the individual employee, then this would not provide a measurement for dedicated programmes to improve elements of the job life.

Since then, many scholars have agreed with the position that Quality of Worklife is more of a subjective construct, and so have proposed that Quality of Worklife originates from an individualistic view-point (Martel and Dupuis, 2006). The idea that Quality of Worklife was more than merely a measure of organisationally focussed initiatives to boost employee satisfaction had now received some traction (Sirgy, Efraty, Siegel and Lee, 2001). This thesis acknowledges, up front, that there may be many organisationally focused, employer driven, Quality of Worklife movements, programmes, or initiatives, which focus on improving employee satisfaction ratings by purposefully or strategically focussing on certain aspects of the workplace environment. However, in the context of this work, this research supports Martel and Dupuis's (2006) viewpoint that Quality of Worklife is a subjective measure. So it is to be noted that this research deals with the individual's perception of the quality of life that is experienced in the workplace derived from the individual's attitudinal perspective, and is therefore exclusively, an individual employee's particular subjective point of reference which will be determined by survey questionnaire. It is

noted that the sample base in this study were not subjected to any prior organisationally focussed Quality of Worklife programmes. However, this does not preclude the possibility that these subjective measures cannot be used as a basis for designing Quality of Worklife interventions and monitoring their effects.

2.2.1 Quality of Worklife and Need Satisfaction

Sirgy *et al.* (2001) argue that Quality of Worklife aligns with two key theories, need satisfaction theory and spill over theory. Need satisfaction theory has its origins, or is grounded in Maslow's (1954) seminal works, with particular reference to his understanding of need hierarchy. Maslow's (1954) needs hierarchy includes lower order affiliation, security and physiological needs, as well as other higher order needs such as esteem and self-actualisation. Maslow's (1954) theory assumes that each of these needs are positioned in a hierarchical sequence, with lower order needs positioned at the bottom and the higher order needs at the top of the hierarchy. Maslow (1954) postulated that unless the preceding needs in the hierarchy were largely attended to, the needs higher up in the hierarchy could not be activated or satisfied. Similarly, Alderfer's ERG, Existence, Relatedness and Growth (1969), needs theory argues that the lower order needs of existence and relatedness precede the higher order needs of personal development or growth. This suggested that satisfaction of needs related to job security, salary and working conditions preceded those of achievement and growth (Alderfer, 1969). A hierarchically sequential need fulfilment philosophy was what drove early thinking of Quality of Worklife, and proposed that by firstly satisfying basic personal needs of employees through work orientated activities and environments, this added to better perceptions of employees' Quality of Worklife (Suttle, 1977).

2.2.1.1 Needs theory and the Contact Centre Context

Discussing needs based theories in relation to the Contact Centre context is particularly relevant for this study. Rasskazova, Ivanova and Sheldon (2016) argue that self-determination theory is a more contemporary view of Maslow's (1954) higher order needs satisfaction structure in the work environment. Self-determination theory suggests higher order psychological needs are met through the satisfaction of three criteria, the feelings of autonomy, competence and relatedness (Rasskazova *et*

al., 2016). It is argued that within the Contact Centre context, all of these self-determination theory (Rasskazova *et al.*, 2016) need criteria are significantly challenged due to the nature of the Contact Centre work, which was described in Chapter One. It is also argued that the very scripted and controlled nature of the work may affect need fulfilment with respect to feelings of autonomy. It is proposed that feelings of competence are surely to be challenged by the numerous customer complaints and the probability of making mistakes given the level of scrutiny that Contact Centre service agents are exposed to. The probability of inadequate feelings of relatedness is also highly plausible in the Contact Centre environment. As described in Chapter One, Contact Centre service agents often have feelings of isolation, as they work alone in their small cubicles, systematically engaging with one customer after the other.

It is therefore argued that needs theory is a theory that is contextually appropriate for this thesis; and that this study will be of valuable contribution to it. It is also important to note at this stage in the thesis that studies have shown that need satisfaction through leadership is possible (Chiniara and Bentein, 2016). In particular, leadership that is relational and values caring, such as a few value based leadership theories do, is positively associated with the fulfilment of the psychological needs of their employees (Chiniara and Bentein, 2016). It will later be argued that a value's based leadership theory, such as Servant Leadership theory, is a relational and caring leadership theory.

2.2.2 Spill Over Theory

As early as the 1970's, the argument that Quality of Worklife affects overall Quality of Life was already being researched and debated (Martel and Dupuis, 2006). Work is an integral part of a person's life and elements of work life will affect perceptions of a person's overall Quality of Life.

Sirgy *et al.* (2001) argue that Spill Over theory will suggest that factors that are extrinsic to the work environment will play a significant role in the determination of overall need satisfaction. Hence, combinations of dimensions such as health, both physical and psychological health, as well as personality, family, social and financial elements, all play important roles in need satisfaction (Sirgy *et al.*, 2001). Spill Over

theory suggests that the needs from these dimensions, or combinations of dimensions, spill-over to one another; or put differently, impact each other and therefore impact the perceptions of feelings of satisfaction in other domains (Sirgy *et al.*, 2001). For example, the current status of an employee's spousal relationship will have some influence on the employee's perceptions of job satisfaction, and vice versa, in other words, levels of satisfaction in one domain of life affect other domains (Sirgy *et al.*, 2001). Quality of life experienced at work at any given time is therefore an important and "integral part of an employee's overall Quality of Life" (Martel and Dupuis, 2006:343).

Sirgy (2006) suggests that overall life satisfaction is the uppermost domain of satisfaction and that all other domains, as is the case with Maslow's (1954) hierarchical needs theory, are subordinate to overall life satisfaction. However, the domains are interrelated, in that they affect each other in a bottom up spill over process. "Subordinate to the most superordinate life domain are the major life domains such as family, job, leisure, community, and so on" (Sirgy *et al.*, 2001). The more satisfaction that is perceived from lower level domains, such as community happiness, the more satisfaction will be perceived in job satisfaction and in turn, overall life satisfaction (Sirgy, 2006). Sirgy (2006) therefore suggests that Spill Over theory is hierarchical in nature.

2.2.2.1 Spill Over Theory and the Contact Centre

It could be argued that many possible examples of Spill Over theory and its effects on Contact Centre agent work could be given. As contended by Sirgy *et al.* (2001), the effects of health, both physical and psychological, will spill over to work satisfaction. As mentioned in Chapter One, it is well documented that the nature of Contact Centre work is filled with psychological ailments such as anxiety (Wegge *et al.*, 2006) brought on from the stress associated with the nature of the Contact Centre work (Holdsworth and Cartwright, 2003; Rose and Wright, 2005). It is argued that these ailments related to the nature-of-the-job, spill over and influence other domains such as employee need satisfaction. This in turn affects the employee's quality of life at work. Another example of Spill Over theory that is relevant to the Contact Centre context is work-life balance. Budhwar *et al.* (2009) argue that

Contact Centre frontline service agents often struggle to balance work expectations and personal life. Agents are expected to work according to customer demand, and this is sometimes outside of traditional office hours (Reynolds, 2003). Added to this, shift work, by its very nature, will mean that agents will at times be working into the evenings or very early mornings, when their families are at home. Work commitments, due to the nature of the work of the Contact Centre agent, will therefore spill over into what is generally viewed as traditional family time, impacting the work-life balance of the Contact Centre agent. It is therefore argued that the root theory of Quality of Worklife theory, Spill Over theory, is contextually appropriate for this thesis and that this study, in turn, is also positioned to be of valuable contribution to it.

2.2.3 Segmentation, Compensation and Goal Setting Theory

There are several other theories that have contributed to the development and understanding of the Quality of Worklife construct, these are segmentation theory, compensation theory and goal setting theory (Martel and Dupuis, 2006; Sirgy *et al.*, 2001; Sirgy, 2006).

The Segmentation Theory approach according to Sirgy *et al.* (2001) explains that an employee may also choose to segment issues of dissatisfaction in one domain and forcibly not let it affect the other. Martel and Dupuis (2006) argue that this segmentation approach distances employee perceptions and emotions of life at work, and life outside of the work environment, so much so that they are deemed unrelated.

Alternatively, Martel and Dupuis (2006) argue that according to Compensation Theory, domain compensation can also occur. Domain compensation occurs for example when a specific domain, such as when the work domain experiences high levels of dissatisfaction; this is compensated by the stimulating of other domains, or vice versa (Martel and Dupuis, 2006). The idea that employees can become completely immersed in their jobs and work when experiencing other domain issues, such as marital problems, and by so doing this, block off the negative effects of home life, is not uncommon and is argued to be a compensation approach (Martel

and Dupuis, 2006). In contrast, Martel and Dupuis (2006) present the accommodation approach, which argues that if an employee voluntarily gives up time or effort in one domain to satisfy the load of another domain, they are voluntarily accommodating the sacrifice of one domain for another.

Sirgy (2006) argues that Goal Setting Theory posits that need satisfaction can also be attained through the setting and realising of goals. The feelings of achievement that employees feel after goals have been attained are the basis of need satisfaction through goal setting (Sirgy, 2006). Sirgy (2006) argues that if the organisation understands the employee's goals, or is able to influence the setting or achieving of these goals, employees could start to experience better Quality of Worklife.

However, these viewpoints of Quality of Worklife are not universally accepted, or acknowledged by all scholars (Losscocco and Roschelle, 1991). To ensure construct clarity, it is therefore important to review exactly how previous scholars have defined Quality of Worklife within the literature.

2.3 Quality of Worklife Construct Clarification

There seems to be little agreement within the literature on a universally accepted definition of Quality of Worklife (Sirgy *et al.*, 2001). Most researchers do agree however, that the Quality of Worklife construct is a complex multidimensional one, affected or influenced by a myriad of interconnected variables (Sirgy *et al.*, 2001, Sirgy, 2006, Totawar and Nambudiri, 2014).

Early popular efforts to define Quality of Worklife include the seminal works of Walton (1974). Walton (1974) argued that Quality of Worklife can be thought of as need satisfaction in the work place on a very broad scale. The need satisfaction based theory which Walton (1974) was referring to, superseded the earlier rationale that there was little differentiation between Quality of Worklife and Job Satisfaction (Walton, 1974). A Job Satisfaction biased view of Quality of Worklife argued that if organisations are to concentrate on categories of the job, which are traditionally designed to enhance the job experience - such as job enrichment, job enlargement

or equal opportunities concepts - employees will experience better Quality of Worklife (Walton, 1974). In contrast, Walton (1974), proposed that it is rather the entire work experience that makes up an employee's reference for Quality of Worklife, and, that this went beyond Job Satisfaction criteria to include various physiological and psychological needs. Moreover, Walton (1974) posited that Quality of Worklife consisted of separate need dimensions, arguing that an employee will experience better Quality of Worklife if the following matters are addressed: the employee is perceived to be fairly remunerated; the employee feels that they are working in an environment which is not harmful to them; the employee feels that they are able to grow and develop themselves within the working environment; he or she feel their rights are protected and that they are treated with dignity; there is a balance of work and life commitments, and their employer is a socially responsible organisation. Walton's (1974) definition therefore clarifies the understanding of the Quality of Worklife a little more by broadening the scope of the construct. Glaser (1976) agreed with Walton's (1974) delineation as he also concluded that Quality of Worklife is a construct that did more than merely focus on dimensions solely associated with job satisfaction, Glaser (1976) suggested that Quality of Worklife also included additional job dimensions such as adequate remuneration, favourable working conditions and job security.

Nadler and Lawler (1983) contend that the construct of Quality of Worklife, in its broadest sense, is the sum of all the employees' attitudes in relation towards the organisation and the level to which the organisation affects these employees, on any dimension be it in a positive or negative context. Nadler and Lawler (1983) suggest that organisations in which employees experience high levels of Quality of Worklife, are effective in realising organisational goals; as well as understanding the importance of employee inclusivity in both the problem solving and decision-making processes. Nadler and Lawler (1983:26) posit that Quality of Worklife is a construct that can be summed up as continuously "thinking about people, work and organisations". Nadler and Lawler (1983) point out however, what Quality of Worklife is not, and argue that it is not an organisationally driven indicator aimed at solely producing better shareholder results, but rather is a concept which can generally be described as how the total work environment influences the people who work in it.

The people-centric view of Quality of Worklife is largely supported by Straw and Heckscher (1984), as they argue that it is widely agreed that the human resource is the most important organisational resource, and it is this resource that makes the most significant difference with respect to both the organisations performance and its operational longevity. It is therefore critically important for the organisation to be constantly preoccupied with the wellbeing of this resource. Straw and Heckscher (1984) posit that Quality of Worklife implies that if you treat employees with respect, and help them to grow within the organisation as well as within themselves, by enhancing feelings of self-respect; this heightens the levels of their perceived quality of their work life.

Robbins (1989) suggests that employee perceptions of the quality of their work life increases when they feel included in the decision making processes which affect their working lives, while being cognisant and addressing their extrinsic and intrinsic job needs. Similarly, Kaushik and Tonk (2008) argue that Quality of Worklife is a perception of the environment in which the employee perceives they are working in, what rewards come from the work experience, and the combination of the perceived experiences of the workplace itself. These perceptions are internally contrasted with the level to which they fulfil a wide range of employee needs. It is this aggregated perceived employee need satisfaction that is Quality of Worklife (Kaushik and Tonk, 2008).

Efraty and Sirgy (1988) suggested that Quality of Worklife could be defined as organisational need satisfaction. Need satisfaction in the workplace has direct implications on employee's general perceived work satisfaction and has direct consequences on performance (Efraty and Sirgy, 1988). Efraty and Sirgy (1988:44) argue that Quality of Worklife can be explained through the observation of a combination of the following aspects: Quality of Worklife is observed in an employee who feels i) they have strong identification with the organisation, ii) their "survival, social, ego and self-actualisation" needs are met, iii) they are involved in their jobs, iv) they appear to be intrinsically motivated to perform well and vi) they are not disenfranchised or feel out-casted, but rather seem to experience a meaningful relationship with the organisational community.

Early Quality of Worklife arguments proposed that employees were often described as “passive reactors”, where the need satisfaction of these employees could be moderated through the job itself, as well as changes in the work environment (Loscocco and Roschelle, 1991:184). However, a different more complex set of needs fulfilment is required, and it is suggested that there are not always a standard set of objective requirements to be satisfied which would ensure happiness in the workplace (Loscocco and Roschelle, 1991). Moreover, Loscocco and Roschelle (1991) posit that the construct of Quality of Worklife is informed by both work commitment and job satisfaction and have individual and structural influences. Individual influences such as the type of personality of an employee or the age or level of education or which gender they are and even which family role they play, are all factors that influence the perceived quality of work life. However, promotional opportunities and characteristics of the job itself as well as how the organisation is contextually perceived by outsiders also influences the employee’s Quality of Worklife on a structural level (Loscocco and Roschelle, 1991).

According to Yousuf (1996), Quality of Worklife is a holistic personal assessment of everything that is work related, from feelings of satisfaction with salary levels, to the total work environment and employee experiences in the work place. This holistic viewpoint is shared by Sirgy *et al.* (2001:242), who define Quality of Worklife as “employee satisfaction with a variety of needs through resources, activities, and outcomes stemming from participation in the workplace”.

As previously mentioned, Martel and Dupuis (2006) suggest that the constructs of Quality of Life and Quality of Worklife overlap and are interconnected. Quality of Life is described as the level at which people perceive themselves, with respect to the attainment of a predetermined hierarchically structured set of goals. Within this hierarchical structure, Quality of Worklife is a specified domain, and only one of many Quality of Life domains. Quality of Life is therefore attained and reflected though the employee’s Quality of Life, organisational performance and societal functioning in general.

Up until this point in the literature, common threads seem to emerge. One key thread being that Quality of Worklife is a needs-satisfaction-based concept. It is also a domain within the broader domain of Quality of Life. Quality of Life has previously

been theorised to be, very broadly, impacted by several other life domains which influence perceptions of the quality of life experienced at work. The definition of Quality of Worklife of Van Laar *et al.*, (2007:326) argues that Quality of Worklife is a domain within overall quality of life, and that it is influenced by work in the “widest context in which an employee would evaluate the influence of work on their life”. The varied dimensions of Quality of Worklife according to Van Laar *et al.* (2007), which will be discussed in some detail later on in the chapter, are: general wellbeing, stress at work, home-work interface, control at work, job career satisfaction and working conditions. The Van Laar *et al.* (2007) description of Quality of Worklife is the definition which this research will be adopting. It is argued that the work of Van Laar *et al.* (2007) incorporates and combines earlier ideas of Quality of Worklife, such as Need and Spill Over theories, and is argued to present a holistic and comprehensive understanding of the construct.

There are other more recent works, such as Yadav and Khanna (2014), which argue that Quality of Worklife can be summarised as a theoretical concept which defines the relationship between the employee and the organisation. Yadav and Khanna (2014) posit that the strength of this relationship impacts other domains, such as family life, and this has a bearing on the perceptions of work life of the employee. The authors explain that employee’s consequently feel that work is more than just a place that you got to in order to earn a pay cheque every month. Workers have needs that go beyond the employment-remuneration paradigm and so Quality of Worklife is explained as the construct that is depicted as needs that are satisfied in the work place. However, Quality of Worklife is also a key human resource indicator, as it is a measure of the quality of life that employees experience while working for an organisation (Totawar and Nambudiri, 2014). So notwithstanding these contributions, they do not seem very different from the works of Van Laar *et al.*, (2007), where the key criteria of the construct relates to need satisfaction at work, influenced by the spill over from other domains. It is for this reason that the Van Laar *et al.* (2007) definition remains appropriate for this thesis.

2.4 The Differentiation of Job Satisfaction, Employee Well Being, Wellness and Quality of Worklife

It is significant within the context of this research to note that similarities between certain theoretical concepts exist within the literature, and it is therefore important to ensure that there is sufficient construct clarity when referring to Quality of Worklife so as to eliminate any conceptual ambiguity. This section of the chapter discusses whether there are any significant differences between the constructs of Job Satisfaction, Employee Wellbeing, Employee Wellness and Quality of Worklife; or whether researchers can use the terms interchangeably or even as synonyms due to similarities in their theoretical construction.

2.4.1 Quality of Worklife and Job Satisfaction

Locke (1969) suggests that Job Satisfaction can be articulated through the articulation of employee perceptions, of what they want from their job and contrasting this with what they believe they are getting. If the employee believes he is receiving enough of what he perceives he wants from his job or place of employment, then he would be satisfied. Moreover, Greenberg and Baron (2000) argue that the way that the employee feels about his job can be described as Job Satisfaction. In other words, how an employee summarises the evaluation of his feelings towards his work or place of work is described as Job Satisfaction. Robbins (2003) suggests that Job Satisfaction is an attitudinal construct that is determined by an employee's attitude towards his work. Whilst the similarities with respect to the perceived satisfaction of needs of employees, is seemingly attributed to both the constructs of Job Satisfaction and Quality of Worklife, it is in the factor or dimension structure that the difference is most notable.

Nel, Gerber, Van Dyk, Haasbroek, Schultz, Sono, and Werner (2001) suggest that factors associated with Job Satisfaction have two key dimensions: on the one hand there are individual factors and on the other, job or organisationally related ones. The organisational factors relate to aspects such as the job content, the type of supervision and level of relationship with fellow colleagues experienced and what type of conditions they are working in (Nel *et al.*, 2001). According to Aydogdu and Asikgil (2011), individual factors that influence satisfaction include variables such as

age and gender. Females and older employees are seemingly more satisfied than their male and younger counterparts (Aydogdu and Asikgil, 2011). Moreover, Aydogdu and Asikgil, (2011) posit the level of experience, organisational commitment and level or type of education all play a significant role in determining perceived satisfaction.

It is important to note however, that Quality of Worklife includes all that is Job Satisfaction, in that Job satisfaction is one facet of Quality of Worklife. So the Quality of Worklife construct is differentiated owing to the fact that contemporary Quality of Worklife models have Job Satisfaction as one individual factor, of a few additional factors (Van Laar *et al.*, 2007). It must be acknowledged however, that Job Satisfaction is a complex construct in its own right, with a variety of theories, models and measures which describe it (Roos and Van Eeden, 2008), and therefore Job Satisfaction is described slightly differently in various Quality of Worklife models, which will be discussed in greater detail later on in this chapter. In addition to Job Satisfaction being a separate dimension of Quality of Worklife, another important differentiating element to note between the constructs is that Job Satisfaction only considers needs and satisfaction within the work domain, whereas Quality of Worklife acknowledges domain spill-over.

2.4.2 Quality of Worklife and Employee Well-Being

There are many similarities between the constructs of Quality of Worklife and Employee Well-Being, which is sometimes referred to as Occupational Well-being or Work-Related Well-being. The literature often uses the terms interchangeably, as within the works of Warr *et al.* (1979). Warr *et al.*'s (1979) study of the psychological or work related well-being of employee's, produced a scale to measure Quality of Worklife. There is therefore an underlying assumption in the literature to imply that Employee Well-Being and Quality of Worklife are the same constructs. An example of this is the works of Juniper, Bellamy and White (2010), where a study of Employee Well-Being of call centre employees used both Sirgy *et al.*'s (2001) Quality of Worklife and Van Laar *et al.*'s (2007) Work-related Quality of Life Scale and referred to them as validated Employee Well-Being measures. The assumption is therefore again made that Employee Well-Being and Quality of Worklife are synonyms.

Sirgy (2006:8) defines Employee Well-Being “as a state of life satisfaction, happiness, and subjective wellbeing directly related to job satisfaction”. Bhullar, Schutte and Malouff (2013:1) suggest Well-Being include outcomes that “encompass life satisfaction, positive affect, psychological well-being, social well-being, subjective physical health, and absence of depression, anxiety, and stress”. Both definitions assume wellbeing to be of a subjective nature. The definitions point to pleasure attainment, but Sirgy (2006) argues that Employee Well-Being does not measure or consider the element of Job Satisfaction within the construct. Therefore Job Satisfaction is not a dimension of Employee Well-Being, but rather that Employee Well-Being is the level of happiness and contentment that is derived from satisfaction within the work-life domain. It is important to note however, that similarly to the Job Satisfaction differentiation mentioned earlier, the Quality of Worklife construct includes Employee Well-Being as a separate dimension. The Employee Well-Being construct therefore differs from the Quality of Worklife construct due to the fact that Employee Well-Being is considered one of several other dimensions of Quality of Worklife. Employee Well-Being is therefore one individual factor of Quality of Worklife (Van Laar *et al.*, 2007).

2.4.3 Quality of Work life and Wellness

Dana and Griffin (1999) argue that Wellness is a construct that is reflective of the employee’s entire being. Wellness relates to an aggregated happiness, contentment, or life satisfaction, no matter where or what the employee is engaged in (Dana and Griffin, 1999). The consequences of wellness include employee energy, motivation and productivity and a healthy demeanour (Sieberhagen, Rothmann and Pienaar, 2009). Wellness reflects need satisfaction in both work and non-work related life domains; however the construct differentiates itself from Quality of Worklife by including measures of positive health, such as favourable mental, physical and physiological employee health aspects (Dana and Griffin, 1999). Moreover, Wellness is in essence a construct that is less focussed on the work related quality of life aspects, and is more associated with general good health, sound relationships and feelings that an individual exists for a particular purpose that adds significant value to the world (Sieberhagen *et al.*, 2009).

2.4.4 Appropriateness of the Quality of Worklife Construct

It is argued that the more appropriate construct to adopt for this thesis is Quality of Worklife. This argument is made on the grounds that Quality of Worklife includes job satisfaction and general wellbeing, as well as elements of wellness as individual dimensions included within the construct (Van Laar *et al.*, 2007). Van Laar *et al.* (2007), argue that the dimensions of Quality of Worklife are: general wellbeing, stress at work, home-work interface, control at work, job career satisfaction and working conditions. The inclusion of the varied dimensions of stress at work, home-work interface and control at work, which will be discussed later in this chapter, further add to the relevancy of the construct to the context of the study, and are not evident in the constructs of Job Satisfaction, Employee Wellbeing and Employee Wellness. It is for these reasons that Quality of Worklife has been chosen as the construct of choice for this study.

2.5 A Systems Understanding of Quality of Worklife

This section of the chapter discusses the inter-relationships of various variables in relation to the Quality of Worklife construct. These variables are reported to either play an antecedent, moderator, mediating or consequential role in relation to the Quality of Worklife construct. Figure 2.1 below displays a systems view of these interrelationships, and their positions and relationships to one another as reported in the literature. The systems view that is proposed suggests that the relationships with Quality of Worklife are contextual, in that Quality of Worklife exists in a context that may vary or differ depending on the job, sector or industry. The context is ultimately reflective of the type or nature of the job that the employee performs in relation to the demands of the job and conditions under which this work is done.

Contextual elements such as mental stressors, supervision received and working conditions are all pertinent to the context of this research. The nature of the Contact Centre job is usually associated with a job context where employees are confronted with routine, repetitive work (Connell and Hannif, 2008; Gorjup, Valverde and Ryan, 2008); and where Contact Centre agents are confronted with numerous and often stressful customer interactions (Ashill *et al.*, 2009). A high percentage of Contact

Centre customer interactions are complaint or query-driven. Contact Centre agents are also very highly monitored as well as routinely assessed (Ashil *et al.*, 2009). Contact Centre Service agents need to possess the correct skill and show the required empathy to appease their customers (White and Roos, 2005) and service their calls. Therefore, working in the customer service frontline environment requires significant emotional labour (Cheung and Tang, 2009). Agents within the Contact Centre are often seen as the *face* of the organisation and are therefore expected to communicate, with proficiency (White and Roos, 2005) with customers on all of their queries; and agents are expected to meet these customer service expectations in a calm and collected manner (Grandey *et al.*, 2004). Added to this stress, part of the query resolution falls out of the immediate control of the agent (Nangu, 2013). According to Holdsworth and Cartwright (2003), compared to most other office jobs, Contact Centre frontline jobs are more stressful, less satisfying, and employees report experiencing less empowerment.

It has been touted as one of the more stressful jobs in the so called traditional *white-collar* workplace (Holdsworth and Cartwright, 2003). It is also well documented that the Contact Centre frontline job is often associated with high employee burnout rates (Budhwar *et al.*, 2009; Ashill *et al.*, 2009). Moreover, very high stress rates are also common, and are generally as a result of leadership pressures, performance expectations, customer demands and the inability to resolve interactions with the first contact (Ashill *et al.*, 2009). Some scholars argue that the Contact Centre closely resembles a panopticon design as the frontline Contact Centre employee is constantly under the scrutiny of his supervisory staff (Fernie and Metcalf, 1998).

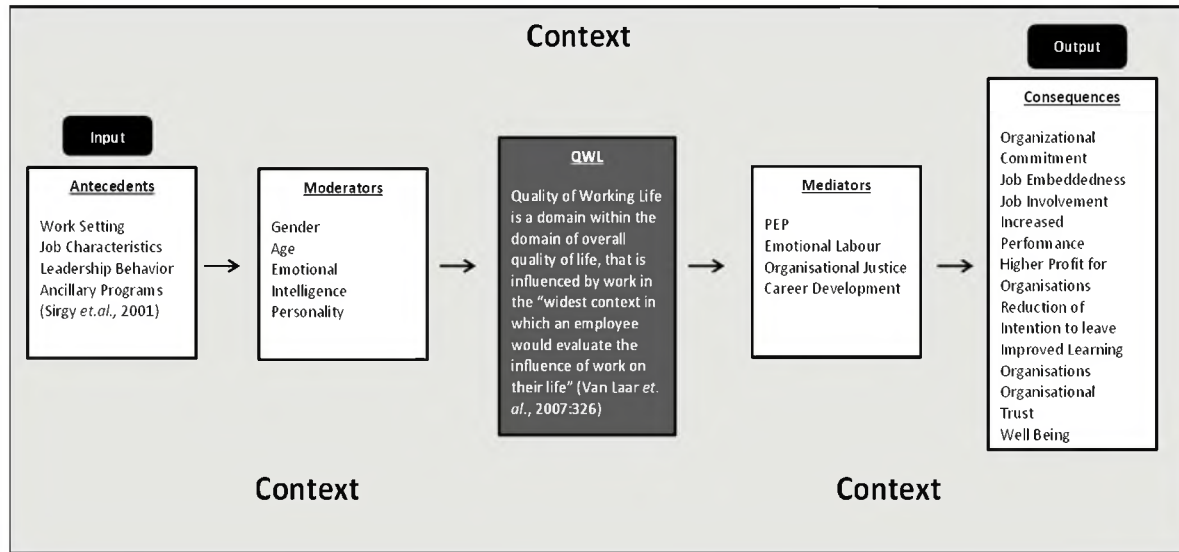
It is assumed that in any context, there will exist either abundant or deficit levels of employee Quality of Worklife. It is argued that this assumption can be explained by virtue of the context. In other words, jobs that have generally poor working conditions and which operate in a poor working environment are argued to more probably have deficit levels of Quality of Worklife (Parise and Soler, 2016). Following this logic, it is suggested that this research is conducted in a setting is that has deficit levels of Quality of Worklife. It is suggested that in the Contact Centre contextual environment, which this research is conducted and which has been described above, a deficit Quality of Worklife context exists (Hannif, Burgess, and Connell, 2008). This presupposition of deficit levels of Quality of Worklife experienced in the research context, is based on the extensive evidence in the literature, which portrays the

frontline customer service environment of the Contact Centre as a difficult, strenuous and stressful place, and where entry level employees with lower skills generally tend to work (Ashill and Rod, 2011; Batt, Holman, and Holtgrewe, 2009). It is therefore expected, within the context of this research, to find an environment where the employees perceive deficit levels of Quality of Worklife rather than abundant levels.

To explain the proposed system-model thinking, variables that affect Quality of Worklife in antecedent role behaviour are work setting, work characteristics, ancillary programmes and leadership behaviour (Sirgy *et al.*, 2001). It is also argued that gender, age, emotional intelligence, personality and trust moderate Quality of Worklife. Quality of Worklife is said to mediate the relationship between family-to-work interference to emotional labour, organisational justice and job satisfaction as well as career development and psychological well-being. Several organisational consequences of Quality of Worklife include organizational commitment, perceived external prestige, job embeddedness, job involvement, increased performance, higher profit for organisations, reduction of intention to leave, improved learning abilities of organisations and organisational trust, all of which will be discussed in some detail below.

Figure 2.1 displays this systems view in an illustrated format in relation to their conceptual theoretical position as well as their relationship with one another.

Figure: 2.1 Systems Model of QWL



Source: Developed from literature by Author

The systems model illustrates the relationship of the antecedents of Quality of Worklife that are qualified by moderating variables. Mediators of Quality of Worklife then mediate relationships between Quality of Worklife and its consequences, in a systems input and output flow pattern. This system is influenced within a context in which Quality of Worklife is experienced or measured. What follows is a discussion of each of these variables of the Quality of Worklife system's model.

2.5.1 Potential Consequences of Quality of Worklife

The importance of the positive consequences that are realised through the employees perceiving good Quality of Worklife cannot be understated due to the significant impacts that they have on the organisation. Moreover, notwithstanding that the consequences of Quality of Worklife are multi-faceted; both from the individual and organisation's point of view, the importance that they hold for the organisation and the employee cannot be undervalued. This is evident when examining the literature on Quality of Worklife with respect to the positive organisational consequences which were derived from empirical studies conducted in a multitude of environments. There is much evidence in the literature describing the positive consequences of higher levels of Quality of Worklife, thereby corroborating its importance within the organisational setting (Fields and Thacker,

1992; Huang, Lawler, and Lei 2007; Igbaria, Parasuraman and Badawy, 1994; Lau, 2000; Lee, Dai, Park and McCreary's, 2013; Sirgy *et al.*, 2008; Nair, 2013; Zin, 2004).

Performance management is a key management function within any organisation and studies show favourable correlations between higher Quality of Worklife and higher levels of job performance (Huang *et al.*, 2007). This suggests that Quality of Worklife is a construct that when properly acknowledged, and given the importance and focus it deserves, can be vastly beneficial to organisations via improvements to productivity levels. Moreover, organisations that have employees with higher perceptions of their Quality of Worklife show abilities of producing higher profitability ratios over those who may experience lessor Quality of Worklife (Lau, 2000). These organisations also tend to show better returns on asset ratios, making Quality of Worklife an extremely effective productivity antecedent (Lau, 2000).

High turnover in any organisation is a costly endeavour due to re-training and organisational knowledge acquisition considerations. Huang *et al.* (2007) argues that Quality of Worklife positively affects employee turnover, by decreasing the intention-to-quit. Lee *et al.* (2013) study corroborates this finding and argues that improved Quality of Worklife can significantly reduce the intention-to-leave of employees. Lower turnover results suggest less cost and effort in recruitment and training.

Zhao, Sun, Cao, Li, Duan, Fan, and Liu (2013:781), argue that Job Embeddedness, which is “an overall construct capturing the combined psychological, personal and professional factors that keep people from leaving their job”, also had a significant positive relationship with higher levels of perceived Quality of Worklife, in that employees, who rated their individual perceptions of their own Quality of Worklife higher, showed increasing levels of Job Embeddedness which in turn proved to be positively associated with commitment to their organisations.

Quality of Worklife also showed a positive relationship with Perceived External Prestige. Ojedokun, Idemudia and Desouza (2015) argue that Perceived External Prestige is determined by how organisational outsiders, perceive your job and the organisation you work for. This perception is gained from general interactions

between employees and the public on the subject of your organisation. The more organisational outsiders seem to revere the organisation, the more an employee will acquire feelings of prestige, due their association with the organisation (Ojedokun *et al.*, 2015). Employees with revered jobs working in reputable organisations will therefore get a fair amount of associated prestige and will, often openly mention who they work for and what they do. Ojedokun *et al.* (2015) also argue that Organisational Commitment was also positively affected by Quality of Worklife.

Moreover, Igbaria *et al.* (1994) demonstrated that Quality of Worklife was positively related to Job involvement, however they argued that relative caution should be taken, in that in some instances, and at the very other end of the scale, very high levels of Job involvement was counterproductive to Quality of Worklife and produced significant systems of stress. It is implied therefore that a positive relationship does exist between Job involvement and Quality of Worklife; however, a ceiling point of the level of involvement may tip the employee to experience the counter effects of Quality of Worklife, which may result in job stress (Igbaria *et al.*, 1994).

Darafsh (2012) measured a significant relationship between Quality of Worklife and Learning Organisations. Darafsh (2012) proposed that organisations whose employees experience better Quality of Worklife, are able to change and adapt more easily by embracing a learning culture through systems thinking (Senge, 1990) more effectively than those organisations that experience a poorer Quality of Worklife. Moreover, Fields and Thacker (1992) and Zin (2004) argue that the levels of Quality of Worklife and in particular, factors such as working conditions and growth and development within Quality of Worklife have a positive relationship with levels of organisational commitment.

Lastly, and very importantly, it is critical to note that the Quality of Worklife has far reaching effects on the workers life, in that impacts the wellbeing of an individual outside of the work domain. As previously mentioned, Quality of Worklife can impact an individual's overall quality of life both positively and negatively (Sirgy *et al.*, 2008). Hence, it is suggested that higher levels of Quality of Worklife have positive spill over effects onto the perceived quality of life of employees, the converse of this is also unfortunately true, that lower levels of Quality of Worklife will have negative spill over

effects onto the perceived quality of life of employees (Sirgy *et al.*, 2008). Management practitioners are therefore well advised to take cognisance of this within their individual organisational contexts should they want to improve the level of Quality of Work Life for all of their employees. Moreover, higher levels of the Quality of Worklife construct within organisations produces productive, dedicated and happy employees (Sirgy *et al.*, 2001), so it would seem counter intuitive for organisations to ignore it. It would seem that Quality of Worklife should be an extremely important and prevalent management consideration in organisational all contexts, more so however where it is suspected that a deficit context is more likely to exist, such as the Contact Centre environment. To this end, this study is positioned to find a solution that will help organisations improve their employees Quality of Worklife and subsequently benefit from its direct positive consequences, even in contexts that would traditionally be described as environments with lower levels of Quality of Worklife such as the Contact Centre frontline environment.

As previously mentioned, acknowledging that Quality of Worklife is a construct of organisational importance is a critical management objective, particularly within the Contact Centre context. It is plausible to therefore argue that organisations must be aware of their employee's levels of Quality of Worklife, and this is achieved by regularly measuring it. Only then can areas of concern be addressed in order to realise the benefits that higher levels of the construct produce. Moreover, it is also plausible to suggest that if managers acknowledge the importance of Quality of Worklife and are cognisant of what it can do for the organisation; then surely the question of how to improve the Quality of Worklife of employees becomes a primary management objective.

The next section of the chapter describes antecedents to Quality of Worklife as well as variables that moderate this relationship.

2.5.2 Potential Antecedents of Quality of Worklife

Given the importance of higher levels of Quality of Worklife within organisations and its consequential positive benefits, antecedents of the construct become of both academic and applied interest. Using Sirgy *et al.*'s (2001) theoretical framework of the antecedents and consequences of Quality of Worklife, Sirgy *et al.* (2001:249) argue that the antecedents of Quality of Worklife can be described in four main categories, these are: "work environment, job requirements, ancillary programmes and supervisory behaviour". Each of these is discussed below.

2.5.2.1 Work Environment

Working conditions and the work environment are directly associated with Quality of Worklife (Sirgy *et al.*, 2001). Sirgy *et al.* (2001) argue that these elements have direct influence on, and are therefore antecedent to, Quality of Worklife. Independent variables which affect the work setting, such as control at work, gregarious support as well as having sufficient tools and resources to complete the job, impact the perceptions of the work environment (Aronsson and Blom, 2015). Since the conception of the Quality of Worklife construct, considerations pertaining to the health and safety of employees were considered an important dimension of Quality of Worklife (Walton, 1974). Walton also argued that perceived fair remuneration was also an important element of Quality of Worklife and a work setting variable that impacts the employee views on his work environment.

Other considerations such as the structure of the work environment, pertaining to when employees are scheduled to work has an impact on their work environment. Notwithstanding that shift work may influence the quality of life dynamic, due to the employee working time slots which are traditionally enjoyed by other members of society as *off* times, shift work can also impact the physiological wellbeing of an employee (Culpepper, 2010). A disorder known as shift work disorder is argued to affect performance, quality of life, as well as, general health of an employee (Culpepper, 2010). This is particularly pertinent to this study as many frontline employees working in Contact Centres have to work variations of shifts and different shift patterns.

2.5.2.2 Job Requirements

According to Mayfield (2013), job task or requirements have been included in many theoretical organisational outcome models, as antecedents to these outcomes. There is also mention within the literature that there is an association between job characteristics and employee need satisfaction (Mayfield, 2013).

Hackman and Lawler (1971) posit that there are five core job characteristics, namely; skill variety, autonomy, task identity, task significance and feedback; and that there is a positive association between these five job characteristic core elements and need satisfaction. This theory was further researched in Hackman and Oldham's (1975) development of the job diagnostic survey. Hackman and Oldham (1975) proposed a theoretical model that illustrated the effects of the core job dimensions on particular organisational outcomes. Hackman and Oldham (1975) argued that these dimensions were in fact antecedent to certain critical psychological states of employees, and that there were several organisational consequences of these psychological states. Hackman and Oldham (1975) suggested that the dimension of *skill variety*, explained the condition where employees were able to use a multitude of skills, experience and knowledge within their job environments to complete the task of the job. *Task identity* referred to a dimension where employees were able to complete the task from beginning to end within the realm of the job (Hackman and Oldham, 1975). *Task Significance* is a dimension that speaks to the worth and relevance of the task (Hackman and Oldham, 1975). Task Significance relates to how the job affects or impacts the people and the environment around the employee (Hackman and Oldham, 1975). Hackman and Oldham (1975) explain that the dimension of *Autonomy* suggested that employees have freedom to make decisions that affect elements of how, when and where the work is carried out, these elements are not prescribed to the employee; he/she is free to choose how the task will be carried out. The last dimension of job characteristics according to Hackman and Oldham (1975) is that of *Feedback*, and illustrates a scenario of employee's receiving gratification when enabled to witness the progress of their labour.

If there is significant fulfilment of the core dimensions of the job characteristics, this has a positive relationship with certain critical psychological states which include experiencing feelings of meaningfulness, increased feelings of responsibility and

accountability for the job and a heightened sense of effects of the work and the results they produce (Hackman and Oldham, 1975). According to Hackman and Oldham (1975), the consequences of these psychological feelings include increased job satisfaction and higher levels of motivation.

2.5.2.3 Ancillary Programmes

Ancillary programmes are initiatives that are dedicated to improving Quality of Worklife, and act as antecedent to Quality of Worklife (Sirgy *et al.*, 2001). Organisations can focus their improvements of Quality of Worklife through dedicated programmes designed to address specific dimensions of Quality of Worklife. These programmes can take on a variety of forms and aim to address more specific Quality of Worklife areas. For example, programmes that address working conditions such as work hours, or work from home policies (Sirgy *et al.*, 2001). Quality of Worklife programmes that are developed in collaboration with the employees of the organisations hold significant value for the employee and the organisation, in that employees are able to meaningfully influence aspects of the Quality of Worklife programme. The Quality of Worklife programme becomes a channel for which workers are able to influence operational and working conditions decision making (Katz, Kochan, and Gobeille, 1983). Due to this inclusive nature of Quality of Worklife programmes, Katz *et al.* (1983) argue that such programmes can potentially play important labour relations functions, as they tend to help to build relationships with management.

Sirgy *et al.* (2008) posit that Quality of Worklife programmes that relate to the needs of the employees with respect to *Working Conditions* include: decentralised organizational structures which reduce role stressors, provides mechanisms to improve teamwork, provides parallel structures by enhancing resource allocation and availability, as well as ensuring an ethical corporate mission and culture. Quality of Worklife programmes related to the *job itself* include: participation in decision-making and job enrichment programmes (Sirgy *et al.*, 2008). *Leadership* Quality of Worklife programmes, according to Sirgy *et al.* (2008), include: total quality management initiatives, regular performance feedback and role clarity, as well as ethical leadership training (Sirgy *et al.*, 2008). On the *organisational* level, Quality of

Worklife programmes include ensuring that there are sufficient promotional opportunities and incentive schemes (Sirgy *et al.*, 2008).

2.5.2.4 Supervisor behaviour (leadership behaviour)

Intuitively, the type of leadership that someone is exposed to, in some way will affect the quality of life that they experience at work. However, albeit that there may be a relationship between leadership and Quality of Worklife (or put differently, that leadership behaviour is antecedent to and therefore affects an employee's Quality of Worklife), there is little empirical evidence in the literature which has investigated the relationship between the two constructs. Sirgy *et al.* (2001) and Nanjundeswaraswamy and Swamy (2015) do however state quite categorically that the type of leadership, or supervisor behaviour, an employee is exposed to, has a substantial impact on the Quality of Worklife of the employee, but his research does not expand in any detail on how the style of leadership affects the Quality of Worklife.

Notwithstanding Sirgy *et al.*'s (2001) contributions to the premise that leadership influences Quality of Worklife, there is also a substantial amount of research describing how particular leadership behaviours influence individual factors or dimensions of Quality of Worklife. These include employee job satisfaction, stress at work, general wellbeing, amongst others (Epitropaki and Martin, 2005; Podsakoff *et al.*, 1982; Stander and Rothman, 2008), but there is very little evidence of research on leadership styles and Quality of Worklife. It is here where this thesis proposes to make a specific contribution to knowledge by empirically investigating a particular leadership style and its effects on Quality of Worklife. But first, it is important to acknowledge the work that has already been conducted between leadership and the separate dimensions of Quality of Worklife.

Podsakoff *et al.* (1982) study argues that the leadership behaviour has a direct influence on employee satisfaction. This focus of the research was particularly pertinent to the dimension of reward behaviour, in that it argues those leaders who display attributes that champion the positive reinforcement of employees by actively and openly rewarding good behaviours, increase satisfaction of employees (Podsakoff *et al.*, 1982). Supervisory style and job satisfaction were also found to

have a significant relationship with one another (Tease, 1983). Tease (1983) argued that supervisors, who seek to actively form bonds and continuously look to improve relationships with their employees, improve levels of satisfaction.

Seltzer and Numerof's (1986) study produced results which confirmed that the supervisory style and relationships formed with subordinates are important considerations in reducing stress at work. Seltzer and Numerof (1986) found there to be a direct inverse relationship between considerate supervisors and organisational stressors.

Cohen, Change and Ledford (1997) argued that employees that are led in a self-management leadership style show higher levels of employee satisfaction over those which experienced conventional employee/supervisor relationships. The dimension of self-management increases feelings of control at work as employees feel that they are able influence their work in a meaningful manner, and are empowered to make decisions appropriate to goal acquisition (Cohen *et al.*, 1997).

Employees also use Implicit Leadership theory to judge a manager's performance against their presupposed ideas and in contrast to what good leadership behaviours or traits ought to be (Epitropaki and Martin, 2005). Implicit Leadership theory suggests that an employee's preconceived personal viewpoint is that a leader's traits should include behaviours such as thoughtfulness, warmth, sensitivity, amongst many others. If those behaviours are demonstrated by a leader, this corroborates the employee's presupposition that the leader is doing the right thing to satisfy his needs and this positively impacts the quality of leader-member exchanges of employees and directly influences staff satisfaction and well-being (Epitropaki and Martin, 2005).

So notwithstanding that there has been empirical evidence found to suggest leadership behaviour, or that, a particular style affects various dimensions of Quality of Worklife, there is very little evidence linking a particular leadership style to Quality of Worklife as a construct. The most contemporary research on the topic is the study of Nanjundeswaraswamy and Swamy (2015). They argue that Quality of Worklife is dependent on leadership style. Nanjundeswaraswamy and Swamy's (2015) research illustrated a dependent relationship between transactional and transformational

leadership styles and factors of Quality of Worklife. The results of Nanjundeswaraswamy and Swamy (2015) showed a highly correlated and significant relationship between transformational leadership and Quality of Worklife, more so than the relationship between transactional leadership and Quality of Worklife. The study illustrated that managers or supervisors that displayed behavioural traits conducive to those of transformational leaders, produced higher levels of Quality of Worklife.

Researchers have argued that in the Contact Centre context, relational leadership styles are highly appropriate leadership styles, as they too produce substantial positive employee and organisational outcomes in this often stressful and very busy environment (Bartram and Casimir, 2006; Connell and Hannif, 2008; Grant, 2012; Ruggieri and Abbate, 2013). It is argued that a relational style of leadership that focuses on caring, influence, relationships, as well as the needs and wellness of the individuals that they are leading is appropriate for the Contact Centre context. Servant Leadership is one such theory, and while the selection of Servant Leadership will be argued in the next chapter, it is proposed that Servant Leadership theory is a relational, and values caring for people theory which is, due to the context and nature of the work, appropriate for the frontline Contact Centre context. This thesis proposes to add to the work of Sirgy *et al.* (2001), in supporting his posit that leadership is antecedent to Quality of Worklife. However, it intends to contribute to the literature with evidence that there is a link between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife, or put differently, that there is a positive relationship between the two constructs and that Servant Leadership is antecedent to Quality of Worklife in the frontline Contact Centre context.

As with Nanjundeswaraswamy and Swamy's (2015) study, where a link between leadership style and Quality of Worklife was found, this research aims to add to the literature that Servant Leadership is particularly relevant in contexts with deficit levels of Quality of Worklife such as the customer service, or Contact Centre frontline environment. Nanjundeswaraswamy and Swamy's (2015) study is particularly important to this research work as it supports the basis of the primary hypothesis of this thesis, which is that Servant Leadership has a significant positive relationship with and is antecedent to Quality of Worklife in the Contact Centre frontline

environment. This translates to an understanding that if supervisors are to behave in a manner to which is perceived as being akin to Servant Leadership, or put differently, be perceived by their staff as being a servant leader, employees will perceive a higher levels of Quality of Worklife.

Moreover and as previously stated, leadership also plays a significant role in the enhancement of trust of employees (Bass, 2002). Lee (2016) argues that through the development of social relationships a trust bond develops. The Servant leader is a leader who is typified as one which builds relationships with their subordinates (Greenleaf, 1977). Cook and Wall (1980) posit that trust in the leader is important in ensuring the well-being and Quality of Worklife of employees. Thus, it is reasonable to suppose that Servant Leadership will produce a better Quality of Worklife, and that this relationship could be possibly mediated by Trust.

2.5.3 Potential Moderators of Quality of Worklife

If the strength of a relationship between two variables, for example between the variables of an antecedent of Quality of Worklife and Quality of Worklife itself, is altered by including an additional variable, this additional variable is named a *moderating variable* (Baron and Kenny, 1986). The moderating variable can either increase or decrease the strength of the relationship and therefore the interaction effect between an antecedent of Quality of Worklife and the Quality of Worklife construct itself. Several moderators of Quality of Worklife are mentioned within the literature and are discussed below.

2.5.3.1 Gender

Ganesh and Ganesh (2014) conducted a study of over 300 frontline employees in the banking customer service sector to determine if gender played any significant role in the respondent's Quality of Worklife scores. It was found that gender did have a significant role in the perceived Quality of Worklife of these employees (Ganesh and Ganesh, 2014). The results of the study confirmed that females in frontline customer service positions, generally perceived to experience a significantly better Quality of Worklife to that of the male counterparts.

Ganesh and Ganesh (2014) posit that due to the females being more relationship orientated, or putting more value on the importance of relationship building between themselves and supervisors, these relationships turn into good experiences within the work environments and therefore affect Quality of Worklife more positively. Many Contact Centre environments, including the research sites of this thesis, have generally more female employees than males, making this moderator a particularly important variable for consideration.

2.5.3.2 Age

Age was found to moderate the affect between work load and Quality of Worklife in a study of approximately 600 employees from various business sectors (Lai, Chang, and Hsu, 2012). It was found as workload increases, employees get busier and more stressed, not unlike as, in the context of this study, ages of employees explained different levels of Quality of Worklife (Lai *et al.*, 2012). Lai *et al.* (2012) argue that the generations of baby boomers, those employees born between years 1946-1964, and the Generation Y's, employees born between years 1975-1994, had lower perceptions of their Quality of Worklife in busy contexts. This was in contrast to the Generation X employees, those born between the years of 1965 and 1974, who generally experienced higher levels Quality of Worklife in the same busy contexts (Lai *et al.*, 2012). The Contact Centre frontline job, is generally perceived as an entry level position into many organisations, and therefore will have a younger workforce biographic, so it is pre-assumed that lower levels of Quality of Worklife will be reported in this thesis.

2.5.3.3 Emotional Intelligence

Goleman (1998) proposes that people who are self-aware, motivated, possess a high level of social skill, are able to regulate the way they react to situations, and are empathetic towards other people, in general have higher emotional intelligence than others. Goleman (1998) contends that emotionally intelligent people are those individuals that have the ability to not only control their own behaviour, but also match it with what would be deemed as appropriate for any given situation.

Kumar and Iyer (2012) argue that there are positive relationships between emotional intelligence and Quality of Worklife. Kumar and Iyer (2012) posit that individuals with

higher levels of emotional intelligence seem to correlate positively with higher Quality of Worklife perceptions. An employee's levels of emotional intelligence therefore will influence his perceived Quality of Worklife.

2.5.3.4 Personality

Both Martins (2000) and Van der Berg and Martins (2013) found significant positive relationships with Quality of Worklife and the *Big Five* personality traits. According to Van der Berg and Martins (2013), conscientiousness, agreeableness, emotional stability, resourcefulness and extraversion are five dimensions that have in the past, been extensively researched with respect to dimensions associated with Quality of Worklife. While acknowledged as a relatively moderate relationship, the agreeableness dimension showed a significant relationship with Quality of Worklife (Van der Berg and Martins, 2013). Kaushik and Tonk (2008) however, found that the extroversion, agreeableness and conscientiousness dimensions of personality had positive and significant relationships with Quality of Worklife. The implications of these research findings suggest that dimensions of personality can influence and moderate perceptions of their Quality of Worklife (Van der Berg and Martins, 2013).

2.5.4 Quality of Worklife as a Potential Mediator

According to Baron and Kenny (1986), mediating variables are those variables that change the causal relationship between the predicting variable and its consequence. The mediating variable controls the dynamics of the causal effect and it is therefore possible for it to either increase or reduce the casual effect between the predicting variable and its associated consequence. The mediating variable therefore acts to describe the effects of the relationship between two variables (Baron and Kenny, 1986).

In a previous section of this chapter, it was argued that there are several potential consequences of Quality of Worklife, each of which were argued to, independently, have causal reactions to variations of the Quality of Worklife variable. Albeit that there is relatively sparse literary evidence, the mediators below show some evidence to suggest that Quality of Worklife can also act as mediator in the relationship with certain consequential variables.

2.5.4.1 Emotional Labour and Work Family interference

Contact Centre frontline jobs are service related positions, and these types of positions require a significant amount of emotional labour (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993) due to their constant interactions with customers. Contact Centre service agents are expected to connect on an emotional level with customers to produce a state of customer satisfaction. Ashforth and Humphrey (1993) posit that this *expectation* of certain expected behaviours within the role of a service employee is what is described as emotional labour. Employees in emotional labour contexts engage with customers through either a process of surface acting or deep acting (Cheung and Tang, 2009). Surface acting occurs when there is little congruence between emotions displayed or actually felt, while deep acting manifests when the employees use their cognitive abilities to change their emotional status so that they truly feel the emotions that they are portraying when dealing with customers. Contact Centre service agents are also asked to show emotional intelligence when dealing with customer interactions in order to control their own emotions during interactions with customers. The foremost role of Contact Centre service agents is that they are expected to provide good service through customer interactions over a broad spectrum of interaction channels. All of these interactions are expected to be conducted with the conveyance of either acted or genuine emotions within the norms of what is expected in a service role environment (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993).

In a study conducted to explain the antecedent properties of family-to-work interference to emotional labour, Cheung and Tang (2009) proposed that Quality of Worklife acted as a mediator between the two constructs. Work family interference, according to Cheung and Tang (2009:247) results in work “conditions interfering the family domain, or vice versa”. This is very relevant in the Contact Centre context, due to the prevalence of shift work and other related factors that affect the work-home domain balance, and therefore a pertinent finding for this study to take cognisance of.

2.5.4.2 Organizational Justice and Job Satisfaction

Quality of Worklife was found to play a mediating role in the relationship between Organizational Justice and Job Satisfaction (Totawar and Nambudiri, 2014). Totawar

and Nambudiri, (2014) note the existence of Quality of Worklife programmes being designed and formulated by organisations for specific purposes, which include, amongst others, wanting to increase job satisfaction. Consequently, such programmes could be susceptible to manipulation by the organisation, and Quality of Worklife could theoretically be managed by the organisation, and therefore act as a controllable mediating variable (Totawar and Nambudiri, 2014). Quality of Worklife thereby intensifies, or mediates, the relationship between Organisational Justice and Job Satisfaction (Totawar and Nambudiri, 2014).

2.5.4.3 Career development and Well-being

Zulkarnain (2013) found that Quality of Worklife mediated the relationship between career development and psychological well-being. Needs satisfaction derived from the personal betterment of career development brought about psychological wellbeing. Quality of Worklife dimensions such as working conditions, stress and growth and development are all reported to mediate the relationship between career development and psychological well-being (Zulkarnain, 2013).

2.5.5 Summary

As explained above, the proposed system-model supposes that variables which affect Quality of Worklife in antecedent role behaviour within a deficit Quality of Worklife context are work setting, work characteristics, ancillary programmes and leadership behaviour. It is also argued that gender, age, emotional intelligence and personality moderate Quality of Worklife. Quality of Worklife is said to mediate the relationship between family-to-work interference to emotional labour, organisational justice and job satisfaction as well as career development and psychological well-being.

Several organisational consequences of Quality of Worklife include organizational commitment, perceived external prestige, job embeddedness, job involvement, increased performance, higher profit for organisations, reduction of intention to leave, improved learning organisations and organisational trust. The next section of the chapter investigates different models of Quality of Worklife that have been proposed by influential scholars over the last few decades.

2.6 Quality of Worklife Measurement Instruments

This section addresses the topic of Quality of Worklife measurement with reference to how Quality of Worklife has been researched before; and the level at which it has been applied in organisations. There are several different Quality of Worklife conceptual models and other Quality of Worklife models, which have also been tested empirically within the literature. The author therefore had to make a choice of the Quality of Worklife model and instrument best suited for this study. The primary principle of this choice was based on the strength of the instrument as well as its theoretical appropriateness to the context of the study. This choice was therefore largely informed by the quality of the instrument. It is argued that the use of Van Laar, Edwards and Easton's Work Related QWL (WRQoL) instrument (2007) is valid, relevant and well suited for this study.

From a review of the literature, a few prominent instruments emerged, which are often used by researchers to measure Quality of Worklife empirically. These include: Warr, Cook and Wall's (1979) eight factor measure, Baba and Jamal's (1991) seven dimension scale, Sirgy *et al.*'s (2001) seven dimensional instrument, Brooks and Anderson (2005) four dimension instrument, Martel and Dupuis's (2006) Quality of Working Life Systematic Inventory (QWLSI) instrument and Van Laar, Edwards and Easton's Work Related QWL (WRQoL) Model (2007).

Below is a brief description of the contexts in which each of these measures were conceived, together with a brief summary and argument for the more contextually appropriate measure of Van Laar *et al.*'s (2007) Work Related QWL (WRQoL) instrument.

2.6.1 Warr, Cook and Wall (1979)

Warr *et al.*'s (1979) model was developed from the study of both blue collar workers in two studies. The total sample study for both studies included 590 respondents. Using correlation analysis Warr *et al.* (1979:129) developed an instrument that consisted of intrinsic job motivation, higher order need strength, perceived intrinsic job characteristics, job satisfaction, life satisfaction, happiness, and self-rated anxiety. No scale reliability analysis was evident and no factor analysis was conducted to assess the validity.

2.6.2 Baba and Jamal's (1991)

Baba and Jamal's (1991) studies of Quality of Worklife are positioned in a context within relation to the routinization of work. From a review of the literature, a questionnaire was administered to 1120 respondents (Baba and Jamal, 1991). The dimensions of Quality of Worklife included job involvement, work role ambiguity, work role overload, work load conflict, work stress and turnover intention and organisational commitment. Reliability coefficients of between 0.6 and 0.8 for the sub dimensions were deemed sufficient by the authors. Discriminant analysis illustrated that inter-correlations among the dimensions proved sufficiently weak enough to argue for construct validity; however no factor analysis was conducted.

2.6.3 Sirgy *et al.* (2001)

Sirgy *et al.* (2001) developed an instrument to measure Quality of Worklife in a study with a sample of 563 respondents. A large majority of these respondents (i.e. 87%), were university staff members from two different universities and the balance of the respondents were accountants from various accounting firms.

The questionnaire, consisting of 16 items using a seven point Likert scale, is derived from the basis that QWL has its roots in need satisfaction and spill over theory (Sirgy *et al.*, 2001) and the questionnaire was designed accordingly. Confirmatory factor analysis confirmed seven factors, which included i) health and safety needs, ii) economic and family needs, iii) social needs, iv) esteem needs, v) actualization needs, vi) knowledge and vii) aesthetic needs. According to the authors, the Confirmatory model produced an acceptable fit ($\chi^2, 97 = 366.2$, $p = 0.0$; GFI = 0.92; AGFI = 0.88; CFI = 0.89; NFI = 0.86; RMSEA = 0.07) with a reliability coefficient of 0.78, however by contemporary standards, the model fit does not meet more modern thresholds.

2.6.4 Brooks and Anderson (2005)

The Brooks and Anderson (2005) instrument was developed within the frontline nursing context, however the authors argue that their Quality of Worklife measure is applicable to all industries, management levels and organisational settings. They do

however argue the occupation specific items that have been delineated to address the occupation in questions hold great advantages, and so the health and nursing vernacular, gained from experts in the nursing field, is prevalent in the items of instrument. Besides deriving items from other empirical works which measured related empirical constructs such as job satisfaction, job stress, organisational commitment, along with a few others, no evidence of any empirical tests were mentioned in the paper on the instrument construction.

2.6.5 Martel and Dupuis's (2006)

Based on a rigorous review of the literature, Martel and Dupuis's (2006) developed a Quality of Worklife measurement instrument, which they termed the *Quality of Working Life Systemic Inventory* (QWLSI). Martel and Dupuis's (2006) QWLSI differentiates itself from previous models, in that the questionnaire is based on an understanding of Quality of Worklife that has its roots in Quality of Life (QOL) theory. Martel and Dupuis's (2006) instrument consists of the 33 items in a 7-point Likert scale view which ranges from *Essential* to *Useless*. The respondent is also asked to rate whether the Quality of Worklife perception is getting better or worse.

While it is acknowledged that the instrument is the result of a very rigorous review and robust critique of theoretical models available at the time (Martel and Dupuis's, 2006), the questionnaire was not accompanied by, or as a result of, rigorous psychometric testing, therefore the reliability and construct validity did not form part of the original construction.

2.6.6 The Van Laar, Edwards and Easton (2007)

The Van Laar *et al.* (2007) WRQoL model first originated from a study of healthcare workers in England. The purpose was to present to literature a valid and reliable instrument that would measure Quality of Worklife in the health sector.

The study sample included a large pool of 953 respondents, of which a significant percentage were females (86%) (Van Laar *et al.*, 2007). Most employees were between the ages of 18 and 44 (52%) and were relatively new in the organisation with between one and five years' experience between them (Van Laar *et al.*, 2007). The original instrument consisted of a 61 item instrument (Van Laar *et al.*, 2007).

The instrument produced good internal scale reliability with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.96 (Van Laar *et al.*, 2007). Exploratory factor analysis reduced the original 61 item questionnaire to a 24 item, with a scale reliability of 0.91 (Van Laar *et al.*, 2007).

During the confirmatory factor analysis of the Van Laar *et al.* WRQoL (2007) model, items were removed due to poor fit and relatively low factor loadings. Through factor analysis, the Van Laar *et al.* (2007) study produced a 23 item, six factor model. The six factors included Job and Career Satisfaction (JCS), General Well-Being (GWB), Stress at Work (SAW), Control at Work (CAW) and Working Conditions (WCS). Reliability of the instrument proved to be excellent with an overall Cronbach's Alpha score of 0.91. The instrument also produced very acceptable Confirmatory Factor analysis indices, (CFI = 0.94, GFI = 0.93, NFI = 0.92 and RMSEA = 0.05), indicating a good model fit and suggesting it to be a reliable and valid instrument.

The WRQoL instrument was subsequently re-tested in a different context. Edwards, Van Laar, Easton and Kinman (2009) validated the instrument, this time using Higher Education employees where a significant sample, n = 5900 proved the instrument to be valid and reliable in this context too. The instrument was also used by a study by Easton, Van Laar and Marlow-Vardy (2013) of a Quality of Worklife study of police officers. Five hundred and thirty three respondents confirmed the validity and reliability of the six factor WRQoL model. In this study (Easton *et al.*, 2013) benchmark scores per factor, based on previous research, were introduced.

The instrument is displayed in the table below:

Table 2.1: Van Laar, Edwards and Easton's Work Related QWL (WRQoL) Instrument (2007)

item	Job Career Satisfaction
1	I have a clear set of goals and aims to enable me to do my job
3	I have the opportunity to use my abilities at work
8	When I have done a good job it is acknowledged by my line manager
11	I am encouraged to develop new skills
18	I am satisfied with the career opportunities available for me here
20	I am satisfied with the training I receive in order to perform my present job
	Control at Work
2	I feel able to voice opinions and influence changes in my area of work
12	I am involved in decisions that affect me in my own area of work
23	I am involved in decisions that affect members of the public in my area of work

	General Well Being
4	I feel well at the moment
9	Recently, I have been feeling unhappy and depressed
10	I am satisfied with my life
15	In most ways my life is close to ideal
17	Generally things work out well for me
21	Recently, I have been feeling reasonably happy all things considered
	How Work Interface
5	My employer provides adequate facilities and flexibility for me to fit work in around my family life
6	My current working hours / patterns suit my personal circumstances
14	My line manager actively promotes flexible working hours / patterns
	Stress at Work
7	I often feel under pressure at work
19	I often feel excessive levels of stress at work
	Working Conditions
13	My employer provides me with what I need to do my job effectively
16	I work in a safe environment
22	The working conditions are satisfactory

Source: (Van Laar *et al.*, 2007).

In recent studies, the instrument has also proved to be valid and reliable in a mix of organisations, countries and contexts. Dunyan, Aytac, Akildiz, Van Laar's (2013) study of 288 employees from different organisations and jobs in Turkey, proved that the instrument could be used in a cross cultural context. Chen, Haniff, Siau, Seet, Loh, Jamil, Sa'at and Baharum's (2014) study of 229 academics measured QWL and burnout in academic institutions in Malaysia.

So given the robustness of the instrument design, both from a theoretical and methodological point of view, as well as reasons for it being deemed a valid and reliable Quality of Worklife measurement instrument that has been used in a variety of cultures and contexts, it is argued that this instrument is an appropriate measure of Quality of Worklife. Moreover, what makes it particularly context appropriate is that both Stress at Work and Control at Work are included in the instrument as measurement factors. The differentiation of model dimensions and their appropriateness will be further elaborated on in the next section of this chapter. It is however, important to re-state that the Control at Work and Stress at Work

dimensions are extremely contextually relevant, in that the Contact Centre environment is a particularly stressful and controlled place of work. Frontline employees within the Contact Centre are often seen as the “face” of the organisation and are therefore expected to communicate and handle with proficiency, all customer queries (White and Roos, 2005) and meet service expectations in a calm and collected manner (Grandey *et al.*, 2004). Added to this stress, is that part of the query resolution falls out of the immediate control of the agent and these stress factors and other elements within the department lead to a negative impact on the Quality of Worklife (Danna and Griffin, 1999; Wright and Bonett, 2007) of these employees. It is therefore, both the robustness of the instrument design and the factor structure that make this particular instrument appropriate for this research thesis.

What follows is a discussion on the theoretical structure of Quality of Worklife models that are frequently referenced in the literature, with particular reference to how these models are presented by each of the authors through analyses of their dimension structure.

2.7 Quality of Worklife theoretical models and their associated dimensions

A review of literature resulted in an emergence of a few prominent Quality of Worklife models. This section discusses the theoretical structure of these Quality of Worklife models, with particular reference to how these models are presented by each of the authors through analyses of their dimension structure, and the consequential themes that emerge. It is further argued for the relevance of Van Laar *et al.*, (2007) model as a relevant and appropriate model for the context of this research.

2.7.1 Quality of Worklife Models and Associated Dimensions

What follows is a discussion of Quality of Worklife models from the 1970's to more contemporary ones.

2.7.1.1 Quality of Worklife Models of the 70's

A review of the literature revealed that two predominant Quality of Worklife models of the 1970's include the works of Walton (1974) and Warr *et al.* (1979). Walton (1974) proposed a conceptual model of Quality of Worklife which was focused primarily at the employee level, and which was predominantly designed to study employee need satisfaction. Walton's (1974) conceptual model of Quality of Worklife was primarily aimed at the employee level, and focused on the attainment of need satisfaction in what can be generally described as normal, typically blue collar and white collar, routine, fairly monotonous type jobs. Walton (1974) argued that there were eight factors that constituted a Quality of Worklife model, these factors included: i) *Adequate and Fair Compensation*: which argued that the employee would not be satisfied if they felt that they were being underpaid, or that someone, doing similar work elsewhere was getting more pay than them. The logic of this points to the assertion that employees do not generally have to feel that they receive the highest pay, but should not feel that they are not being exploited either (Walton, 1974). ii) *Safe and Healthy Environment*: Employees whom feel endangered by the work they do, or feel that they are putting themselves in harm's way every time they come to work, will feel dissatisfied (Walton, 1974). Walton, (1974) argues that it is not only the most basic need of safety that this factor is referring to but also other softer related issues such as ergonomics or noise pollution are related to Quality of Worklife. iii) *Development of Human Capabilities*: During the time of writing this

conceptual model on Quality of Worklife, it was clear to Walton (1974) that many jobs were very structured in nature, and there was little room for employees to use their skills in totality, which proved to contribute to a monotonous working environment. So Walton (1974) suggested that employees who possess a larger set of skills than the job requires, be given the freedom to use these skills to grow in their jobs. iv) *Social Integration*: Walton (1974) suggests that employees whom feel a connectedness with the people of the organisation and feel that they fit into the social mix will experience better Quality of Worklife. v) *Constitutionalism*: Employees must feel that their individual rights are protected in order to perceive higher levels of Quality of Worklife (Walton, 1974). vi) *Total Life Space*: There must be sufficient space within an employee's life in order to experience quality time for all the dimensions of life, in particular, the family, sport, spiritual domains (Walton, 1974). vii) *Social Relevance*: To experience QWL, employee's need to feel that they work for an organisation that adds value to the world (Walton, 1974). Organisations that tend to practice unethical behaviour, or involve themselves in practices that are deemed by society to be socially irresponsible will not produce high levels of Quality of Worklife within employees (Walton, 1974).

Warr *et al.*'s (1979) study concentrated on the distinction between work and the job itself. According to Warr *et al.* (1979:129), work covered "jobs in general", whereas jobs were defined as the specific tasks employees did within their work. Warr, Cook and Wall's (1979) model is made up of eight factors i) *Work involvement*: Warr *et al.* (1979) argue the level to which employees are involved with all aspects of their jobs, is closely related to Quality of Worklife levels. ii) *Intrinsic job motivation*: Employees that yearn to do well in their jobs and are satisfied by doing well, have higher Quality of Worklife (Warr *et al.*, 1979). iii) *Higher order need strength*: Quality of Worklife is positively affected by the opportunity of an employee to be the best he can be, and to be able to use his intellect and talents to the best of his abilities to achieve more than the job requires (Warr *et al.*, 1979). iv) *Perceived intrinsic job characteristics*: The level of Quality of Worklife experienced increases if employees are satisfied with aspects that are endemic to the job, which include rewards and recognition, promotional possibilities, and so forth (Warr *et al.*, 1979). v) *Job satisfaction*: Job Satisfaction is a work attitude that balances how satisfied or dissatisfied employees are with their jobs (Loscocco and Roshelle, 1991), however Warr *et al.* (1979:133)

argue that it's both the "extrinsic and intrinsic" that inform how satisfied employees are within their jobs and this influences QWL. vi) *Life satisfaction*: An employee's life satisfaction is a combination of the amounts of satisfaction an employee perceives in the different domains of life. Higher levels of cross domains relates to higher levels of Quality of Worklife (Warr *et al.*, 1979). vii) *Happiness*: Employee's that are happy indicate higher Quality of Worklife (Warr *et al.*, 1979). viii) *Self-rated anxiety*: Anxiousness and constant worries negatively affect an employee's Quality of Worklife.

2.7.1.2 Quality of Worklife Models of the 80's

The 1980 Quality of Worklife models predominant within the literature include the works of Mirvis and Lawler (1984), Nadler and Lawler's (1983) and Effraty and Sirgy (1988). The models in the eighties differed from those of the seventies in that the number of dimensions per model was significantly condensed. The models moved from the wide based dimension structure of the seventies, to a Quality of Worklife structure which consisted of four major themes, these being safety, equality, opportunity and organisational identity.

Mirvis and Lawler (1984) argued from a fairly simple and pragmatic theoretical premise, in that they propose that Quality of Worklife can be described by need satisfaction of remuneration combined with needs satisfaction in basic work conditions. Mirvis and Lawler (1984) suggested four key factors:

i) *Equitable remuneration*: Mirvis and Lawler (1984) argued that employees who experience a sense of equivalence in both the content of the job (i.e. what is required, in relation to their levels of remuneration that the job delivers); and added that these levels of remuneration are thought to be fairly similar to other employee's doing comparable work. It is these employees who are hypothesized to have potentially higher levels of Quality of Worklife.

ii) *Safe working environment*: Mirvis and Lawler (1984) suggest that a safe working environment to be a very basic need that must be satisfied because without it, Quality of Worklife is unlikely.

iii) *Equal Employment Opportunities*: Mirvis and Lawler (1984) posit that if employees associate the organisation with one in which all are given equal opportunities, and is one which is devoid of all favouritism. Employees of all races or

any gender are treated equally and those whom are deemed to be most qualified and perform the best are recognised accordingly.

iv) *Career advancement opportunities*: Opportunities develop from intrinsic employee behaviour, in that employees who have an ideological world viewpoint, that is derived from, or has its roots in hope; and where hope is ingrained into their work psyche, as they visualise personal betterment through hard work, have the propensity to enjoy better Quality of Worklife (Mirvis and Lawler, 1984).

Not dissimilar to the Mirvis and Lawler (1984) model, Nadler and Lawler's (1983) conceptual model of Quality of Worklife suggested similarly pragmatic dimensions of Quality of Worklife. Nadler and Lawler (1983) conceptual model of Quality of Work life suggested four fairly pragmatic factors of Quality of Work which included, safe work environment, equitable employment opportunities, equal wages and opportunities for advancement

Effraty and Sirgy (1988) argued that Quality of Worklife could be understood through an examination of satisfying employee's hierarchical needs and aligned their dimensions along this premise. Effraty and Sirgy (1988) argued that Quality of Work could be understood through an examination of satisfying employees hierarchical needs, and suggested that the following factors are relevant employees perceived Quality of Work: i) *Organisational Identification*: Effraty and Sirgy (1988) posit that there is a positive relationship between Quality of Work and employees emotional feelings. Positive feelings and positivity associated with the organisation, increases Quality of Work (Effraty and Sirgy, 1988). Effraty and Sirgy (1988) argue that if employees perceive a personal connectedness with the organisation, or that there is congruency in the employees' as well the organisation's future aspirations, in relation to vision and mission, this will increase their levels of Quality of Work. ii) *Job Satisfaction*: Effraty and Sirgy (1988) suggest that the measure of job satisfaction is the difference between the ability, or capacity, of the organisation to meet the individual needs of the employee. The less the difference between these two dimensions, the greater the perceived employee Quality of Work. iii) *Effort and Performance Effectiveness*: If an employee shows pride and effort into his job, and this effort is rewarded through appraisal and positive performance assessments, this is positively associated with Quality of Work (Effraty and Sirgy, 1988). iv) *Personal*

Alienation: The greater the levels of incongruence with respect to feelings of loneliness, separation or segregation from the organisational community, the more favourable the climate for a better QWL (Effraty and Sirgy, 1988).

2.7.1.3 Quality of Worklife Models of the 90's

Work roles, job stressors, organisational commitment and intention to quit are all job dimensions that start to emerge in the literature in the nineties, which were not part of the Quality of Worklife structure of the eighties.

Baba and Jamal (1991) and May, Lau, and Johnson (1999) present two prominent models that were proposed in the 1990's. Baba and Jamal's (1991) framework of Quality of Worklife is positioned in a context within relation to the routinization of work. Baba and Jamal (1991) suggested that certain aspects of routine increased perceived Quality of Work, these included structure of working conditions, but argued that less routinization in the actual content of the job increased Quality of Work. Baba and Jamal (1991) proposed that factors associated with Quality of Worklife included: i) *Job Satisfaction*: How an employee feels about his work or his attitude towards his place of employment and work is synonymous of job satisfaction (Robbins, 2003) and this is key to Quality of Worklife (Baba and Jamal, 1991). ii) *Work Role Ambiguity*: The absence of an indistinct understanding of what the employee's role is, heightens the employees perceived Quality of Work (Baba and Jamal, 1991). iii) *Work Role Conflict*: Baba and Jamal (1991) suggest that when there is a presence of conflicting pressures from various origins, which could originate either from within, or external to the organisation, and that if these variables are evident in a particular job role; that this will have a detrimental effect on the Quality of Worklife of an employee. iv) *Job Involvement*: To what degree the employee is emerged in their work and to what degree of involvement in the job, directly impacts the levels of Quality of Worklife perceived (Baba and Jamal, 1991). v) *Job Stress*: Baba and Jamal (1991) argued that higher stress levels in the work environment had a negative relationship with Quality of Work. vi) *Work Role Overload*: When employees feel that there is never enough time to finish tasks within a prescribed time, and that they generally have more tasks to complete in relation to the time it takes to do those tasks, this will have a negative effect on Quality of Worklife perceptions (Baba and Jamal, 1991). vii) *Organizational Commitment*: Stander and

Rothman (2008) posit that a committed employee is one who gives of himself to the job more than what is expected and is noted to perform above expectations, such an employee relates well to the values, vision and mission of the organisation and this behaviour in turn is positively associated with Quality of Work. viii) *Turn-over intentions*: Baba and Jamal (1991) argue that the less those employees actively look for employment elsewhere, due to reasons of wanting to quit their present employment, is a factor of their perceived Quality of Worklife.

May *et al.* (1999) adapted the works of Levering and Moskowitz (1994) of the evaluation of the 100 best companies to work for in America, of which many of these 100 organisations were multinational companies. May *et al.* (1999) argued that Quality of Worklife was determined by the following factors: i) *Job security*: Organisations that do not offer a level of job security to their workforce, for at least the foreseeable future, will not experience a workforce of employee's with high levels of Quality of Worklife (May *et al.*, 1999). ii) *Employee Growth Opportunities*: Employees need to believe that there is hope that if they work hard and up-skill themselves, that opportunities to grow within the organisation will present themselves. This prospect of hope for growth in the future improves the Quality of Worklife of the employee (May *et al.*, 1999). iii) *Rewards*: Working towards and then achieving rewards positively affects perceptions of Quality of Worklife (May *et al.*, 1999). iv) *Employee satisfaction*: According to May *et al.*, (1999), organisations which seek to ensure that employees needs are considered, and have the value of job satisfaction, which is ingrained as a key consideration of all aspects of the job, will experience better Quality of Worklife (May *et al.*, 1999).

2.7.1.4 Quality of Worklife Models of the New Millennium

Models of the present millennium include the works of Sirgy *et al.* (2001), Brooks and Anderson (2005) and Van Laar, Edwards and Easton (2007). These models are different from the models which have come before them as certain dimensions which have not been noted in the preceding decades begin to emerge. More contemporary models of Quality of Worklife include dimensions related to home-work balance, general wellbeing and empowerment of employees.

Sirgy *et al.* (2001) posit that an employee has several key needs that have to be met to some extent, in order for employees to perceive decent levels of Quality of Worklife. Sirgy *et al.* (2001) propose that the domains of Quality of Worklife and quality of life are interlinked and affect each other. Need satisfaction spills over from one domain to another (Sirgy *et al.*, 2001). Sirgy *et al.* (2001) argued that an employee has several key needs that had to be met to some extent in order for employees to display behaviours that are consequent and resultant to Quality of Worklife, such as overall job and life satisfaction. The first of these dimensions is i) Work Environment: The physical work environment such as ergonomics, health and safety issues, or even comfort about the work-space will cause employees to view their Quality of Worklife in a certain light (Sirgy *et al.*, 2001). ii) Work load pressures and the requirements associated from the job, as well as levels of employee empowerment are all aspects of the work environment domain, and these have significant influence on Quality of Worklife (Sirgy *et al.*, 2001). Frustrations or disagreements of any of these dimensions alters the employee's perception of his working environment and influences how he feels about his Quality of Worklife (Sirgy *et al.*, 2001). iii) Supervisor Behaviour: Sirgy *et al.* (2001) argue that supervisors play an integral role in the perception of QWL, more especially due to their approach to performance management, and the type of feedback thereof that they supply their subordinates. iv) Ancillary Programmess: Organisations that offer supplementary programmess that speak to the improvement of the wellness of their employees, such as improvements to work-time schedules, or offer substance abuse programmess, will experience better levels of QWL within their organisational environment (Sirgy *et al.*, 2001).

Brooks and Anderson (2005) added to the Quality of Worklife literature by arguing for a model of Quality of Nursing Worklife that could be used for health workers but had very close ties to Quality of Worklife literature. Brooks and Anderson's (2005) theoretical model is derived from socio-technical systems theory, in that they posit that both the social elements of the job as well as the more technical related fundamentals are central to Quality of Worklife perceptions of employees. The results of Brooks and Anderson's (2005) study in the nursing organisational environment argued for the following dimensions in their Quality of Worklife model. i) *Work and Home life*: Brooks and Anderson (2005) posit that if employees feel that they had sufficient time to handle all of the work pressures and those brought about by home life, these employees tend to experience better Quality of Worklife; ii) The *Work Design* dimension of Brooks and Anderson's (2005) model speaks to the core characteristics of the job, the job complexity and the workload itself; iii) The *Work Context* factor addresses all aspects of the working environment of the job (Brooks and Anderson, 2005). The work context dimension addresses all aspects of the working environment of the job, and also includes aspects such as relationship with peers and supervisors (Brooks and Anderson, 2005). This factor relates to whether the employee feels that they have sufficient tools for the job, whether they feel that the organisation produces a community of healthy relationships, whether there are sufficient opportunities to grow within the organisation or the opportunity to personally grow through course attendance opportunities (Brooks and Anderson, 2005). The last of the factors in Brooks and Anderson's (2005), *Work World* which deals with the extrinsic extents that influence the work experience. These include the degree to which an employee feel that the work that they do is of worth or real value to the broader society, whether they are remunerated fairly and whether there is possibility of longevity of employment (Brooks and Anderson, 2005).

Van Laar, Edwards and Easton's (2007) study of Quality of Worklife introduced a six factor model to literature. Van Laar *et al.*'s (2007) study moved to evolve the current understanding of Quality of Worklife, including both the conceptual elements of Quality of Life (QOL) and Work Related Stress, which not unlike Loscocco and Roschelle's (1991) theorised model, posits that various life domains overlap and affect each other. As with the Sirgy *et al.* (2001) model, the theory underpinning this rationale is Spill Over theory, which argues that aspects of your individual life, such

as your mental and physical health and as well your personality, spill over to your work and home life, and vice versa (Van Laar *et al.*, 2007). Intuitively, it is relatively easy to consider that the current status of an employee's relationship with their family and friends, impacts how they relate to colleagues at work. Van Laar *et al.*'s (2007) principle understanding of Quality of Worklife argues that Quality of Worklife, while moderated by the social, environmental and economic context, is the sum of all aspects of work that affect an employee's Quality of Life, in any way, it is this that they consider to be Quality of Worklife. Van Laar *et al.*'s (2007) proposed a six factor model which included, General Well-Being (GWB), Job and Career Satisfaction (JCS), Stress at Work (SAW), Control at Work (CAW), Home- Work Interface (HWI) and Working Conditions (WCS), all of which are discussed below.

2.7.1.4.1 General Well-Being (GWB)

General Well-Being is associated with both the physical and psychological well-being of an employee (Danna and Griffin, 1999). Spill Over theory argues that the wellness of one aspect of General Well-Being can influence and spill over to the other domain (Danna and Griffin, 1999). It is possible for a physical ailment to manifest itself in the psyche of an employee and this ailment to morph into a more serious psychological problem (Danna and Griffin, 1999). Sirgy's (2006) conceptualisation of Employee Well-Being is based on goal theory. Sirgy (2006) posited that Employee Well-Being did not focus on only the aspect of satisfaction within the work environment, but that general happiness and life satisfaction are domains, which are also considered. Not unlike Danna and Griffin (1999) and Sirgy's (2006) understanding of General Well-Being, Van Laar *et al.* (2007) argue the General Well-Being in this factor of their Quality of Worklife model refers to the general physical and psychological wellness of the employee, influenced by other domains but within the work context.

2.7.1.4.2 Home-Work Interface (HWI)

To balance work commitments with commitments at home so that the one domain does not completely overshadow or dominate the other domain is what Van Laar *et al.* (2007) refer to in the Home-Work Interface factor. All members of the organisation, no matter at what level they operate within the organisation, have a home as well as a work life, each of which need concerted attention. Should an aspect of the home, such as caring for a child, demand more time, attention or

energy than is possible to give without compromising some aspects of the employee's job, or vice versa; this will affect the Home-Work Interface. The Home-Work Interface will as a result be out of equilibrium, (Brooks and Anderson, 2005; Van Laar *et al.*, 2007). Employers that understand the importance of Quality of Worklife will therefore ensure mitigating strategies to compensate for this, such as providing child support to help restore balance to the pressures (Brooks and Anderson, 2005). This factor is particularly relevant in Contact Centres, as the work of Contact Centre agents is scheduled at times when customers are requiring service (Reynolds, 2003). This means that workload requirement in Contact Centres has to be met by schedules that fulfil the requirement or customer expectation. Therefore agents have to sometimes work schedules that are not within the traditional office hours of 9am to 5 pm. Employees could feel that being available for both the needs of their families, as well as the needs of their employers, could at times be opposing forces. Many organisations are aware of this and Contact Centre agent preference plays an important role when scheduling staff (Reynolds, 2003). If ignored, morale, absenteeism and general work performance can be severely affected (Reynolds, 2003), and consequently lower levels of Quality of Worklife are experienced (Van Laar *et al.*, 2007)

2.7.1.4.3 Job-Career Satisfaction (JCS)

Van Laar *et al.* (2007) argue that on a theoretical level, the Job Career Satisfaction factor compares very closely with Job Satisfaction from other measures of Quality of Worklife, therefore suggesting that the Job Career Satisfaction factor in the Van Laar *et al.* (2007) model is synonymous with the Job Satisfaction Construct, and should be understood by researchers as such. Nel *et al.* (2001) propose the Job Satisfaction is made up of two sets of dimensions. On the one hand there are the factors that express the intrinsic personal side of the employee, such as the how they think, what is of importance to them, the type of personality they have, how they relate to peers and supervisor staff, and, if they feel that the organisation's vision and values fit within their personal paradigms. The other dimension of Job Satisfaction according to Nel *et al.* (2001) is related to aspects of the job itself, which include aspects such as fair remuneration, job content and promotional opportunities. Judge, Erez, Bono and Locke (2005) suggest that job satisfaction is a construct that can be measured by aspects of the entire job, and how it is perceived in its totality; the inference that

the perception of job satisfaction is influenced by total life satisfaction. According to Rose and Wright (2005), Job Satisfaction in Contact Centres can be understood through a study of a combination of variables. These variables include the job design and content (i.e. how the Contact Centre agent identifies with the organisation) and to what extent the employee is engaged or involved with the job. The amount of support and consultation that they receive from the organisation, in particular, to their supervisors as well as the amount of emotional strain they are faced with are also Contact Centre Job Satisfaction variables (Rose and Wright, 2005). Moreover, to what degree the pressure they are exposed to, particularly with reference to the need to be working with technology is an important Job Satisfaction variable, and lastly, how in control they feel of their work and how strenuous or achievable their targets are (Rose and Wright, 2005). Rose and Wright's (2005) theoretical view of Job Satisfaction is not unlike, and is somewhat similar to Van Laar *et al.*'s (2007) understanding of Job Satisfaction. Van Laar *et al.* (2007) understand Job Satisfaction to include elements of satisfaction with respect to: the job content, feeling significantly competent and being able to use individual skills as required by the job, feeling content with opportunities arising within the organisation and receiving recognition when deserved.

2.7.1.4.4 Control at Work (CAW)

The ability to control large aspects of your work is an important factor in the consideration of good Quality of Worklife, it also is closely linked to the amount of stress an employee feels at work (Easton and Van Laar, 2012). Feeling empowered and therefore in control at work is closely related to feelings of respect and to the importance of his work (Spreitzer, 1995). The degree to which the employee has a feeling of self-efficacy, how free the employee is to choose how will deliver the work as well as how their work makes a positive impact on the organisation, affects feelings of control (Spreitzer, 1995). Decision-making, or the ability and opportunity to contribute in the decision making process of the job, or in the broader organisation, is key to feeling that you have some control over your working environment, and this improves quality of work life (Easton and Van Laar, 2012). Rose and Wright (2005) argue that Control at Work is a key determinant of Job Satisfaction and affects Quality of Worklife, in that much of the Contact Centre agents work is extremely closely controlled. Contact Centre agents are given work

schedules where they have to adhere to them very strictly and this adherence is controlled through software monitoring devices, any unplanned deviations are recorded negatively against the agent. Reasons for deviations of Contact Centre agents' schedules being frowned upon by the organisation is easily understandable, due to the continuous attempts by the Work Force Management team to accurately meet customer requirement, or workload, with scheduled Contact Centre agents (Reynolds, 2003). Moreover, most of the interactions of callers are supposedly similar in nature, or request from the organisation similar things, and organisations therefore tend to script the answers that Contact Centre agents need to supply to customers, with very little variation in answers allowed (Rose and Wright, 2005). Organisations therefore need to take into cognisance that while it is necessary for the Contact Centre environment to be a controlled one, the level of perceived Control at Work of its employees will impact Quality of Worklife.

2.7.1.4.5 Working Conditions (WCS)

Working conditions in the Van Laar *et al.* (2007) model deal with the "level of satisfaction with the physical working environment and conditions" of the job and whether or not employee's "have the right tools and equipment to get the job done" (Easton *et al.*, 2013:138). Van Laar *et al.*'s (2007) Working Conditions dimension does not only consider the tangible physical conditions such as ergonomics of the work environment, but also includes issues such as fundamental health of safety concerns and argues that this affects the way the employee perceives his Quality of Worklife (Easton and Van Laar, 2012). With up to four percent of the global GDP and approximately 270 million recorded accidents at work a year both employees and employers are justified to be concerned about the health and safety condition of the work place (Sieberhagen, Rothmann, Pienaar, 2009). Sieberhagen *et al.* (2009) argue that although these figures are high a lot of the health issues, particularly pertaining to psychological problems derived from stress are possibly overlooked. Sieberhagen *et al.* (2009) posit that the understanding of health and safety, particularly in South Africa, does not adequately cater for psychological problems that may arise from the work place. Organisations with good governance may follow legislature to the letter, but if health issues, such as psychological problems, for example depression and stress, are left out of the evaluating equation, employers may be excluding a vital area of wellness (Sieberhagen *et al.*, 2009). So

notwithstanding the importance of organisations applying attention to the physical or tangible aspects of their employee's working conditions, mental wellness is also an important, and often ignored, consideration when discussing working conditions of employees (Sieberhagen *et al.*, 2009).

2.7.1.4.6 Stress at Work (SAW)

Stress at work is a major problem in South Africa, according to medical aid companies, stress related illnesses are one of the leading causes for medical conditions and medical claims (Sieberhagen *et al.*, 2009). Customers can affect or put pressure on Customer Service employees through their interactions with them and the work context call for significant Emotional Labour (Dollard, Dormann, Boyd, Winefield and Winefield, 2003). Emotional dissonance and stress affected by customer interactions are two dimensions that are prevalent in any work that necessitates the need for employees and customers to engage (Dollard *et al.*, 2003). Contact Centre agents in particular, are particularly vulnerable to stress at work, Wegge, Vogt and Wecking's (2007) study of customer induced stress of frontline telephony employees illustrated that stress increases when exposed or dealing with customers whom display levels of anger. Given that the context of this research is within the customer service frontline environment, many of the calls are from customers whom are rude (Wegge *et al.*, 2007) or are generally upset with something; these feelings translate into how they deal with the customer service agent on the other end of the receiver. Stress at work in the Contact Centre environment therefore becomes a very important factor of Quality of Worklife.

As illustrated in Table 2.2, each of these models describe Quality of Worklife using a set of factors or dimensions.

2.7.2 Quality of Worklife Model Comparative Analysis

A previous section in this paper argued for the appropriateness of the Van Laar *et al.* (2007) instrument. What follows in this section of the chapter is a discussion of the commonalities and differences of the theoretical models in relation to their dimension structure, as illustrated in the table below, with the aim of further arguing for the appropriateness of the Van Laar *et al.* (2007) model for this study.

Table: 2.2 Quality of Worklife Models and their Corresponding Dimensions

Dimensions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Walton (1974)	Adequate and Fair Compensation	Safe and Healthy Environment	Development of Human Capabilities	Growth and Security	Social Integration	Constitutionalism	Total Life Space	Social Relevance
Warr <i>et al.</i> , (1979)	Work Involvement	Intrinsic job motivation	Higher order need strength	Perceived intrinsic Job characteristics	Job satisfaction	Life satisfaction	Happiness	Self-rated anxiety
Mirvis and Lawler (1984)	Equitable remuneration	Safe working environment	Equal Employment Opportunities	Career advancement opportunities				
Nadler and Lawler (1983)	Safe work environment	Equitable Employment Opportunities	Equal Wages	Opportunities for Advancement				
Efraty and Sirgy (1998)	Organisational Identification	Job Satisfaction	Effort and Performance Effectiveness	Personal Alienation				
Baba and Jamal (1991)	Job Satisfaction	Work Role Ambiguity	Work Role Conflict	Job Involvement	Job Stress	Work Role Overload	Organizational Commitment	Turn-over Intentions
May <i>et al.</i> , (1999)	Job security	Employee Growth Opportunities	Rewards	Employee satisfaction				
Sirgy <i>et al.</i> , (2001)	Work Environment	Job Requirements	Supervisor Behaviour	Ancillary Programs				
Brooks and Anderson (2005)	Work and Home life	Work Design	Work Context	Work World				
Van Laar <i>et al.</i> , (2007)	General Well-Being	Home-Work Interface	Job-Career Satisfaction	Control at Work	Working Conditions	Stress at Work		

Source: Developed from literature by Author

Table 2.2 illustrates the various models and their associated dimensions, which are proposed by their respective authors. Closer inspection reveals that while common dimensions or themes emerge, several differences are also noted. Table 2.3 proposes a few logical groupings of the dimensions. The dimensions were grouped into job satisfaction, working conditions, stress, wellbeing and home-work balance dimensions.

Table: 2.3 Quality of Worklife Models and their Corresponding Dimensions

Job Satisfaction	Working conditions	Stress	Wellbeing	Home Work Balance	General Well Being
Warr <i>et al.</i> , (1979)	Walton (1974)	Baba and Jamal (1991)	Walton (1974)	Walton (1974)	Walton (1974)
Efraty and Sirgy (1988)	Warr <i>et al.</i> , (1979)	Warr <i>et al.</i> , (1979)	Warr <i>et al.</i> , (1979)	Warr <i>et al.</i> , (1979)	Warr <i>et al.</i> , (1979)
Baba and Jamal (1991),	Mirvis and Lawler (1984)	Van Laar <i>et al.</i> , (2007)	Brooks and Anderson (2005)	Mirvis and Lawler (1984)	Van Laar <i>et al.</i> , (2007)
May <i>et al.</i> , (1999)	Nadler and Lawler (1983)		Van Laar <i>et al.</i> , (2007)	Efraty and Sirgy (1988)	
Van Laar <i>et al.</i> , (2007)	Efraty and Sirgy (1988)			Brooks and Anderson (2005)	
	Baba and Jamal (1991),			Van Laar <i>et al.</i> , (2007)	
	May <i>et al.</i> , (1999)				
	Sirgy <i>et al.</i> , (2001)				
	Brooks and Anderson (2005)				
	Van Laar <i>et al.</i> , (2007)				

Source: Developed from literature by Author

2.7.2.1 Job - Career Satisfaction

Job - Career Satisfaction is a dimension that is mentioned in several models. The Job-Career Satisfaction dimension of the Van Laar *et al.* (2007) has closely aligned to the Warr *et al.* (1979), Efraty and Sirgy (1988), Baba and Jamal (1991), May *et al.* (1999) and Van Laar *et al.* (2007) Quality of Worklife models in that all of them have Job satisfaction as a dimension of Quality of Worklife.

2.7.2.2 Working conditions

Sub dimensions that showed close theoretical alignment with the working conditions dimension of Quality of Worklife included the following:

- Health and safety (Walton, 1974; Mirvis and Lawler, 1984; Nadler and Lawler, 1983; Danna and Griffin, 1999; Van Laar *et al.*, 2007),
- Development, opportunities and performance (Walton, 1974; Warr *et al.*, 1979; Mirvis and Lawler, 1984; Efraty and Sirgy, 1988; Van Laar *et al.*, 2007)
- Fair treatment (Walton, 1974; Mirvis and Lawler, 1984; Nadler and Lawler, 1983).
- Job Design and task clarity (Warr *et al.*, 1979; Baba and Jamal, 1991; May *et al.*, 1999; Sirgy *et al.*, 2001; Brooks and Anderson, 2005; Van Laar *et al.*, 2007).
- Employee, associates with their peers, supervisors and their organisation as an entity (Walton, 1974; Warr *et al.*, 1979; Mirvis and Lawler, 1984; Efraty and Sirgy, 1988; Sirgy *et al.*, 2001)

2.7.2.3 Home- work Balance

In the Quality of Worklife models of Walton (1974), Warr *et al.* (1979), Brooks and Anderson (2005) Mirvis and Lawler (1984), Efraty and Sirgy (1988) and Van Laar *et al.* (2007), all have balance of life and work themes as dimensions of Quality of Worklife.

2.7.2.4 Stress at Work

Baba and Jamal (1991), Warr *et al.* (1979) and Van Laar *et al.* (2007) have the element of stress at work as dimensions of their Quality of Worklife models.

2.7.2.5 General Well-Being

In the Quality of Worklife models of Walton (1974), Warr *et al.* (1979) and Van Laar *et al.* (2007) all have elements of General Well-being themes as dimensions of Quality of Worklife.

2.7.2.6 Aggregation Model and Model Selection

After reviewing the dimension structure of each of the models and the resulting themes which emerge, it is interesting to note that only two Quality of Worklife models are presented in all five dimensions, the Van Laar *et al.* (2007) and Warr *et al.* (1979) models. It is therefore interesting to note how these models have influenced each other and how Van Laar *et al.* (2007), in particular, have theoretically built on previous understandings of Quality of Worklife. An argument could be made therefore that the Van Laar *et al.* (2007) is an aggregate model of Quality of Worklife. However, the dimension of Control at Work, as an independent individual dimension, is missing from all of the other models. The addition of Control at Work as individual factors improves the model's relatedness to the context of this research, as it is argued to be a pertinent and a relevant factor for the stressful Contact Centre customer service frontline environment. The nature of the Contact Centre is one with little control over many elements of the job due to its panopticon design (Fernie and Metcalf, 1998), scripted processes (Rose and Wright, 2005) and a large portion of the query resolution falling outside of the frontline service agent's immediate locus of control.

The selection of the Van Laar *et al.* (2007) becomes therefore an informed and appropriate choice as the model correctly theoretically aligned to both other

predominant seminal theoretical Quality of Worklife works, as well as proving appropriate for the context.

2.8 Conclusion

This chapter investigated and clarified the construct of Quality of Worklife, its relationship with leadership and the importance of it within the Contact Centre context. Quality of Work Life theory was located within the broader field of Need and Spill Over theory and was differentiated from other similar theories, such as Quality of Life, Employee Satisfaction, Wellness and Employee Well-Being.

The chapter also argued that it is important for organisations to be particularly aware of the Quality of Worklife perceptions of their employees should they want to address these levels and benefit from the positive consequences of higher levels of Quality of Worklife. These benefits included organizational commitment, job embeddedness, job involvement, increased performance, higher profit for organisations, reduction of intention to leave, improved learning organisations and organisational trust. The chapter also argued that that it is particularly important for organisations with Contact Centres to be vigilant of Quality of Worklife levels, as it is argued that in this context, the probability is high that a deficit Quality of Worklife exists.

To this end, numerous variables are reported to play an antecedent, moderating, mediating or consequential role in relation to the Quality of Worklife construct within the deficit Contact Centre context. A conceptual systems model of Quality of Worklife was proposed, which positions the various variables of the model and illustrates several inter-relationships of these variables, which affect and are affected by Quality of Worklife. The chapter argued that leadership is an important antecedent to Quality of Worklife; it is also proposed however, that it is not just any leadership that will suffice, particularly within a context such as this study. The chapter offers a position that it is certain qualities of leaders that have more influence on Quality of Worklife. Quality of Worklife measurement instruments were debated and arguments on their suitability were tabled. The argument for the selection of the Van Laar *et al.* (2007) instrument was presented. This chapter concluded with an investigation of a selection of Quality of Worklife models, and differentiated them in accordance with

their theoretical dimension structure and over-arching themes, linking various common dimensions and noting differences. The Van Laar *et al.* (2007) model was argued as an appropriate model to use for this research with respect to both its theoretical robustness as a model, as well as its suitability of the context.

As previously mentioned, leadership was positioned as an antecedent of Quality of Worklife, and it is the antecedent of interest for this study. The chapter also introduced the possibility of trust playing a mediating role between leadership and Quality of Worklife, although this will be further debated in the next chapter. The preferred leadership approach, its suitability for the context, as well as its relationship with trust will be further discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 3 – Servant Leadership

3.1 Introduction

The main goal of this research thesis is to examine the effects of leadership behaviour on the Quality of Worklife of their followers. The research also proposes that trust plays a mediating role in the relationship between leadership and Quality of Worklife. Quality of Worklife was positioned as an important construct in the context of the Contact Centre environment in the previous chapter, particularly because of the potential positive effects of higher levels of Quality of Worklife for both the organisation and the people working within that environment. This chapter reviews the literature on leadership as an antecedent to Quality of Worklife, as well as trust as a mediating variable.

Firstly, it is proposed that a particular type of leadership is required, namely one that is caring and relationally focused. Due to the “unpredictable, dynamic and very people-centred” context of the frontline service related environment (Chen, Zhu and Zhou, 2014:511), it is argued that a people centric leadership style, with a focus on relationships and caring, is needed. As argued in the previous chapters, due to the extremely prescriptive nature of work in the Contact Centre, employees begin to feel alienated and dissatisfied. The question therefore arises as to what the leader’s role in this context should be, in order to create a more caring, nurturing and relationship focused environment, so as to help employees cope within this challenging context. This chapter will argue that the leadership approach that is needed for the context described in this research paper is one that is heavily driven by relationships and displays a value of care. That is, leadership needs to be a relationship focused, caring, and values based approach, which attends to the needs and wellness of followers. This approach is consistent with a noted shift in the contemporary leadership and management literature. The shift reflects a move in leadership philosophy from a purely competitiveness orientated leadership approach, to an approach that is more responsible, with extra emphasis on ethics and which is driven by a set of values (Copeland, 2014). Consequently, values based leadership styles such as Servant leadership have emerged (Copeland, 2014).

Secondly, the chapter proposes that Servant leadership is a leadership construct that values caring, is primarily focused on leader-follower relationships, and is therefore well suited for this study's context. It will be argued that Servant leadership focuses on follower need satisfaction, relationship building and serving philosophies (Greenleaf, 1970; Spears, 1995; Laub, 1999; Russell and Stone, 2002; Patterson, 2003; Van Dierendonck, 2011). Thus, the principal objective of this chapter is to argue that Servant Leadership theory is a theory which is relational and displays values of caring for people and that it is an appropriate theoretical construct to act as antecedent to Quality of Worklife in the frontline Contact Centre context of this research thesis. Servant Leadership is reported to have a relationship with several behavioural constructs (Parris and Peachey, 2013), however, a significant gap in the literature exists with respect to investigating the relationship between Servant leadership and Quality of Worklife; and this research aims to contribute to the body of knowledge by empirically investigating the relationship between these two constructs. The chapter further argues that Van Dierendonck's (2011) theoretical model of Servant Leadership and its measure of the construct, the Servant Leadership Survey (Van Dierendonck and Nuijten, 2011), is the most appropriate instrument for the measurement of Servant Leadership in the frontline customer service context.

Thirdly, the chapter locates Servant Leadership within the broader field of leadership theory, and differentiates it from other similar contemporary theories. The review of Servant Leadership literature is preceded by a summary of the broader concepts of leadership and leadership theory; which is then followed by a synopsis and comparison of related leadership theories and Servant Leadership theories. While illustrating the differentiated Servant Leadership construct and its relationship with other behavioural constructs, as well as the various measurement instruments that measure the construct, the literature review demonstrates its proposed relevance to the context of this research thesis.

Fourthly, the chapter explains how this research intends to advance the development of Servant Leadership theory. This will be achieved through the testing of Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's (2011) Servant Leadership theory in a context and organisational setting which has never been tested before, as well as testing its

relationship with Quality of Worklife, also which has also never been tested before. Finally, trust is introduced as a mediator of the relationship between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife.

The next section, serves to identify contemporary leadership theories, which display a value of caring and have a relational follower centric premise. This type of leadership is argued to be relevant to the context that this research is situated within.

3.2 Relational, Caring and Trustworthy Leadership

Within the organisational context, leaders are ultimately measured on their ability to lead others (Setley, Dion and Miller, 2013). Contemporary leadership literature acknowledges that leadership is particularly affected by the nature of the relationships between the follower and the leader (Wood and Dibben, 2015). Given this acknowledgement, it is plausible that organisations wishing to improve their leadership effectiveness should seek to focus on the development and health of the relationships between leaders and their followers. As such, many studies have argued that relationally focused leadership styles prove to be associated with positively outcomes in an array of challenging work contexts. Cummings, MacGregor, Davey, Lee, Wong, Lo, Muise and Stafford's (2009) comprehensive review of the leadership literature, albeit in the healthcare nursing context, illustrated that task completion styles of leadership were inadequate on their own. Studies showed that leadership which emphasised relational elements produced substantial positive employee and organisational outcomes in the busy, somewhat stressful and often understaffed context of the frontline nurse (Cummings *et al.*, 2009). Similarly, research papers have argued that in the Contact Centre context, relational leadership styles are also highly appropriate as they too produce substantial positive employee and organisational outcomes in this often stressful and very busy environment (Bartram and Casimir, 2006; Connell and Hannif, 2008; Grant, 2012; Ruggieri and Abbate, 2013). Theories that aim to help explain the relationship between the leader and follower are Social Exchange theory and Leader Member Exchange theory. Both are discussed next.

3.2.1 Social Exchange and Leader Member Exchange Theories

Leadership and follower relations in the work context can be understood through Social Exchange theory (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005). Cropanzano and Mitchell (2005:874) argue that Social Exchange theory can be described as “a series of interactions that generate obligations”; which are “interdependent and contingent on the actions of another person”, and “have the potential to generate high-quality relationships.” In the Contact Centre context, according to Social Exchange theory in the work setting (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005) supervisors and agents are able to form unique reciprocating relationships. The value of these relationships is decided through a mix of social exchange and economic exchange transactions (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005). Cropanzano and Mitchell (2005) argue that social and economic transaction exchanges affect the type of social and economic relationships experienced.

In the Contact Centre context, social transactions refer to the social elements of the relationship. Trust between a supervisor and a Contact Centre service agent that develops from a caring and serving leadership attitude would be a positive consequence of a good social transaction (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005). Economic transaction exchange denotes a contractual monetary exchange transaction, such as remuneration for services rendered (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005). Or put differently, social interactions are interactions that can be described as a display of leadership that cares for and serves employees. On the other hand, the economic transactions of leaders and employees are characterised by transactions that are purely quid pro quo in nature, deriving an economic benefit for efforts exerted in relation to requirements of the job.

It is argued that an increase in social interactions with employees can improve the quality of the social relationship between the employee and the supervisor (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005). In relation to the Contact Centre context, an increase in interactions that are more relational in nature, such as the social interactions, will affect the social exchange relationship between the supervisor and agent. If the social exchange interactions outweigh the economic transactions, this would suggest that the supervisors in the Contact Centre have a more caring and relationally focussed leadership attitude towards their subordinates. As argued previously, this is the type of leadership that is appropriate for the Contact Centre

context. Sadly though, this is contrary to what is possibly the norm in the Contact Centre context due to the autocratic, highly monitored and scripted context, as previously described, where economic transactions in an economic relationship are more likely to be prevalent. The type of leadership that research has advocated for, is one which is first and foremost concerned with caring for the employees' wellbeing, above any economic benefits that they may bring to the organisation.

Leader Member Exchange (LMX) is another social theory, which helps to explain the strength of relationship between leader and the followers (Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995). LMX moves from the understanding that leadership is more than a one way, leader-to-follower-instruction-giving-relational-process (Steiner, 1988). LMX theory proposes that relationships in leadership at the one to one level are dyadic in nature (Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995). Leadership is influenced by relational aspects in the social exchange process of both the leader and the follower (Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995). LMX theory proposes that good leadership behaviour is categorised by leader-follower exchanges in where the leader's willingness to "show more influence and support beyond what is expected in their employment contract" significantly improves relationships (Steiner, 1988:612).

Setley *et al.* (2013) argue that if followers are led through relationship-related styles, coupled with a task-orientation emphasis, the follower will perceive that they experience better, or have higher quality LMX relationships with their leaders. This finding is significant in that it supposes that leadership styles that are relationally focussed, positively impact the leader-follower relationship. It is argued that in the challenging context of the Contact Centre, a relationship focussed leadership approach will benefit the quality of the employee's life as well as produce positive organisational consequences. While it is acknowledged that there is arguably a limited amount of literature that measures which relationally focussed styles stimulate the highest quality of the employee work life; Barbuto and Hayden (2011) did test the relationship between Servant Leadership and Leader Member Exchange. The findings of this study did propose that the Servant Leadership style of leading people proved to have a positive and significant relationship with LMX.

3.2.2 The Value of Caring

The notion that leadership and those who aspire to leadership positions should be of a moral nature and nurturing towards followers, is gaining momentum within the literature (Tomkins and Simpson, 2015). Härtel and Brown (2011:733) posit that organisations need to acknowledge the importance of “putting human capital front and center”, with a particular emphasis on caring for the employee. The value of caring in the Contact Centre context cannot be denied. It is proposed that in the very task orientated and monitored environment of the Contact Centre, leadership that demonstrates that it values caring for its human capital will strengthen relationships between its leaders and followers. The value of caring in a challenging organisational context is of interest to this study, as the study proposed that a caring and relationship focused leadership style is well suited for the Contact Centre context. Leadership approaches that value caring as their primary focus are therefore important for this research. Values and caring are intrinsically linked, in that “values-based leadership can influence and help to sustain a culture of caring” (Faith, 2013:6). It is therefore proposed that it is a values-based leadership approach that is needed for the context of this study. There are several leadership theories that have developed from a values based premise, which will be discussed in some detail later in the chapter. But it is important to note at this stage of the thesis, that Servant Leadership is a values based, caring and relationally focussed leadership construct, and is therefore positioned, amongst others, to be a leadership construct which is theoretically appropriate for this study.

3.2.3 The Role of Trust in Leaders

Leadership plays a significant role in the enhancement of trust of employees (Bass, 2002). As proposed earlier, leadership and follower relations in the work context can be understood through Social Exchange theory, in that trust between a supervisor and an employee may develop as a product of good social transactions (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005). Employees will thus associate positive social exchanges with a trusting relationship with the leader (Brown and Treviño, 2006).

Trust is developed through the behaviours of the leader (Zeffane, 2010), and the behaviour of a leader influences the level of trust of a leader (Joseph and Winston,

2005). If the leader produces positive social transactions, which display characteristics that subordinates deem as trustworthy and benevolent, employees are more likely to trust these leaders (Zeffane, 2010), and develop more meaningful emotional bonds (McAllister, 1995). Put differently, the role of trust in leadership is to ensure that there is a mutually dyadic trusting relationship between the supervisor and their subordinates. Cook and Wall (1980) attribute an increase in subordinate trust in the leader to the leader's intentions. If these are deemed to be trustworthy, and if subordinates develop confidence in the actions of a leader, trust will manifest (Cook and Wall, 1980).

Subordinate trust in a leader is a particularly foremost and central element of leadership, should a leader want to be effective (Burke, Sims, Lazzara and Salas, 2007). If a break down in trust of the leader develops, any organisational or team effectiveness becomes very challenging (Burke *et al.*, 2007). The role of trust in leadership and the role it plays in forming positive relationships with subordinates is one which cannot be underestimated, hence the focus it has achieved within the literature (Burke *et al.*, 2007).

Positive relationships aside, trust in leaders also can result "in greater focus on productive tasks, organizational commitment, intention to stay, compliance with corporate strategy decisions and profitability and therefore lead to a competitive advantage" (Fulmer and Ostroff, 2017: 648). Moreover, high trust in leaders is also reported to be positively associated with employee satisfaction (Podsakoff *et al.*, 1990), "increased communication, cooperation, and information sharing, perceived effectiveness of the leader increased discretionary behaviours, decreased turnover, improved team and organizational performance and stability" (Burke *et al.*, 2007:607). While these consequences are extremely noteworthy and important within the organisational context, as previously mentioned, the leadership construct which has been proposed as theoretically appropriate for this study and context is one which is caring and relationship based. While this will be discussed in more detail later on in this chapter, it is important to note that Servant Leadership has often been positioned within the literature as a leadership approach that is caring and relationship based (Greenleaf, 1977). It is also an approach which influences, and is antecedent to attitudes of trust of the leader (Chan and Mak, 2014, Seto and Sarros, 2016; Joseph and Winston, 2005).

3.2.4 Summary

It is argued that a caring, trusting and relationship focussed leadership approach is an appropriate, if not necessary approach given the Contact Centre operational context, and that the need for high quality leader-member-exchange leadership relationships is an imperative one. Values based leadership styles such as Servant Leadership are relationship, trusting and caring orientated. The construction and appropriates of Servant Leadership is discussed in more detail in a later section of the chapter, with particular reference given to the delineation of the construct, the examination of various prevalent models as well as measurement methods of Servant leadership. What follows is a discussion on the earlier scholarly conceptions of leadership styles and how these relate to the caring and values based leadership approach that is argued to be required in the context of this study.

3.3 Conceptions of Leadership

The contemporary business world is constantly changing. Daft (1999:9) argues that the state of change today is more profound than any time “since the dawn of the modern age”. The comparative stability of the industrial age is vastly different to the uncertainty and constant change of the post-industrial era, or information age (Daft 1999). The industrial age was characterised by the constant search for stability; and with it control. Competition was about winning and losing and industrialists were fixated on uniformity with little emphasis given to relationship building or caring for subordinates. Leadership ability was defined and identified by the social, physical and personal traits of leaders (Hellriegel, Slocum, Staude, Amos, Klopper, Louw, and Oosthuizen, 2013). The dominant leadership theory of the time was that of *Trait Theory*.

3.3.1 Trait Models

Research on leadership traits was the predominant research of leadership in the early 1900's, prior to 1940 (Paul, Costley, Howell, Dorfman, 2002), and is characterized as the first phase of modern leadership development. Munsun (1921), Bowden (1926), Bingham (1927), and Moore's (1927) arguments postulated that the assertion of authority through strength of personality, character and physical prowess, articulated what it meant to be a leader. These early models were primarily based on a *Great Man* ideology. Weber (1968) proposed that a leader's position within the organisation, through a bureaucratic nature, influences and identifies leadership traits of power. Later research on trait theory (Stogdill, 1974) did show that other traits such as assertive, dominant, energetic and self-confident appeared more frequently in leaders; however the research proved inconclusive, as a consistent set of leader traits was seldom evident and evidence of absence of traits did not correlate with the absence of leadership. There was not much in the way of relational or caring focussed leadership literature. Later scripts however, make more deliberate mentions of these traits. In his study on behavioural taxonomies on effective leadership, Yukl (2012:69) argued that one of the behavioural elements that are significant to ensure successful leadership is the ability to be "relationship-orientated". The more contemporary view of leadership would therefore suggest that good leaders have the innate ability, or trait, to build relationships with members (Yukl, 2012). Leaders, who show attributes of listening, and genuinely caring for members make worthy leaders (Yukl, 2012). Moreover, along with the ability to show supportive characteristics, leaders must be able to demonstrate that they have the ability to be able to grow and empower subordinates (Yukl, 2012). Yukl (2012) therefore argues that the more contemporary view of leadership is one that considers forming relationships and is of a caring nature to be an important element of leadership.

3.3.2 Behavioural Models

Given the inconclusiveness of the early Trait theory research results, researchers tended to argue towards a notion that perhaps certain behaviours displayed by people could be closely correlated to leadership. The behaviours of the *Behavioural Models* suggested in this phase of leadership research, much emphasis was

positioned at the behaviour or actions of leaders in relation to how they delegate, what frequency and medium of communication channels, and so forth (Hellriegel *et al.*, 2013).

The *Behavioural Model* philosophy is described as the Theory X and Theory Y model (McGregor, 1960). The assumption is that the Theory X leader has to resort to pressure tactics in order for followers to produce. This is due to the assumption that all employees possess a general negative or apathetic attitude towards their jobs. McGregor's (1960) Y theory suggests that employees are responsive to the organisational objectives, they are therefore engaged, and therefore buy into what the organisation's visions, values and beliefs are. These employees are typified as the types who are eager to accept and pursue fulfilment of tasks through increased responsibility in their jobs.

It could be argued that the works of Blake and Mouton's (1964) research was pioneering in the development of leadership as relational and caring as they posit that leadership can be classified under two key assumptions, the first is that leader's show disproportionate concern for people; and at the other end is that they show more concern for production. The Managerial Grid model (Blake and Mouton, 1964) illustrated that the polar opposite of the relational, caring and concern for people style, dubbed a *country-club-style*, was the single minded concern for production, named the *produce-or-perish-style*. A high concern for both people and production was what produced effective leadership, or *team-style*. An implicit Team Style assumption is that leadership resides as an entity within the team and not purely in the individual leader (Foster, 1989) and therefore is in stark contrast to the industrial era paradigm of Trait Theory.

Graen and Uhl-Bien's (1995) work on the Leader-Member Exchange model (LMX) argues that there is uniqueness in the one-on-one leader-follower relationship. On the one end, it is characterised as highly effective and meaningful, while at the other end of the continuum, it is superficial and contractual. Performance and a meaningful leader-follower relationship are positively related (Gerstner and Day, 1997), so it is advocated that a large amount of significance should be placed on relationship building and maintenance within the team between leaders and team members.

3.3.3 Contingency Models

According to Hellriegel *et al.* (2013), Contingency Models of leadership are highly contextual, in that the context determines the preeminent style of leadership required. Stated differently, Contingency Models argue that leadership effectiveness relies on the relationship between situational variables and leadership behaviours (Hellriegel *et al.*, 2013). To recognise the applicability of this theory, a thorough examination of the leadership style and the current situation, or context, is necessary. Moreover, the interpretation of this type of theory for leadership effectiveness, proposes to match the leadership style required to the suitable situation. Some models presuppose flexibility of leadership style, while others help a leader to identify the type of context that best suits his or her approach.

Fiedler (1967) was one of the first researchers to associate situational aspects with leadership style. Fiedler's (1967) central argument in his Contingency Model is postulated from the notion that leaders are either task or relations orientated. Fiedler (1967) illustrated leadership effectiveness can be predicted when a manager follows a process of firstly describing a colleague which fit the managers least preferred co-worker mould, based on characteristics that the co-worker or subordinate displayed when at work. Based on this categorisation, the manager was labelled either as pro task or relationship (Fiedler, 1967). Fiedler then defined three variables; leader-member relations, task structure and position power, to assist in predicting effective leadership behaviour and argued that certain leadership styles would be more effective in certain situations (Hellriegel *et al.*, 2013). For example, the most effective leadership style in a situation where leader-member exchange is good, the task structure component of the model is high and position power is strong, would suggest a task orientated leadership style, however in other situations different combinations of the variable would be optimal (Fiedler, 1986). Leaders therefore needed to recognise the context where their typical style was suited.

On the other hand, House's Path-Goal-Model (Northouse, 2013) argues that differing situations call for the leader to adopt differing leadership styles. House (1996) suggested four leadership styles; these are supportive, achievement orientated, participative and directive. House (1996) proposed that leaders must use the

appropriate style, as and when needed, to best meet the current and specific motivational requirements of their followers in order to realise specific predetermined goals. While this model is one of the first to acknowledge the importance and effect of motivation, it appears to be fairly simplistic in that it implies leadership to be a one way, leader to follower, process and not a two way relationship process.

Leadership that is influenced by environment is indeed worth understanding within this research's context. It is argued that due to the highly autocratic structure of the Contact Centre work environment, which as previously mentioned before, is governed by strict rules and scripted tasks, will benefit from a relationally biased leadership style that values caring. One body of leadership literature that does focus on a type of leadership that is focussed on relationships and which has values which are core to the construct, such as caring, is values based leadership. Values based theory and the contemporary models that have emerged from it are discussed in the next section of the chapter.

3.4 Contemporary Values Based Leadership

It has been previously argued that the context that this study is set in is an environment where a deficit Quality of Worklife environment exists. Previously, leadership was argued to be the antecedent of Quality of Worklife and the antecedent of interest for this study. However, not any leadership style was argued to suffice. To improve Quality of Worklife in the Contact Centre context, a relational, caring leadership was proposed. This relational, caring leadership approach can be found in the values based leadership body of literature.

The idea of having values drive a leadership approach is a fairly contemporary ideal. The industrial era paradigm was traditionally based on the premise that the main focus of an organisation was the accumulation of capital, and this was to be accomplished through the strategic modelling and positioning of resources (Bartlett and Ghoshal, 1994). The main purpose or function of leadership was to ensure strategies, structure and systems translated into organisational competitive advantage, with seemingly little care of relationship building. The employee's portion

of this contract was to ensure, through obedience of strategy implementation, job security would be secured (Bartlett and Ghoshal, 1994). Industrial era leadership failed to recognise and apply the full capabilities of the organisations most valuable resource, the Human Resource (Bartlett and Ghoshal, 1994). The very recent past has arguably not been too dissimilar, and has been described by some as an environment in which organisations are chiefly focused on strategic leadership, in a quest for the ever eluding allure of sustainable “above average returns” (Rowe, 2001:81). As a consequence, the recent strategic business practice premise has been overwhelmingly focussed on the accumulation of capital, and a win-at-all-costs philosophy (Copeland, 2014). The consideration that the human resource should be the most valuable resource has therefore in turn, seemingly still been largely ignored. Senior leadership’s fixation on “above average returns” (Rowe, 2001:81) at all costs leadership culture, permeates through the organisation onto lower levels of the organisations structure. Task orientated environments like the Contact Centre combined with a lower-level leadership fixation on productivity, due to pressures from the top, is argued to influence how the ordinary worker is treated in these challenging environments.

Unfortunately, a negative consequence of the focus on above average returns, finance and wealth accumulation has led to numerous documented occurrences where this type of leadership focus has led to fairly significant and unwanted and dire consequences, for both leaders and managers of organisations. In the quest for increased productivity and wealth accumulation, some leaders have felt compelled to increase and acquire capital, as well as increase shareholder value by any and all means possible (Copeland, 2014). All too often, the endeavour to accomplish “above average returns” (Rowe, 2001:81) at all costs has compromised the ethics of leaders at all organisational levels (Copeland, 2014). Leadership’s prime focus of increasing shareholder value at all costs, which is sometimes at the expense of their employees, has severely tested many leaders’ ethical and moral foundations, and several leaders have often been found wanting when being held to account for unethical practices in the recent business world (Copeland, 2014). Consequently, there has been a shift in this paradigm. Management literature now reflects a move in leadership philosophy which proposes a move from the purely competitive, task orientated leadership approach, to an approach that is more responsible, with extra

emphasis on ethics, develops relationships and which is driven by a set of values (Copeland, 2014), caring for one's employees being one of them. This shift in thinking has given rise to the concept of a Values Based Leadership approach (Copeland, 2014).

Copeland (2014) argues that Values Based Leadership is primarily concerned with addressing improving the moral code and ethical principles of leadership. Badaracco (1998) argues that when confronted with difficult situations, values become the key driver, which determines the response or reaction to the situation, problem or context. This is significant for the Contact Centre context, where difficult situations are frequent and abound, and the idea that in difficult circumstances or environments, leadership that values caring will come to the fore and is assured to positively impact frontline employees, and in turn impact on their Quality of Worklife.

From the Value's Based Leadership premise, several leadership theories have emerged and are currently being developed within the literature (Copeland, 2014). It is important in the context of this research dissertation to be cognisant of these theories, but more importantly, to understand which of these are aligned with the relational and caring attributes that are argued to be appropriate within the Contact Centre context.

Copeland (2014) posits that Authentic Transformational Leadership (Bass and Steidlmeier, 1999), Ethical leadership (Treviño, and Brown, 2004), Authentic leadership (Avolio and Gardner, 2005), Spiritual Leadership (Fry, 2003), Self-Sacrificing Leadership (Van Knippenberg and Van Knippenberg, 2005), Stewardship (Block, 1993), Connective leadership (Lipman-Blumen, 1997), Shared leadership (Pearce and Conger, 2003) and Servant Leadership (Greenleaf, 1970) are all emerging leadership theories that have developed from the Values Based leadership construct. In addition to these leadership theories, Van Dierendonck (2011) posits that Transformational leadership (Bass and Avolio, 1994), Level 5 leadership (Collins, 2001) and Empowering leadership (Martin, Liao and Campbell, 2013) also have much in common as they too are embedded in philosophy of strong values. These leadership constructs are rooted in moral, ethical, relational and member focussed values. While all of these leadership theories have a strong relational and

values emphasis, they differ in their principle or dominant value. What follows is a short summary of these theories followed by the differentiation of each of them according to their dominant value structure.

3.4.1 Transformational Leadership and Authentic Transformational Leadership

The principle that the follower can achieve more than what they initially thought they could, or even more than what they initially intended to achieve through attentive guidance and motivation of the leader, is the foundation of Transformational leadership (Krishnan, 2005). Transformational leadership relates to and is positively associated with both the follower's needs and outcomes, as well as with the needs and outcomes of the organisation (Jorg and Schyns, 2004). Transformational leadership theory is embedded in the value and beliefs of the followers and ignites greater awareness of the organisational needs within followers (Kuhnert and Lewis, 1987). Congruent organisational and follower needs outcomes such as job satisfaction (Bryman, 1992; Emery and Barker, 2007), trust (Podsakoff, Mackenzie, Moorman and Fetter, 1990) and empowerment (Masi and Cooke, 2000), are particularly important in this form of leadership. Transformational leaders are leaders who are able to change followers' visions and goals through application of their influence in an honourable manner (Kuhnert and Lewis, 1987). Bass and Avolio (1994) argue that transformational leadership consists of four separate factors: Idealised Influence, Inspirational motivation, Intellectual stimulation and Individualised Consideration. Idealised Influence, also known as charisma, is leadership behaviour that is trustworthy and develops respect of the followers through the displaying of values that are congruent with role model behaviour (Bass and Avolio, 1994). Inspirational motivations is referred to as leadership which ensures that the vision that has been developed by the organisation, paints a clear picture of the future proposed state and is very clearly articulated (Kotter, 2007) so that followers are motivated by it (Bass and Avolio, 1994). Intellectual stimulation is a factor of transformational leadership which speaks to the encouragement, creativity and welcomes continuous challenging of the status quo through follower initiative (Bass and Avolio, 1994). The Individualised Consideration dimension of Transformational leadership is leadership that pays particular attention to the

follower as an individual in respect of their personal growth, and one which continuously mentors and coaches the follower.

However, Bass and Steidlmeier (1999) argue that Transformational leadership relies heavily on the charisma of the leader, and acknowledges that not all leaders have the ability to influence people with charisma. To compensate for the lack of innate charismatic ability, some leaders have to play-act this ability. Albeit that this play-acting may often be effective, it does not emanate from genuine Transformational leadership ability, and therefore cannot be classified as Authentic Transformational leadership (Bass and Steidlmeier, 1999). Sosic and Cameron (2010:254) suggest that Authentic Transformational leadership is Transformational leadership; but the key differentiator is that it is leadership that is conducted “in a way that is true to the self and others”. Authentic Transformational leadership is leadership which is enhanced by authentic values, and displays enhanced senses of self-awareness and authentic relationship developments with members (Sosic and Cameron, 2010).

3.4.2 Ethical leadership

According to Treviño, and Brown (2004:120), ethical leadership is defined as “the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, and the promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement, and decision-making”. Broadly speaking, Treviño and Brown (2004) argue that the fair treatment by the leaders to all stakeholders earns leader-follower trust; and this is the foundation of effective ethical leadership.

It is to be noted that when describing the “moral person” (Brown and Treviño, 2006:597) in Brown’s and Treviño’s (2006) definition of Ethical leadership, these characteristics are those that are related to ethical leadership. Leadership that makes decisions with reference and concern for all stakeholders demonstrates the character of leadership. The character that emanates from leaders is attractive to its followers, and stands out as a beacon of virtuous governance for followers to follow (Brown and Treviño, 2006). Moreover, Ethical Leadership assumes the position of a role model purely by the moral actions of the leader, both in their professional as well

as in their personal capacities (Brown and Treviño, 2006:597). Social learning theory argues that leaders can change or enhance their follower's viewpoints on moral or ethical behaviour and therefore engrain the mantle of role model onto an ethical leader (Zhu, 2008).

Decisions made within the organisation that are made by what followers consider as leaders whom display ethical leadership characteristics are decisions that will tend to be trusted more, therefore instructions tend to be followed more acceptingly, with more effort placed on the performance of the activity rather than the obedience of the instruction (Treviño and Brown, 2004).

3.4.3 Authentic leadership

The unequivocal sense of truly knowing oneself and having comprehensive, realistic views of one's self-identity is the basis of Authentic Leadership, or as described by Greek Philosophers "To thine own self be true" (Avolio and Gardner, 2005: 319). Avolio and Gardner (2005) argue that the term sincerity must not be confused with the term authenticity, and in the context of Authentic Leadership the two concepts need to be differentiated. Authenticity is an accurate and true understanding of one's own self, sincerity however, is how others perceive the true and truthful image and actions of another (Avolio and Gardner, 2005). Authentic leadership is witnessed in contexts where followers have authentic relationships with leaders, and the followers follow those same leaders for reasons that are deemed to be authentic in nature (Shamir and Eilam, 2005).

Avolio, Gardner, Walumbwa, Luthans and May (2004) postulated that Authentic Leadership has four factors, self-awareness, relational transparency, internalized moral perspective and abilities to balance information. Self-awareness is a frank and realistic internal understanding and summation that the leader has of himself with respect to both flaws and abilities equally (Avolio *et al.*, 2004). Relational transparency involves truthful representation of the leader's emotions and emotional state when dealing with followers (Avolio *et al.*, 2004) and a factual display of emotions that warrants the situational context. The innate set of capabilities that allude to a state where all actions of an individual are directed by sound moral

judgement is what Avolio *et al.* (2004) refer to as Internalized Moral Perspective. The ability to Balance Information is the last of Avolio *et al.*'s (2004) factors, and this factor encompasses the ability to digest and analyse complex information and articulate it so the followers are able to easily understand.

3.4.4 Spiritual leadership

Fry's (2003: 711) associates Spiritual leadership with a "calling and membership" in order to inspire and influence followers and is a seminal statement describing Spiritual leadership theory. Making a real difference through serving, is the basis of what Fry (2003) terms as a calling. A genuine, concerned and loving organisational culture is deemed the term membership (Fry, 2003). Fry (2003) argues that a leadership analogy which is akin to a calling, in an atmosphere of love and membership, depicts and defines the construct of Spiritual Leadership.

Fry (2003: 717) argues that the core of Spiritual leadership is that it influences, directs and encourages the relationships of followers intrinsically "through vision, hope/faith, and altruistic love, task involvement, and goal identification". The vision and goal identification of an organisation is sometimes referred to as a Big Hairy Audacious Goal, a BHAG (Louw and Venter, 2006). The BHAG in conjunction with a rich and vivid depiction of what would happen, or what it would be like when this goal is achieved, can be understood as the vision (Louw and Venter, 2006). The "hope or faith" element of Fry's (2003: 717) definition is associated with an expectation, as well as trust of reward, should the perseverance of an ideal be maintained. Altruism in Fry's (2003: 717) definition can be described, very basically, as people who help people without the expectation of resultant reward (Wameken and Tomasello, 2009). Task involved people, as to which Fry (2003) refers are intrinsically motivated to complete and get involved with certain tasks, so much so that they become masters of these tasks, and are classified as experts of these jobs (Ryan and Deci, 1989).

Fry (2003) posits that Spiritual leadership can be found in organisations where both the leaders and the followers display a sense of real concern for one another. An organisation where followers experience the value of connectedness with one another other and the fellowship of belonging which can only be described as a

system of spiritual leadership. A sense of belonging is thought of by some to be one of humanness and of most innate psychological desires (Thau, Aquino, and Poortvliet, 2007). Reave (2005) argues that the most important value of a spiritual leader is values based, namely integrity. According to Reave (2005), it is crucial for the spiritual leader to be classified as the embodiment of integrity. Followers do not only react to how leaders act, followers follow the whole real person (Reave, 2005). Spiritual leaders are those with unquestionable integrity.

3.4.5 Self-Sacrificing

The sacrifice of one's self for the benefit of a greater cause can be described as Self-Sacrificing Leadership (Van Knippenberg and Van Knippenberg, 2005). The value placed on the group over the individual is inherent to Self-sacrificing Leadership behaviour (Van Knippenberg and Van Knippenberg, 2005). Choi and Mai-Dalton, (1998) argue that foregoing a predominantly self-serving methodology, or mind-set, towards business for private gain is illustrative of Self Sacrificing Leadership. Self-Sacrificing Leadership proposes a more noble primary purpose of existence, which is of the benefit to the entire organisation; self-enrichment becomes a visibly lower priority (Choi and Mai-Dalton, 1998). Choi and Mai-Dalton (1998) argue that the entire organisation benefits, through improved performance (Van Knippenberg and Van Knippenberg, 2005), if leaders are able to behave in this fashion, as well as influence their followers to also behave in a self-sacrificial manner. De Cremer (2006) suggests that followers gravitate to acts of leader self-sacrifice; and acts of self-sacrifice ignites spirits and improves fellowship.

Bass's (1985) initial works on transformational leadership reasoned that self-sacrifice can be used as a motivational technique to influence followers, many other authors however have expanded this argument to incorporate the beneficial consequences for self-sacrificing leadership behaviour (Van Knippenberg and Van Knippenberg, 2005). Self-Sacrificing leadership is argued, amongst others benefits, to increase the propensity of followers to follow, or work with, leaders more intently and this can influence can directly be associated with an increase in follower motivation (De Cremer, 2006).

3.4.6 Stewardship Leadership

Slette (1999), in review of Block's (1993) seminal works on the Stewardship theory, positions that Stewardship is the leaders ability to relinquish all ideologies of strict employee control or the expectation of subservient compliance from members, however the reduction of control does not imply relinquishment of accountability, Steward-leaders assume full accountability for all for organisational goals. A Steward-leaders fundamental conviction stems from the premise that leadership must consist of a "distribution of power" (Block 1993; Slette, 1999:6), in that all tiers of the organisation are empowered through the process of being given options to choose how they will perform, or interact with customers. Block (1993) posits that a collectivist approach to organisational governance is favoured over the traditional leader-subordinate locus of control, which is usually found in hierarchical organisational structures. Block (1993) suggests that Stewardship-leaders advocate for partnership relationships within organisations as opposed to a relationships that can be described as controlling or parental-childlike. A partnership view of leadership in a steward paradigm is particularly pertinent when issues of dependency are being considered. Block (1993) argues that partnerships assume members are empowered, can make decisions independently and do not rely on the constant instruction of leaders. Stewardship can be posited as the relationship between leaders and members of the organisation working in partnership, with balanced control, in order to fulfil the long term interests of the organisation.

3.4.7 Connective Leadership

At the core of Connective leadership is the opposing concepts of interdependency and diversity (Lipman-Blumen, 1997). Interdependency argues that everything and everyone is connected, and is getting increasingly more connected. An increasing connectivity context is due to several reasons such as increasing seemingly unlimited growth of the global village combined with ever developing technological advancements (Lipman-Blumen, 1997). Diversity however posits that the concept of individuality is also gaining momentum. More and more groups of people or individuals are demanding to be classified as, and respected as unique entities with their own independent voices and viewpoints (Lipman-Blumen, 1997). Lipman-Blumen (1997) argues that the type of leadership needed to deal with these

contrasting philosophical viewpoints, is Connective leadership, and this is particularly relevant in leading organisations in the contemporary and connective era.

The Connective leadership behavioural model consists of three behavioural styles, a direct style, a relational style and an instrumental style (Lipman-Blumen, 1997, Robinson and Lipman-Blumen, 2003). Direct behaviours are associated with competitive action, leaders who want to succeed and beat competitors (Lipman-Blumen, 1997). The relationship style refers to leadership behaviour that relishes in the mentoring and then consequential accomplishments of members (Lipman-Blumen, 1997). The instrumental style which Lipman-Blumen (1997) makes reference to is the ability of leaders to use members in savvy ways in order to achieve certain organisational goals. While it is acknowledged that some leaders may express certain styles more prevalently or naturally, the intention of the Connective leaders should be to find a balanced use of all three styles.

3.4.8 Shared Leadership

Shared leadership, described by Pearce and Conger (2003), advances the leader – member influence ideology. Pearce and Conger (2003) argue that leadership does not only manifest itself in the influence relationship between the leader and the member but is also found in groups, or more specifically, the influence of groups on members as well as influence on other groups in the attainment of organisational goals. This leadership style is a fundamental move for the traditional leadership approach in where managers influence employees through hierarchical structures in a one-on-one or one-on-many environment (Pearce, Hoch, Jeppesen and Wegge, 2010), is it said to be “leadership from the inside” (Gockel and Werth, 2010:172). In a Shared Leadership organisational environment, decision making is not done by only the leader, and in reference to his own vision, Shared leadership implies collective viewpoints are considered and joint decision making is preferred (Pearce and Conger, 2003). Shared leadership is thus a move from the popular traditional writings of where scholars portray the leadership construct to be a one of influence on members in order to fulfil organisational goals. Gockel and Werth (2010) argue that contextual influences play a significant role in Shared leadership; Osborn, Hunt,

and Jauch (2002) suggest that contextual influences in a leadership context will change from time to time to suit context requirements, similarly the members in teams are also affected and swayed by context in Shared leadership (Gockel and Werth, 2010). In other words Shared leadership can be articulated as leadership that is based on mutual influence theory and influenced by context.

3.4.9 Level 5 leadership

Collins (2001:75) argues that under the stewardship of level 5 leaders, organisations have the capabilities of moving from “good to great”. Collins (2001:75) describes “Level 5” leadership as the “highest level of executive capabilities” that are able to produce “sustained excellence” and sustained organisational success.

Level 5 leaders are extremely unassuming, humble individuals, who are strong on values and have intense internal drive (Collins, 2001). This is the type of leader who takes the organisation to heights that are greater than expected, and sustains it there. The key differentiator in this leadership style is that when credit is given, Level 5 leaders have the humility to recognise all around them first, and will ensure that they are last in line to receive any credit. The level 5 leader’s acknowledges achievements and diverts personal credit to all around them.

To understand the construct better, Collins (2001) argues that the capabilities of leaders can be arranged in different levels. Level 1 indicates a highly capable individual who consistently produces through the application of talent and knowledge. A level 2 individual makes significant contributions through working effectively in a team setting. A Level 3 individual, which Collins (2001) refers to as a Competent Manager, controls and organises resources and is able to effectively achieve predetermined organisational objectives. Level 4 is characterised by leaders in which Collins (2001) refers to as Effective Leaders. These effective leaders are leaders whom achieve high performance through the understanding and relentless perusing of the organisations vision. The Level 5 leader is described as the “paradoxical combination of humility and will” (Collins, 2001:70) that sustains the

organisation at greatness. These leaders ensure, through a brand of humble leadership and extraordinary will that their organisations become great.

A very good analogy of Level 5 leadership is described by Collins in the “window and the mirror example” (2001:74). Collins explains that level 5 leaders will always look to give credit to others. Collins suggests, metaphorically, that Level 5 leaders are continuously “looking out of the window” when credit is due, but when things go wrong, are extremely tough on themselves and take personal responsibility for it, in a sense they are describe as “looking in the mirror” during challenging periods. Level 5 leaders will therefore never resort to sharing the blame and take accountability for the organisation in its entirety very seriously. Level 5 leaders show tremendous professional will and set extremely high standards (Collins, 2001), they demonstrate a dogmatic approach to do “what it takes” to make it happen, to produce results.

According to Collins (2001), followers are drawn to the combination of fierce determination, humility and the complete absence of any narcissism that Level 5 leaders display. In the contemporary, materialistically driven world, where much emphasis is put on self-status and self-importance, Level 5 leadership is therefore an attractive alternative.

3.4.10 Empowering Leadership

Martin *et al.* (2013: 1375) define empowering leadership as a form of leadership in which “leaders share power with employees by providing additional responsibility and decision-making authority over work and resources as well as the support needed to handle the additional responsibility effectively”.

Van Dierendonck and Dijkstra (2012) argue that the construct of empowerment in the workplace stems from theories of control at work (Van Laar *et al.*, 2007) and participative employee involvement. Empowering Leadership is perceived to be a position in where empowered leaders produce an environment where employees feel and act empowered (Van Dierendonck and Dijkstra, 2012). The notion that employee motivation has become something of an intrinsic characteristic and

therefore there is little need for them to be managed through typical line or directive functions, is indicative of an empowered employee and infers that they have been subjected to a leader who is empowering (Pearce and Simms, 2002). Van Dierendonck and Dijkstra (2012) explain that Empowering Leadership is characterised by three facets: i) delegation of authority: the practice of leaders giving followers their power in order to operate more effectively (Burke, 1986); ii) accountability: the ability and willingness to answer and account for everything that the employee does encapsulates the concept of accountability (Burke, 2005) and iii) facilitation: by soliciting the knowledge and skills of all of the employees to use collectively, moreover, ensuring that other knowledge and training is available shared to enable more enlightened and effective workforce (Van Dierendonck and Dijkstra, 2012). Empowering Leadership is argued to increase the proactive inclinations of a work force (Martin *et al.*, 2013) and self-leadership, which in turn leads to increases in performance levels (Lorinkova, Pearsall and Sims, 2013).

3.4.11 Servant Leadership

The prosperous contemporary organisation is typified as an organisation that accomplishes better returns and is a more competitive entity through its focus on employee wellness and innovation (Van Dierendonck, 2011). Servant Leadership provides followers with a leader that endorses a participative culture and promotes the ideals of promoting empowerment amongst employees (Melchar and Bosco, 2010). The very core of Servant Leadership is that it is differentiated from the influence-bias thinking of generic leadership, as it promulgates the notion that above all, the good of the members must supersede any self-related interests of the leader (Laub, 1999). A caring follower-service centric culture, within the collective leadership of an organisation, is resultant of leaders who are motivated to serve others first, and through such service, achieve organisational goals (Greenleaf, 1977; Spears, 1995).

As organisations start to redirect their energies from an autocratic approach, and start focusing energies towards managing the wellness of their human resources through service (Dolan and Garcia, 2002), the Servant leadership construct begins to manifest. Servant leadership is more than a construct, which is made up of many varying abstract principles; Servant Leadership is leadership that manifests and is

articulated by the service actions that leaders portray, it is therefore, leadership through practice (Parris and Peachey, 2013).

However, what is of interest to this research is the principle values that are dominant and which resonate from the literature with respect to the Servant leadership construct. It “is strongly based in ethical and caring behaviour and enhances the growth of workers while improving the caring and quality of organizational life” (Spears, 2010:25); as well as a leadership approach which engenders trust in followers (Greenleaf, 1977). As mentioned before, this thesis proposes that it is a leadership style, which has caring and trusting as key value propositions, is appropriate for the context of this study.

3.4.12 Principle Value Differentiation

Given the summary of the leadership theories above, the table below illustrates the dominant value, which is argued to resonate from each of the leadership theories. What follows is a short description of the leadership theories and their proposed principle values.

It is argued that Authentic Transformational leadership’s core value is that of authentic charismatic behaviour which is able to influence. Similarly, Authentic leadership’s core value is that of authenticity. Ethical leadership’s principle value is to be ethical, or differently put, has ethics as its dominant value. Spirituality is Spiritual leadership’s core value and Self-Sacrificing leadership values self-sacrifice as its principle value. Stewardship leadership values steward-like behaviour, while Connective leadership’s core value’s is to bring people or organisations together to find common ground in a mutually collaborative manner. This makes Connective leadership value mutual collaboration very highly. Shared leadership principally values sharing power, or equality within the work environment and Level 5 leadership values passionate and humble leaders, the values of passion and humility are very dominant with Level 5 leadership. Empowering leadership centres on entrusting employees with the responsibilities and accountabilities, valuing trust predominantly. Servant leadership is a leadership theory that is based on the principle of caring and serving your employees so that they in turn grow.

It has been posited throughout this thesis that the leadership style of interest, and that is proposed to be the most contextually appropriate, is one which is relational and caring. From the analysis of principle values per leadership theory based on all of the values based theories above, Servant Leadership is the only theory that values caring explicitly. This is not to say that the other theories are uncaring, it is more that the Servant Leadership construct is one where the value of caring seems to be more dominant. This is significant in relation to this research as it positions Servant Leadership to be the leadership construct of interest for this study and it proposes that it is the leadership construct which is mostly theoretically aligned to the context and Quality of Worklife requirements of this study.

Table 3.1 Principle/Dominant Value per Leadership Theory

Leadership Theory	Author	Principle/Dominant Values
Authentic Transformational Leadership	<i>Bass and Avolio (1994)</i>	Authentic charismatic influence
Ethical leadership	<i>Treviño, and Brown (2004)</i>	Ethics
Authentic leadership	<i>Avolio and Gardner (2005)</i>	Authenticity
Spiritual Leadership	<i>Fry (2003)</i>	Spirituality
Self-Sacrificing Leadership	<i>Van Knippenberg and Van Knippenberg (2005)</i>	Self-Sacrificing
Stewardship	<i>Block (1993)</i>	Stewardly
Connective leadership	<i>Lipman-Blumen (1997)</i>	Mutual Collaboration
Shared leadership	<i>Pearce and Conger (2003)</i>	Equality
Level 5 leadership	<i>Collins (2001)</i>	Passion, Humility
Empowering leadership	<i>Martin, Liao and Campbell (2013)</i>	Trust
Servant leadership	<i>Greenleaf (1970)</i>	Caring, Ethics

Source: Author's construction

3.4.13 Servant Leadership Differentiated

From the values analysis above, Servant leadership is positioned as the possible construct of interest for this study as its principle value was argued to be that of caring. Servant leadership, and other contemporary theories mentioned previously in chapter, have their origins in Values Based leadership (Copeland, 2014) and also, according to Van Dierendonck (2011), have similarities with Servant leadership. The next section however, serves to argue that over and above the principle value focus, the Servant leadership construct is indeed a distinct and differentiated one.

When relating Servant Leadership to Transformational leadership, it is quite clear that Servant leadership is leadership that is a construct which is focused on service as well as the needs of the followers, while Transformational Leadership has its priorities mostly aligned within the organisation and shareholder space (Van Dierendonck, 2011). Authentic leadership theory however, positions that the leader portrays authentic behaviour due to his/her position or station within the organisation and the authentic behaviour is organisationally focussed. Servant Leadership theory also attributes authentic behaviour as an integral characteristic, however more specifically in the form of serving and for the growth of followers (Van Dierendonck, 2011). Moreover, even Authentic Transformational leadership differs in where the Servant leader aspirations and authentic behaviour are not solely aligned with influence of followers for organisational gain but rather to serve, grow and develop.

Ethical Leadership theory focuses on what is the right thing to do, or what the leader is supposed to do, both from a procedural compliance and moral point of view, put differently, Ethical leadership is “moral management” (Brown and Treviño, 2006:598). Servant leadership differentiates itself from this in that the focus of the leader is on the needs of the members, and has emphasis on developing them to a point where members appreciate the benefits of achievement through ethical means, this is contrasting to obeying organisational directives that are ethically based (Van Dierendonck, 2011).

Spirituality at the workplace, as described in Spiritual leadership, does not have the same meaning to all. Some describe it as a construct that evokes feelings of connectedness through value commonalities (Van Dierendonck, 2011), while some argue that it is a calling, usually connected to service to others or God (Brown and Treviño, 2006), Van Dierendonck (2011) posits that Spiritual leadership is immersed in the identity and association of organisational culture. Spiritual leadership however, omits to focus on the more primary relationship aspects of leadership. A relationship focussed viewpoint is very prominent in Servant leadership behaviour (Van Dierendonck, 2011).

According to Van Dierendonck (2011), Self-Sacrificing leadership is primarily organisationally focussed, with an increase in shareholder value driving the behaviour. This view is supported by Choi and Mai-Dalton (1998), who argue that

Self-Sacrificing leaders will sacrifice themselves for the benefit of organisational and while self-enrichment does become lower priority, the organisation is the key priority. Servant leadership however, is member centric, so any self-sacrifice will be done purely for the further development of organisational members (Van Dierendonck, 2011).

Steward leaders are differentiated from Servant Leaders in that Steward leaders associate leadership as a collectivist paradigm with emphasis on partnerships between leaders and members, sharing accountability (Block, 1993); the Servant leader, serves members so that they grow, and in so doing, become servants themselves (Greenleaf, 1970).

At the very essence of Connective leadership is the opposing concepts of interdependency and diversity, as well as the balance of direct style, relational and an instrumental styles (Lipman-Blumen, 1997). While the relationship emphasis of Connective leadership does infer the importance of leader-member relationships, mentorship is suggested as its key output. Servant Leadership also supposes a heavy relationship focus, yet again however, that the emphasis of employee growth through a service differentiates the two constructs.

Servant leadership behaviour suggests to followers that they are “in-group” (Chen *et al.*, 2014: 512) members as opposed to the traditional boss-like figure of more autocratic leadership type styles, who see their role as an superior task giving one; this is admittedly very similar to Shared leadership. Shared leadership however is said to be the influence of groups on followers and influence of groups on other groups, and leadership that places much emphasis on the group decision making process for the attainment of organisational goals (Pearce and Conger, 2003). Servant leadership differs in that the leader does not relinquish the traditional leadership role, the leader is still the leader in the traditional sense, however Servant leadership advocates for service, needs fulfilment, humility, authentic behaviour, employee empowerment and employee development as key themes (Van Dierendonck, 2011).

While both Servant Leadership and Level 5 leadership strongly focus on diverting the admiration or recognition for accomplishments away from themselves and towards their teams, Level 5 Leadership’s primary motive is one of increasing shareholder

value while the Servant Leader's intrinsic motivation is that of employee development (Van Dierendonck, 2011).

Empowering leadership and Servant Leadership both have their roots in the development of people in order to be accountable for functions, Servant Leadership is argued to be a more encompassing leadership theory, as it also includes other equally important factors (Van Dierendonck, 2011). These will be explained in relation to the Servant leadership construct, in more detail in the next section of this chapter.

Over and above the differences in values of contemporary leadership theories that are portrayed in the analysis above, other critical elements of Servant leadership emerge, which help to highlight and clarify the unique value and contribution of Servant leadership. It is evident from the literature that Servant leadership is ethical and people centred, it has its roots in Values Based leadership and is guided by a strict moral code with employees needs as a core focus (Van Dierendonck and Nuijten, 2011). According to Van Dierendonck and Nuijten (2011), the biggest differentiator of Servant leadership resides in a desire to care, serve and develop followers.

3.5 Servant Leadership

This section in the chapter serves to define and clarify the Servant leadership construct.

3.5.1 Servant leadership Construct Clarification

There is no consensus in the literature on a definition for the Servant leadership construct (Parris and Peachey, 2013), and this has much to do with the construct being a very complicated and multidimensional one (Van Dierendonck, 2011). Furthermore, Servant leadership is a relatively new field of leadership research (Van Dierendonck, 2011). However, the concept of Servant leadership has been mentioned in the literature since the 1970's (Greenleaf, 1970). Due to his seminal

works on the construct, Greenleaf (1970) has been dubbed the father of Servant leadership. Greenleaf's (1970) definition of Servant leadership is still very relevant and applicable, as it reads "it begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. The difference manifests itself in the care taken by the servant first to make sure that other people's highest priority needs are being served. The best test is: Do those served grow as persons; do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants?"

Since the seminal works of Greenleaf (1970) in the early 1970's, there has been a fair amount of agreement within the literature, which argues that core to the Servant leadership construct is the philosophical ideal of putting the needs of team members or followers first, in order to create the climate and conditions needed for them to be the best they can be (Greenleaf, 1977; Van Dierendonck, 2011; Van Dierendonck and Nuijten, 2011). Moreover, trusting people by giving them the capacity and room to grow in order to let them prosper is also an important role of the Servant leader (Van Dierendonck, 2011).

3.5.2 Servant Leadership, its Relationship with Behavioural Constructs

The construct of Servant leadership is noted to still be an emerging leadership theory (Parris and Peachey, 2013), and is a construct which is still in need of considerably more research to develop the theory to a level which enjoys scholarly agreement within the literature. As previously mentioned, Servant Leadership has emerged from a Values Based leadership premise (Copeland, 2014), however, albeit fairly sparse, research of the Servant leadership and its relationships with other behavioural constructs has also started to emerge within the literature. Prior Servant leadership research studies conducted which investigate the relationship between the Servant leadership and behavioural constructs and which have particularly significant relevance to this thesis are those studies which have themes related to the focus on Servant leadership and behavioural elements associated with employee wellness or Quality of Worklife of employees. These behavioural Quality of Worklife related themes include research works that investigate the relationship of Servant leadership and its resulting behavioural consequences such as job satisfaction, fostering a

positive work climate, lower job stress, and encouragement of helping behaviours, needs fulfilment and improved wellbeing (Parris and Peachey, 2013).

Van Laar *et al.*'s (2007) seminal works describe the Quality of Worklife construct as constituting of six dimensions or factors, Job and Career Satisfaction, General Well-Being, Home-Work Interface, Stress at Work, Control at Work and Working Conditions. Sirgy *et al.* (2001: 241) argue that Quality of Worklife is "a construct which deals with the wellbeing of employees". Sirgy *et al.* (2001) argue that Quality of Worklife has its roots in need satisfaction theory, and in Mayer, Bardes and Piccolo's (2008) study of the relationship between Servant leadership and the satisfaction of follower's needs, evidence was found that a significant positive relationship was found between Servant leadership and need satisfaction. Mayer *et al.* (2008) found that need satisfaction played an important mediator to the relationship between Servant leadership and job satisfaction.

Stander and Rothman (2008) posit that the leadership construct is a predictor of employee satisfaction. Previous research has positively associated other employee wellness factors, such as staff satisfaction (Barbuto and Wheeler, 2006; Bartram and Casimir, 2006) and job satisfaction (Ehrhart, 2004) with Servant Leadership behaviours. Moreover, a review of the literature on Servant Leadership (Barbuto and Wheeler, 2006; Ehrhart, 2004; Laub, 1999) reveals that employee satisfaction, general well-being, and commitment to their jobs increases when exposed to leadership behaviours associated with Servant Leadership.

In a research study context that was identified as a setting that included a high pressure environment, similar to that of the Contact Centre context, Jenkins and Stewart (2010) found that Servant leadership behaviour by leaders increased individual staff satisfaction. This finding is supported by Chung, Jung, Kyle and Petrick (2010) in their study of the effects of Servant leadership and procedural justice on job satisfaction. In this study, structural equation modelling revealed significant relationships between servant leadership dimensions and staff satisfaction (Chung *et al.*, 2010).

Jaramillo, Grisaffe, Chonko, and Roberts (2009) found that by creating a positive work climate through Servant leadership behaviour, this had a significant indirect correlation with job stress, which in turn had an indirect relationship with job

satisfaction. Jaramillo *et al.*, (2009) argued therefore that increasing levels of Servant leadership behaviour moderates stress in the work place and supports better working conditions.

Rieke, Hammermeister and Chase (2008) study in the sporting context revealed that in addition to Servant leadership being antecedent to staff satisfaction, motivation and increased task orientation increased through an increased focus on wellbeing through Servant leadership behaviour.

A study of the literature does however help to conclude that while there is evidence of the research between Servant leadership behaviour on related Quality of Worklife themes, as described above, there exists a significant gap in the literature with respect to the consequential effects of Servant leadership on the Quality of Worklife construct itself. Previous chapters have argued that the Quality of Worklife construct is a particularly important construct, particularly in the challenging context of the Contact Centre. It is therefore becomes of scholarly and applied interest to close this gap in the literature.

Research has shown that Transformational Leadership (Bradley, Brown, Lingard, Townsend and Bailey, 2009) and Spiritual Leadership (Bardmili, Siadat and Mohammadisadr, 2013) have a significant relationships with Quality of Worklife but there is however, no evidence in the literature investigating the relationship with Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife, and more specifically in the frontline customer service Contact Centre context.

This dissertation proposes to help bridge this knowledge gap in the literature by studying the Servant leadership behaviours, in a customer service frontline setting, related to the improvement of the various dimensions of their Quality of Worklife. The research proposes that the unique demands placed on customer service frontline employees (Menday, 1996), has implications for the way in which they should be led in order to produce a positive effect on their perceived Quality of Worklife dimensions. Put differently, this research examines whether Servant Leadership behavior in the Contact Centre context, is antecedent, and has a positive and causal relationship with Quality of Worklife. The Central Hypothesis of this thesis is that Servant leadership behaviour has a significant, positive and causal relationship with Quality of Work Life.

Up until now however, the construct of Servant leadership has been defined in very general terms. Van Dierendonck and Nuijten (2011) argue that scholars such as Spears (1995), Laub (1999), Russell and Stone (2002), and Patterson (2003) have all made valuable contributions clarifying the theoretical understanding of Servant leadership and are, according to Van Dierendonck (2011), the most influential pieces of Servant Leadership literature.

What follows is firstly a discussion on the measurement of Servant Leadership and its suitability to the context of this research as well as a discussion on each of the theoretical models to further clarify the construct by understanding the contributions of the various prominent Servant Leadership scholars. The different Servant Leadership models will be also be differentiated and an argument for the model that will fit the Contact Centre frontline context the best is made.

3.5.3 Servant Leadership Measurement Instruments, Contexts of Studies and Results

This section addresses the topic of Servant leadership measurement with reference to how Servant leadership has been researched before, and the level at which it has been applied in organisations. There are several different Servant Leadership conceptual models and other Servant Leadership models which have also been tested empirically within the literature. The author therefore had to make a choice of the Servant Leadership model and instrument best suited for this study. This choice was largely informed by the quality of the instrument, and the organisational level to which the instrument has been used before. It is argued that the use of Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's (2011) Servant Leadership Model and its associated Servant Leadership Survey Multidimensional Measure is a quality instrument, is valid, well suited for this study and relevant for the middle management level.

Servant leadership measurement

While the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) has generally been the survey instrument which has been the most widely used to conduct leadership assessment (Green, Rodriguez, Wheeler, Baggerly-Hinojosa, 2015), the development of a Servant Leadership measure is relatively still in its infancy. An important aspect to take cognisance of is that several different Servant leadership measurements are in

existence. This is not surprising, when dealing with the measurement of a multidimensional construct such as Servant leadership, when the extremely complicated nature of the construct itself is considered, and when there is limited agreement in the literature as to its theoretical composition in terms of characteristics or factors (Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's, 2011).

No meta-analysis of Servant leadership currently exists, and various instruments have been used to measure Servant Leadership in various contexts (Green *et al.*, 2015; Parris and Peachey, 2013). The United States of America is the country with the leading amount of Servant leadership research papers published to date (Parris and Peachey, 2013). Education, business, nursing personal selling and sales management, parks and recreation administration, services marketing, and sports, are the key areas in which the construct has been researched to date (Parris and Peachey, 2013). The educational setting is the predominant organisational context, with forty four percent of all empirical research publications derived from it (Parris and Peachey, 2013). A Quantitative approach is the preferred research methodology used when researching Servant leadership, in that sixty nine percent of studies have used this methodological approach (Parris and Peachey, 2013). While acknowledging that the educational setting has enjoyed most of the research to date, it is argued by Parris and Peachey (2013) that Servant Leadership should be further enhanced through studying the construct in a variety of contexts, and particularly in the business context.

Parris and Peachey (2013) posit that studies related to the consequences of Servant Leadership are particularly pertinent and are an important element of assisting the advancement of Servant Leadership theory. Therefore, studies which consider elements that are related to employee wellness, or similar consequences of Servant Leadership behaviour, such as this study proposes to accomplish, will contribute to closing a gap in the literature and will help to advance the development of Servant leadership theory (Parris and Peachey, 2013). As previously discussed, themes such as the relationship between Servant leader behaviours and follower wellbeing, job satisfaction and creating a positive work climate, have been researched and published (Parris and Peachey, 2013), however, there is no published research evidence investigating the relationship between Quality of Worklife and Servant Leadership. Furthermore, there are very little quantitative studies of Servant

Leadership in South African organisations, and none have been conducted in the Call or Contact Centre context, or been focused specifically on the supervisory level. This research therefore will add to the contribution of knowledge with respect to the context and level to which Servant leadership has previously been studied.

Parris and Peachey (2013) explain that the most prominent instruments used by researchers to measure Servant Leadership empirically are Laub's (1999) OLA instrument, Ehrhart's (2004) Servant Leadership Measurement instrument, Barbuto and Wheeler's (2006) five factor instrument, and Liden, Wayne, Zhao, Henderson's (2008) multidimensional measure. Green *et al.* (2015) suggest that Laub's (1999) OLA instrument may be the most established of the instruments while Ehrhart's (2004), Barbuto and Wheeler's (2006) and Liden *et al.*'s (2008) instruments make up most of the recently contemporary and emerging instruments (Green *et al.*, 2015). Green *et al.* (2015) argue that Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's (2011) multidimensional measure is an instrument that should be included into this group of emerging list of quality Servant Leadership measures. What follows is a brief description of the contexts in which each of these measures were applied, together with a brief summary of the Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's (2011) multidimensional measure, thereby advocating for the quality of the instrument and its relevance to the a context of this research.

Laub's (1999) Measure

Laub's (1999) OLA measure was developed from an empirical study measuring Servant Leadership from a sample of 1624 people from 41 different organizations. Out of the 1624, a total of 828 usable responses were used in the analysis. The respondents were from different parts of the United States of America, but additionally included one organisation which was based in the Netherlands. The respondents included employees of religious, business and educational organisations, with the vast majority of the respondents from religious organisations (Laub, 1999). The biographic information of the respondents showed both the male and females were represented fairly equally (Laub, 1999). Most respondents had university degrees. Twenty four percent of the respondents were supervisors or managers.

Factor analysis of the 60 item questionnaire confirmed 6 factors, namely: displays authenticity, shares leadership, values people, provides leadership, builds community and develops people (Laub, 1999). The instrument produced a standard deviation of 48.78 and Cronbach-Alpha reliability analysis of 0.98. Item-to-test correlations produced results which confirmed all of the items had strong relationships with the instrument as a whole.

Ehrhart's (2004) Servant Leadership Instrument

In his study of organisational citizen behaviour and servant leadership, Ehrhart (2004) developed a new measure of servant leadership. The respondents of Ehrhart's (2004) research survey from the development of the servant leadership measure consisted of approximately 254 employees. These employees were employed in the retail industry, more particularly, grocery stores. All of the employees were university students and all had at least three years' work experience. All employees were geographically situated along the eastern part of the United States of America (Ehrhart, 2004). Almost two thirds of the respondents were women (Ehrhart, 2004). Erhart (2004) gave three instruments to respondents, two generic leadership assessment instruments, in the LMX-7 and the MLQ-5x, as well as the Servant leadership scale which he had developed. Analysis of the respondents showed that the Servant leadership scale did indeed measure a separate construct to that of the LMX-7 and the MLQ-5X scales. Fourteen items which were developed from a review of the literature were confirmed through confirmatory factor analysis to form the validated Servant Leadership Scale (Ehrhart, 2004).

Barbuto and Wheeler's (2006) five factor instrument

Respondents to Barbuto and Wheeler's (2006) five factor instrument included 80 leaders and 388 subordinate employees of business organisations based in the Midwestern United States of America. With respect to the leaders, two thirds of the respondents were women with the average age being 51 years old and half of them had university degrees (Barbuto and Wheeler, 2006). The subordinates were of an average age of 46 years and fewer (42%) had university degrees (Barbuto and Wheeler, 2006).

Barbuto and Wheeler's (2006) literature review of Servant Leadership suggested that there is potentially 11 dimensions or characteristics associated with Servant Leadership. Exploratory factor analysis reduced these 11 dimensions to five. The instrument consisted of 23 items, exploratory analyses revealed five factors, these were, altruistic calling, emotional healing, wisdom, persuasive mapping and organisational stewardship (Barbuto and Wheeler, 2006). Confirmatory factor analysis confirmed the five factor model ($\chi^2 = 1,410.69$, $df = 220$, $CFI = .96$, $RFI = .95$, $RMSEA = .10$)

Liden *et al.*'s, (2008) multidimensional measure

Liden *et al.*'s, (2008) multidimensional measure of servant leadership was initially tested on 298 university students and later 182 employees of a United States of America Midwestern production and distribution business organisation. Ninety percent of the respondents in the business organisation were subordinate employees and the balance were leaders (Liden *et al.*, 2008). A large percentage of the respondents from the business organisation did not have a university degree (69%) and most of the respondents were males (73%) (Liden *et al.*, 2008).

The instrument was validated using confirmatory factor analysis and consists of a 28 item questionnaire which has seven factors (Liden *et al.*, 2008). The factors of the Liden *et al.* (2008) instrument include: emotional healing; creating value for the community; conceptual skills; empowering; helping subordinates grow and succeed; putting subordinates first and behaving ethically (Liden *et al.*, 2008). The confirmatory factor analysis produced acceptable model fit indices ($CFI=.98$; $RMSEA=.06$; $SRMR=.05$).

Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's Multidimensional Servant Leadership Survey Measure (2011)

The conception of Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's Servant Leadership Multidimensional Measure (2011) was the result of four independent studies

conducted in the United Kingdom and the Netherlands (Van Dierendonck and Nuijten, 2011).

The development of the Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's Servant Leadership Multidimensional Measure (2011) was researched through a three phase development process. The first phase was called the "Development of the Servant Leadership Survey" (Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's, 2011:250). This phase consisted of a literature review, and a subsequent theoretical preliminary model was initially as a consequence proposed (Van Dierendonck and Heeren, 2006). The initial model that was to be empirically tested included Empowerment, Accountability, Standing back, Humility, Authenticity, Courage, Interpersonal acceptance and Stewardship as factors of Servant Leadership (Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's, 2011). The empirical study that tested the initial Servant Leadership model included results from a survey which was administered to 789 respondents which contained 99 items. The respondents were from a wide range of vocations, twenty five percent consisted of replies from the employees in the finance, education and civil services; twenty percent were teachers; twelve percent were employees of a fire brigade and the balance were respondents of an online survey (Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's, 2011). Exploratory factor analysis was conducted and due to the factor loading structure, a number of items were eliminated, and others had not loaded as initially expected, the number of items had reduced from 99 to 39, and the factor of Interpersonal acceptance had been replaced by Forgiveness.

The second study consisted of 263 respondents who were all from a civil servant background (Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's, 2011). The 39 item instrument which was produced as a result of exploratory factor analysis was administered. Results of which were validated through a process of confirmatory factor analysis. To improve the models fit, 9 items were removed from the instrument which improved the model's fit ($\chi^2 = 623.5$, $df = 377$, $CFI = .93$, $TLI = .92$, $SRMR = .05$, $RMSEA = .05$).

The third study showed the result of 236 respondents of which fifty seven percent were from service stations (petrol and diesel) and the rest from various managers of business organisations (Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's, 2011). The factorial validity of the 30 item, 8 factor instrument was confirmed ($\chi^2 = 600.1$, $df = 397$, $CFI = .94$, $TLI = .93$, $SRMR = .06$, $RMSEA = .05$).

The last study was an online study and 384 respondents replied online (Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's, 2011). Fifty two percent of the total respondents were women (Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's, 2011). The eight factor model was again confirmed ($\chi^2 = 1197.7$, $df = 377$, $CFI = .93$, $TLI = .92$, $SRMR = .07$, $RMSEA = .05$).

Therefore through a combination of exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis, an instrument containing a set of eight factors and 30 items was comprehensively validated and was to be termed the Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's Servant Leadership Survey Multidimensional Measure (Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's, 2011).

The eight factors are: standing back, forgiveness, courage, empowerment, accountability, authenticity, humility, and stewardship (Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's, 2011). The factors and items as per the validated instrument are displayed in table 3.2 below.

Table 3.2: Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's SLS Measure (2011)

Empowerment
1. My manager gives me the information I need to do my work well.
2. My manager encourages me to use my talents.
3. My manager helps me to further develop myself.
4. My manager encourages his/her staff to come up with new ideas.
12. My manager gives me the authority to take decisions which make work easier for me.
20. My manager enables me to solve problems myself instead of just telling me what to do.
27. My manager offers me abundant opportunities to learn new skills.
Standing back
5. My manager keeps himself/herself in the background and gives credits to others. .
13. My manager is not chasing recognition or rewards for the things he/she does for others.
21. My manager appears to enjoy his/her colleagues' success more than his/her own.
Accountability
6. My manager holds me responsible for the work I carry out.
14. I am held accountable for my performance by my manager.
22. My manager holds me and my colleagues responsible for the way we handle a job.
Forgiveness
7. My manager keeps criticizing people for the mistakes they have made in their work.

15. My manager maintains a hard attitude towards people who have offended him/her at work.
23. My manager finds it difficult to forget things that went wrong in the past.
Courage
8. My manager takes risks even when he/she is not certain of the support from his/her own manager.
16. My manager takes risks and does what needs to be done in his/her view.
Authenticity
9. My manager is open about his/her limitations and weaknesses.
17. My manager is often touched by the things he/she sees happening around him/her.
24. My manager is prepared to express his/her feelings even if this might have undesirable consequences.
28. My manager shows his/her true feelings to his/her staff.
Humility
10. My manager learns from criticism.
18. My manager tries to learn from the criticism he/she gets from his/her superior.
25. My manager admits his/her mistakes to his/her superior.
29. My manager learns from the different views and opinions of others.
30. If people express criticism, my manager tries to learn from it.
Stewardship
11. My manager emphasizes the importance of focusing on the good of the whole.
19. My manager has a long-term vision.
26. My manager emphasizes the societal responsibility of our work.

Source: Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's (2011)

Besides Liden *et al.* (2008), the Van Dierendonck and Nuijten (2011) Servant Leadership Survey (SLS) is the only other measurement instrument to have been deduced through psychometric analysis similar to this rigour and methodology (Van Dierendonck and Nuijten, 2011). It must be mentioned however, that although the Liden *et al.* (2008) model used for the exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis, the model produced only one dimension, and only through one study, to validate the model. It is argued that the construct of Servant Leadership is far too complicated a construct to be explained through only one dimension (Van Dierendonck and Nuijten, 2011).

The Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's (2011) measure is the most recent, instrument of the emerging Servant leadership measures (Green *et al.*, 2015). Given the

robustness of the instrument development process, as well as the diversity of environments and a sample which included differing levels of leaderships which that Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's (2011) study was conducted in, in order to validate the instrument, makes it an extremely good candidate for the context of this study. Moreover, the 30 items that were developed are all very relevant when describing Servant leadership at the supervisory or entry management level, as this study is positioned to do, which makes this instrument valid for the context of this research study. This is supported by the vast variety of supervision and management sectors that were evaluated, including frontline respondents, during the instrument development. This further helps to support reasons for its choice in the Customer Service frontline context such as this research proposes (Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's, 2011).

Moreover, according to Van Dierendonck and Nuijten (2011:251), the SLS "primarily focuses on the leader–follower relationship measured from the perspective of the follower". This is an important statement as it displays direct congruence with the key leadership relational concept that this research initialled aimed to position itself within.

Consequentially, it has been decided to use Van Dierendonck and Nuijten Servant Leadership Survey Multidimensional Measure (Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's, 2011) measurement instrument to measure the Servant leadership behaviour of the supervisors of frontline Contact Centre employees. This is due to the aligned primary focus of the instrument, it's robust development, as well as it being developed from survey results of respondents from a broad base of diverse occupations and organisational levels, who evaluated their immediate managers or supervisors in a variety of contexts, including frontline contexts.

3.5.4 Servant Leadership Theoretical models

The previous section identified several prominent Servant Leadership instruments and made an argument for the use of the Van Dierendonck and Nuijten Servant Leadership Survey Multidimensional Measure (Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's, 2011) in this research study. The choice of the instrument presupposes that this

research is also aligned with the Van Dierendonck (2011) theoretical model of Servant Leadership. Given that the Van Dierendonck (2011) model is not the only Servant Leadership theoretical model, the next section of the chapter describes some of the most influential Servant Leadership works. The models to be discussed include the Spears (1995), Laub (1999), Russell and Stone (2002) and Patterson (2003) models, as well as the more recent and contemporary theoretical development of the construct, by Van Dierendonck (2011). The Van Dierendonck's (2011) Servant Leadership model is then differentiated from the other prominent works.

Spears (1995)

Spears (1995) was the first author to propose a theoretical model of Servant Leadership, and this model was mostly derived from and an extension of the seminal works of Greenleaf (1970). Spears (1995) suggested that Servant Leadership can be classified into ten characteristics. The first of these characteristics is to lead through *listening*. According to Spears (1995), actively listening is extremely essential to Servant Leadership and proposes this to be the model's first and leading characteristic. To actively listen, as well as ensure that all followers are heard by encoding the message then taking it into cognisance, the message is thereby translated as the will of the followers. Teams respond well to being listened to (Joseph and Winston, 2005) as it is translated by them as a process of meaningful influence.

The second characteristic of Spear's (1995) model is *empathy*, which is the intuitive ability to understand how followers are feeling, and moreover, to deduce how, due to certain happening or actions, they will feel into the future (Badea and Pana, 2010). Empathetic leaders are also intuitively informed as to how followers will possibly react when exposed to different contexts (Badea and Pana, 2010). Thirdly, Servant Leaders understand the emotions of themselves and others, this gives them the potential of serving their followers by *healing* when and where required (Joseph and Winston, 2005). The characteristic of *awareness* is a dimension of Spear's (1995) Servant Leadership model and is described by Goleman (2000) as leader self-confidence and a realistic self-assessment of the leader's qualities and challenges,

these awareness dimensions are pre-requisite to leaders leading for results is the fourth characteristic.

Spears (1995) suggests that *persuasion* is another key characteristic of Servant Leadership. Having a persuasive demeanour in contrast to an autocratic, instruction-giving command type of leader is characteristic of servant leaders. Spears's (1995) sixth characteristic is *conceptualization*. Servant leaders are able to conceptualise to their followers very clearly, sometimes complicated information of future states or plans of the organisation, and display the exceptional ability of clarifying these visionary ideas (Joseph and Winston, 2005). Spears (1995) proposes that *foresight*, his seventh characteristic, is a critical component of Servant Leadership. Leaders who are able to foresee likely future events make good leaders (Gary, 2009). Acting as a *steward* by taking responsibility of the resources of the organisation in particular the human resources who work in it is paramount to the Servant Leadership construct (Spears, 1995). The last two characteristics of Spears's (1995) Servant Leadership model are, displaying an unrelenting sense of *commitment* to growth of followers and developing an organisational climate of belonging, as well as developing and nurturing a sense of *community* with the organisation (Joseph and Winston, 2005).

Laub (1999)

After a review of the literature and the development of an instrument to measure the Servant Leadership construct, Laub (1999) introduced a Servant Leadership model that both defined Servant Leadership and suggested certain leadership characteristics that are evident in the leadership model.

Laub (1999) argues that Servant Leadership can be characterised by six dimensions. The first of which is displaying *Authenticity*. Servant Leaders are leaders that display openness towards all they deal with, are answerable and accountable for all of their activities. Laub (1999) also characterises servant leaders as people that are willing to learn, moreover these leaders value their people by listening intensively, trusting their people, and are those leaders who intrinsically want to, as a priority, serve their people (Laub, 1999). The Servant Leader *value's* his followers by serving them first (Laub, 1999). The third Servant Leadership dimension *develops*

people by building their confidence and belief in themselves by positive affirmation; these leaders provide the resource and vehicles through which learning is made possible (Laub, 1999). According to Laub (1999), the servant leader *builds community* by concentrating on relationships within the total organisation and advocates that working together, as a team or family builds a sense of belonging that followers feel part of. The last two dimensions of Laub's (1999) model include *providing leadership* by creating the vision, purpose and strategic objectives of the organisation and then, *sharing* this leadership philosophy and objectives with their followers.

Patterson (2003)

In adding to the original works on Transformational leadership of Burns (1978), Patterson (2003) conceptualised a Servant Leadership model that had seven dimensions. Patterson (2003) argued that the first dimension of her Servant Leadership theoretical model is, i) *agapao love*. According to Dennis and Bocarnea (2005) the love that Patterson (2003) refers to is love within a social context that is good, right and honest. It is the love whereby leaders consider others above themselves and value people not merely as a resource but a whole person (Dennis and Bocarnea, 2005).

A leader that acts with ii) *humility* is considered to be Patterson's (2003) second factor for Servant Leadership. Tangey (2000) argues that humility manifests when a person truly knows oneself, and is able to correctly judge one's own personality and character traits. Moreover, humility is the ability to acknowledge to oneself, and to others, personal strengths and weakness.

The third dimension of Patterson's theoretical model is that of iii) *altruism*; the idea that a leader will help a follower without any prospect of personal gain to the leader, is deemed as altruistic behaviour in the Servant Leadership context (Dennis and Bocarnea, 2005). Patterson also proposes that servant leadership is leadership that is iv) *visionary*. Ensuring that the correct vision is in place, as this paints a clear picture of the future proposed state (Kotter, 2007) is an essential factor in Servant Leadership according to Patterson (2003). Patterson (2003) postulates that v) *trust* was an equally significant factor, in that it is a core element of all relationships and

the basis of leadership (Dennis and Bocarnea, 2005). The last two dimensions include vi) *empowering* followers in order for them to be able to fulfil organisational tasks unaided, trusting enough to hand over power to followers and vii) *servicing*.

Russell and Stone (2002)

Russell and Stone (2002) argued theoretically, that Servant Leadership consisted of at least twenty characteristics: nine functional characteristics and eleven additional attributes. The functional characteristics are proposed as addressing operational outputs and are specific towards the workplace while the additional attributes support and are pre-requisites to the functional attributes (Russell and Stone, 2002).

Russell and Stone (2002) argue that the functional attributes of a servant leader include *vision* (foresight), *honesty* (truthfulness), *integrity* (morality), *trust* (belief and faith), *service* (the core of the construct, which is to serve others), *modelling* (a blue print of organisational ethics and values), *pioneering* (brave innovation), *appreciation of others* (value and caring of people), and *empowerment* (willingness and trust to hand over of power to followers).

According to Russell and Stone (2002), the eleven additional, supporting attributes included *communication* (effectively sharing vision and thoughts), *credibility* (a combination of honesty and integrity), *competence* (commitments, skill, knowledge and ability), *stewardship* (trust to manage for others), *visibility* (prominent in action), *influence* (non-manipulative directional guidance), *persuasion* (change through doing), *listening* (actively hearing all), *encouragement* (positive reinforcement), *teaching* (ensuring a constant state of learning), and *delegation* (transferring ownership).

Van Dierendonck (2011) and Van Dierendonck and Nuijten (2011)

Van Dierendonck (2011) argues that the wellness of people is a significant goal of contemporary leadership, and an employee centric approach to management is antecedent to sustainable organisations. In the context of this research, Servant Leadership is argued to be antecedent to Quality of Worklife.

Van Dierendonck's (2011) initial theoretical model, which was based on a comprehensive review of the literature, posited that there are six key Servant Leadership characteristics. Servant Leadership characteristics according to Van Dierendonck (2011) included empowering and developing people, humility, authenticity, interpersonal acceptance, providing direction and stewardship. As described earlier, a later empirical study by Van Dierendonck and Nuijten (2011) on the validation and development of a Servant Leadership Survey, produced a servant leadership model with eight dimensional measures, these being, empowerment, accountability, standing back, forgiveness, courage, authenticity, humility and stewardship (Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's, 2011).

i) Empowerment:

Leadership that focuses on growing people (Greenleaf, 1996) and appreciates the worth of the employee can be associated with empowering leadership (Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's, 2011). The employee who has the authority to make decisions autonomously within boundaries that have been pre-agreed upon (Singh and Dixit, 2011) is an empowered employee. However, it is the organisations obligation to ensure that there is a culture that supports this empowerment (Singh and Dixit, 2011). Conger (1989) argues that creating the right positive atmosphere within the work environment and continuously recognising and rewarding are key to creating a culture of empowerment. Frequently expressing confidence of employees in an open public forum confirms that they have the ability and authority to make decisions that affect their work (Conger, 1989). Empowering leadership creates and encourages pockets of ownership. This is illustrated whereby ordinary employees are treated like managers of their specific outputs (Conger, 1989), thereby introducing elements of accountability, an essential dimension of empowerment (Van Dierendonck and Dijkstra, 2012). Intuitively, a successfully empowered employee is one that has accumulated deep knowledge of their specific environment, and the empowering leader is one whom facilitates this (Van Dierendonck and Dijkstra, 2012).

ii) Accountability

According to Van Dierendonck and Dijkstra (2012), accountability is an extremely critical factor in the servant leadership model. Accountability involves a rich understanding of the employee with respect to what is expected of him/her, precisely, both what is within and out of his/her locus of control (Van Dierendonck and Dijkstra, 2012). More specifically, accountability in the Servant Leadership context refers both to the legal and compliance sense. These accountability elements have a statutory requirement and internal control aspects of what that the job requires, and also of those issues that pertain to and are specified to the fulfilment of mission and vision of the organisation (Stewart, 1984). However, very clear boundaries of operation for the fulfilment of both the legal and statutory requirements need to be robustly understood by the employee so that there should be no ambiguity in knowing what was needed to succeed and fulfil the job mission. With boundaries established, holding to account is more easily achieved, and both the praise of an employee as well as the correction of unwanted behaviour can be conducted more openly with more objective boundary criteria.

iii) Standing back

Similar to humility and authentic behaviour, standing back refers to the leader moving away from the spotlight after successful achievements have been accomplished by the team (Van Dierendonck and Dijkstra, 2012). The idea that the team benefit from credits rather than the leader taking any of the credit, is the fundamental to the ideal of “standing back”.

iv) Humility

Humility in leadership is characterised by leaders intuitively knowing their capabilities and understanding what they are good at and what they need help with (Van Dierendonck and Dijkstra, 2012). The humble leader understands that they cannot do everything and have no insecurities of making this known to their followers, the humble leader is therefore one who can put perspective to their abilities and flaws (Van Dierendonck and Dijkstra, 2012). The humble leader confidently preaches the doctrine that no-one person can ever be all-knowing, and the knowledge gained from

peers and subordinates is crucial to success (Winston, 2004). Humble leaders therefore have no ego barriers preventing them from valuing input from their subordinates, input is encouraged and used.

v) Authenticity

Avolio and Gardner (2005) argue that much of the literature on leadership speaks of self-awareness as a corner stone trait of good leadership. Authentic leaders are not those whom mould their personalities, values or morals to fit differing contexts (Van Dierendonck and Dijkstra, 2012); the leader is as much the same person in his personal capacity as he is in his private life. Authentic leaders are leaders that are perceived by others, as having high morals and values and are confidently aware of their attributes (Avolio *et al.*, 2004).

vi) Forgiveness

After the empirical testing, using factor analyses, of Van Dierendonck's (2011) conceptual model of servant leadership, the factor of interpersonal acceptance was amended slightly. Only the items which related to forgiveness were validated and therefore Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's (2011) named this factor forgiveness. Forgiveness is a measure that distinguishes Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's (2011) Servant Leadership Survey from other servant leadership instruments. Van Dierendonck and Nuijten (2011) argue that this element ensures that the leadership in Servant Leadership is being managed and this is said by Van Dierendonck and Nuijten (2011) to be an essential factor to the construct of servant leadership.

According to Stone (2002), forgiveness in the workplace is to resign any reminiscence of blame, and to constructively use any wrongdoing of employees as critical learning episodes so as not to dampen/restrict future creative and innovated behaviour. Forgiveness aids in the reduction of tension and anger between follower and leader and promotes better relations. Resentment and hostility due to previous indiscretions cloud the leader-follower relationship and reduce the relational synergies needed for creative work (Stone, 2002).

vii) Courage

Courage suggests that leaders trust their moral and value orientation enough to make decisions that may not always be considered within the norms of conventional operations of the organisation's practice. Courage in leadership proposes that those leaders who have the conviction and confidence in their own ability to make these decisions, which may be against some odds, are leaders who are defined as leaders with courage (Van Dierendonck and Dijkstra, 2012). Courageous leaders understand that courage is a decision based on the leaders moral standpoint, and that courageous decisions need the support of followers in order to be effective (Harbour and Kisfalvi, 2012). Harbour and Kisfalvi (2012) argue that courage is not an innate personal characteristic that only a few are born with, but that through experience courage can be learnt over time and managers can get better at making more courageous decisions.

viii) Stewardship

Van Dierendonck and Dijkstra (2012) posit that stewardship is illustrated by leadership that put the team's interests before those of the leader. Stewardship is a collectivist or social responsibility ideal (Van Dierendonck and Dijkstra, 2012) in that which leaders that subscribe to the notion of values-based leadership (Karns, 2011) hold important. It is an ideal which is intrinsic to leaders who believe their purpose as a leader supersedes those managerial line responsibilities that are only focused toward the organisational goals, and instead adopt a people centric position. Servant Leadership behaviour displayed by leaders, is the antecedent to trust between leaders and followers in organisations (Sendjaya and Pekerti, 2010) and the element of stewardship "is closely related to loyalty and team work" (Van Dierendonck, 2012:1234).

Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's (2011) Continued Contribution of Servant Leadership Theory

It is argued that Van Dierendonck and Nuijten (2011) work adds significant value to the continuing development and body of Servant leadership theory as well as

extending it through the development of Servant Leadership Survey Van Dierendonck and Nuijten (2011). Van Dierendonck and Nuijten (2011) are accomplishing this through focusing on leadership within, which includes lower levels of management, and does not only focus on senior, or strategic leadership levels. Relevance to the leadership on the middle management level, which is where this research is positioned, makes the Van Dierendonck and Nuijten (2011) work suitable for this research thesis.

3.5.5 Differentiating the Van Dierendonck (2011) Servant Leadership theory

While it would seem that the principle philosophy of all of the Servant Leadership models described above having employee wellness, serving, supporting, and being cognisant of employees needs as general philosophies, the model's theoretical approach and construction is somewhat differentiated in the literature.

Laub's (1999) works focus on a value based leadership and an authentic leadership philosophy (Taylor, 2013). Patterson's (2003) philosophical approach is grounded in altruism while Russell and Stone (2002) seem to centre their Servant Leadership model on the philosophy of trust and integrity (Taylor, 2013). Spears' (1995) work focuses on a philosophy that the stewardship of resources is paramount (Taylor, 2013), while it is argued that Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's (2011) work is clearly centred on the leader-follower relationships and the philosophy of a caring and forgiving environment which nurtures the ideal of growing people through empowerment and service, but also holding them accountable for their actions. This particular model of Servant Leadership resonates with the Contact Centre context, where it has been previously argued that a caring relational leadership is required to improve the Quality of Worklife of the frontline Contact Centre agents.

Below is a table that categorises each of the Servant Leadership models according to congruent dimension structure.

Table 3.3: Servant Leadership Models and their dimensions

Van Dierendonck and Nuijten (2011)	Empowerment, Accountability	Standing back;	Humility	Authenticity	Forgiveness	Courage	Stewardship
Spears (1995)	Growth of people; Listening			Awareness	Empathy; Healing	Vision	Stewardship; Influence; Persuasion; Building
Laub (1999)	Share Leadership; Delegation; Develop People; Value People			Authenticity			Provide Leadership; Service; Visibility; Build Community
Russell and Stone (2002)	Empowerment; Trust; Teaching; Encouragement; Communication; Competence			Honesty; Integrity; Credibility	Appreciation of others	Vision	Stewardship; Influence; Persuasion; Modelling; Pioneering
Patterson (2003)	Empowering; Trusting; Listening		Humility		Altruistic; Agapao love	Visionary	Serving

Source: Adapted by researcher from the literature

As illustrated in table 2.2 above, in addition to the variances of the key philosophical principles of each author, the congruence of the dimensional characteristics of Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's (2011) work and the other theoretical Servant Leadership models are discussed. The key congruencies of the models are as follows: The Empowerment dimension is a Servant Leadership dimension of Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's (2011) as well as Patterson's (2003) and Russel and Stone's (2002) model however, this can closely be associated with teaching, encouragement (Laub, 1999; Russell and Stone, 2002) and growth of people. The humility dimension of Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's (2011) model is also a prominent characteristic in Patterson's (2003) work. Van Dierendonck and Nuijten (2011), and Spears (1995) both have stewardship as a dimension; and authenticity is a key element in Laub's (1999) and Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's (2011) work.

However, the dimension of Accountability is a factor, which distinguishes the Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's (2011) Servant Leadership Model from other Servant leadership models. Accountability is an important dimension in the Contact Centre

frontline environment, and given that this is such a controlled and monitored environment, it is important to hold employees to account for their performances. This is understandable given that inbound workload in the Contact Centre environment is forecasted, and agents are scheduled according to the forecast requirements (Reynolds, 2003). So should some agents not be working at the levels they are required to (i.e. being unavailable to take calls at times when they are scheduled to be available), this workload will have to be spread over a smaller group of agents, meaning they will have to work harder, or take more calls. The inclusion of Accountability as a specified factor within the model makes the Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's (2011) Servant Leadership model a particularly relevant model for the Contact Centre frontline context.

Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's (2011) Servant Leadership Survey has been developed in a robust manner. It has also been developed from survey results of respondents from a broad base of diverse occupations and organisational levels, whom evaluated their immediate managers or supervisors in a variety of contexts, including frontline contexts. Furthermore the Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's (2011) Servant leadership theoretical model is appropriate. Therefore, this researcher has decided to use Van Dierendonck and Nuijten Servant Leadership Survey (Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's, 2011) measurement instrument and their theoretical model as the Servant Leadership instrument and model of choice for this research thesis.

3.6 Trust as a mediator of Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife

The relationship between Servant Leadership and Trust is well documented within the literature (Chan and Mak, 2014; Joseph and Winston, 2005). Joseph and Winston (2005) found that leaders in organisations who displayed Servant Leadership behaviour were trusted more by their subordinates, in that they found a strong relationship between Servant Leadership and Trust. Joseph and Winston (2005) argue that this finding support Greenleaf's (1977) assertions that Servant Leadership is antecedent to Trust. Chan and Mak (2014) also found strong support

for the relationship between Servant Leadership and Trust in the leader. Chan and Mak (2014) attribute the strong relationship and perceptions of increased trustworthiness of leaders to the view that servant leaders pay more attention to caring for their subordinates. Sendjaya and Pekerti (2010) also found Servant Leadership to be antecedent to Trust. Sendjaya and Pekerti (2010) concluded that Servant Leadership was a significant predictor of Trust. Moreover, Servant Leadership and Trust was also deemed to be significantly related within the South African context (Chatbury, Beaty and Kriek, 2011). Chatbury *et al.* (2011) found within the lower level echelons of employees, a Servant Leadership approach increased subordinate Trust of supervisors (Chatbury *et al.*, 2011). Chatbury *et al.* (2011) posited that Servant Leadership had the potential to enhance Trust of lower level employees in their supervisors in the South African context. Based on these studies, it is also suggested that in the Contact Centre context, Trust between a supervisor and a service agent can be better developed through a positive, caring and serving leadership attitude.

Nanjundeswaraswamy and Swamy's (2015) research illustrated a dependent relationship between transactional and transformational leadership styles and factors of Quality of Worklife. The results of Nanjundeswaraswamy and Swamy (2015) showed a highly correlated and significant relationship between transformational leadership and Quality of Worklife, more so than the relationship between transactional leadership and Quality of Worklife. The study illustrated that managers or supervisors that displayed behavioural traits conducive to those of transformational leaders produced higher levels of Quality of Worklife. It is argued that leadership which focuses on trust, caring, relationships, as well as the needs and wellness of the individuals that they are leading is appropriate for the context of this research and so it has been previously argued that there exists a potential relationship between Servant Leadership, Trust and Quality of Worklife

While there is not too much mention of the relationship between Trust and Quality of Worklife in the literature, Trust has been argued to be positively associated with Quality of Worklife and Wellbeing (Cook and Wall, 1980; Van der Berg and Martins, 2013). Cook and Wall (1980) and Van der Berg and Martins (2013) confirmed that there exists a positive relationship between leadership practices with Trust and Quality of Worklife. There is also some evidence of the relationship between Trust

and the internal dimensions of Quality of Worklife. Guinot, Chiva and Roca-Puig (2014) posited that cultivating a climate of trust improves levels employee satisfaction and well-being among their employees. Guinot *et al.* (2014) also found that Trust was inversely related to job stress in that as Trust increased perceived stress at work decreased.

It is therefore plausible to suggest then that Servant Leadership promotes Trust between a supervisor and a service agent, which in turn influences Quality of Worklife in the customer service frontline context. Said differently, the relationship between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife is posited to be mediated by Trust.

3.7 Conclusion

This chapter proposed that Servant Leadership is a values-based leadership construct that is primarily focused on caring and leader-follower relationships and trust, and is well suited for the frontline context due to its focus on follower need satisfaction, relationship building and caring philosophies (Greenleaf, 1970; Spears, 1995, Laub, 1999, Russell and Stone, 2002, Patterson, 2003, Van Dierendonck, 2011). Thus, the chapter argued that the Servant Leadership theory is a relational, values-based, caring for people and trust focussed theory. It is argued that Servant Leadership is thus appropriate for the frontline Contact Centre context of this research. This viewpoint was important to the development of postulating this thesis's main hypothesis.

It was mentioned that Servant Leadership is reported to have a relationship with several behavioural constructs (Parris and Peachey, 2013). However, a significant gap in the literature exists with respect to investigating the relationship between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife; and this research aims to significantly contribute to the body of knowledge by empirically investigating the relationship between these two constructs.

The chapter argued that the Van Dierendonck's (2011) theoretical model of Servant Leadership and its measure of the construct, namely the Servant Leadership Survey

(Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's, 2011), are the most appropriate measurement instrument and theoretical model for the measurement of Servant Leadership in the frontline customer service context, and consequently defended its position on the use of the Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's (2011) Servant Leadership Survey instrument.

The chapter also reviewed the Servant Leadership literature and located the Servant Leadership construct within the broader field of leadership theory and differentiated it from other similar values based contemporary theories. While illustrating the differentiated Servant Leadership construct and its relationship with other behavioural constructs, as well as the various measurement instruments that measure the construct, the literature review demonstrated its proposed relevance to the context of this research thesis. It also positioned itself to add significant value to the advancement of Servant Leadership theory by proposing the testing of the Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's (2011) Servant Leadership theory as well as testing its relationship with Quality of Worklife, in a context and organisational setting which has not to date been tested before.

The chapter also proposed the possible hypothesis that Servant Leadership is positively associated with Trust, which in turn influences Quality of Worklife in the customer service frontline context, or put differently, that the relationship between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife is possibly mediated by Trust.

The next chapter aims to deal with this research's methodological approach and provides justifications for the methodology used.

Chapter 4 – Description of Research Methodology

4.1 Introduction

Babbie (2011:66) suggests that research in its most basic interpretation is “scientific inquiry which comes from making observations and interpreting what you have observed”. This chapter deals with the methodological approach of the thesis and provides justifications for the methodology used. Research must follow a methodological process so that the observations which are recorded and the results which are proposed are accepted as “agreement reality” (Babbie, 2011:4); that they meet the logical as well as the theoretical and, or, empirical research requirements. In a sense, social research is human inquiry that attempts to understand human behaviour (Babbie, 2011). Good research denotes the predictability of human behaviour and endeavours to use this understanding to examine the causality and/or probability of it (Babbie, 2011).

Social science knowledge is an aggregation of predictability and causality of human behaviour within a particular context, so that it is better explained or further understood or studied differently, by the formulation or further development of theoretical frameworks that develop this knowledge (Remenyi, Williams, Money and Swartz, 1998). Notwithstanding however, that knowledge is sometimes somewhat limited due to the constantly changing context and nature of the world we live in, as well our continuous changing cognition of our environment (Babbie, 2011). Research, be it empirical or theoretical, is therefore purposed to produce knowledge, but it can only do this if careful consideration is given to methodological rigour that holds up to academic peer reviewed scrutiny. The rigor of the research methodology should therefore be evident in the research presented; illustrating that it meets the requirements of scholarly research. Moreover, it should also indicate to the reader the researcher’s understanding of each of the elements of the process (Gummersonn, 2000).

In previous three chapters, the Context of the research was presented and the constructs of Quality of Worklife, Servant Leadership, and Trust were discussed. As described in Chapter One, the main goal of this research thesis is to develop and test a model that denotes the relationship between Servant Leadership and Quality

of Worklife, as well as test whether Trust mediates this relationship in the Contact Centre operational environment. Chapter Four discusses the quantitative methodological measurements justifying the relationship between the dependent variable Quality of Worklife, and independent variable Servant Leadership and whether this relationship is mediated by Trust. The chapter then denotes how each of these constructs is empirically measured in relation to Chapter One's research problem statement and subsequent hypotheses.

The chapter begins with a description of the goals of this research thesis, followed by an explanation of the philosophical assumptions which underpin them. The chapter argues that the philosophical paradigm position of the research is a post-positivist paradigm and the ontological viewpoint is that of a critical realist. The chapter further explains reasons for the epistemology of the work to be viewed through the objectivist paradigm.

Research needs to be rigorous and relevant (Remenyi and Money, 2006), rigour should be evident by the attention to detail in the methodical design of a research paper and the relevance of the research should answer contemporary problems. The design of this research is described by clarifying the quantitative methodological approach used, which includes sampling, data collection and handling, data analysis, hypothesis testing and interpretation of results. The chapter closes with a summary of the methodological process followed.

4.2 Objectives of the Research

The central hypothesis and *primary* objective of the study however is to test whether Servant Leadership behaviour has a significant and positive causal relationship with Quality of Worklife in the Contact Centre frontline context. The research is conducted in eight organisations situated in various geographical regions across South Africa.

This research project also included six secondary goals that it wished to achieve which included:

- i) *To validate the SLS and WRQWL instruments that measure both Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife in the South African Contact Centre frontline context.*
- ii) *To use Structural Equation Modelling to measure the relationships between Servant Leadership, Trust and Quality of Worklife.*
- iii) *To assess whether Trust played a mediating role in the relationship between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife.*
- iv) *To measure if there were any differences in Servant Leadership, Trust and Quality of Worklife.*
- v) *To identify potential problems that could result due to deficiencies found in Servant Leadership behaviour that may lead to a lower Quality of Worklife.*
- vi) *To make recommendations to the organisations to assist frontline leaders to improve the working lives of Contact Centre agents.*

To achieve these research aims, the researcher needed to follow a precise, methodical and rigorous scientific process that adhered to the principles of empirical research.

4.3 Research Paradigms

Academic research either follows a theoretical or empirical approach (Remenyi *et al.*, 1998). Both the theoretical or empirical approaches are conducted by researchers who see the world differently. Prior to the start of any research process, it is of critical importance that the researcher's philosophical standpoints are stated. This philosophical standpoint not only underpins the researcher's viewpoint, but also guides their research methodological approach.

The way in which researchers view the world, and in turn their research, is defined as their paradigm (Kuhn, 1962). Kuhn (1962) first used the expression "paradigm" to articulate the collective and differing views or assumptions of different groupings of researchers, and how these assumptions influenced their research approaches. According to Kuhn (1962), these assumptions, or paradigms, were based on how researchers interpret or view the world that they live in. Paradigms provide to the researcher, as well as announce to the reader, the lens through which the researcher see's the world, or put differently, the researcher's "way of looking" at the world (Babbie, 2011:32). According to Guba and Lincoln (1994:107), paradigms define the "nature of the world" we live in, how we reflect on our "individual place" in the world, and what manner of relationships and interrelationships exist within it. Paradigms are varied and numerous and not always very easily identified. However, paradigms are generally understood for "how things are" in the world (Babbie, 2011:34). It is however, the ability to recognise a paradigm in the first place that enables seeing reality from different angles or viewpoints. So scientists who are able to recognise their paradigms, are better able to understand various research works and learn from them (Babbie, 2011).

Some social scientists make the mistake of exclusively explaining, in great detail, the scientific methods of their research approach without fully considering or even mentioning the philosophical foundations that underpin it (Humphrey, 2013). Recognising the absence of a clear paradigmatic viewpoint, or stance, is a potential and somewhat critical flaw and it is for this reason therefore, that this dissertation goes to some length to clearly articulate the paradigm it has adopted.

The paradigm selected for this dissertation is with reference to the combined answers of questions that are of an ontological, epistemological and methodical nature. The ontological question that needs to be answered in terms of the paradigm selected is specific to the nature of the “things, beings and processes” (Humphrey, 2013:4) that are pertinent to answering the questions posed in this research paper. The epistemological question however, is one where the answer will be derived from a sense of knowing. In other words, the epistemological question to be answered from the dissertation is whether the knowledge developed from the research is derived from a “reflection of reality” (Humphrey, 2013:4) and a product of following a robust and specific scientific methodology. With reference to the methodological question, Guba and Lincoln (1994:108) postulate that “methods must be fitted to a predetermined methodology” and the answers of the ontological and epistemological will determine whether the research answers will be found through an application of a qualitative or quantitative methodological approach.

Recently, and increasingly so, an abundance of different paradigmatic views or standpoints have been described in the literature (Humphrey, 2013). However, two opposing methodological processes are primarily used in social research that is governed by their paradigmatic viewpoints, namely Qualitative and Quantitative methodologies (Gray, 2014).

4.3.1. Paradigms associated with Quantitative Methodology

Positivism and Post-positivism are paradigms that are closely associated with quantitative research (Babbie, 2011). Post-positivism, an extension of Positivism, posits that research is an objective process, which attempts to link theory with practice (Henderson, 2011). The post-positivism paradigm studies the cause and effect relationship of variables (Creswell, 2003). Positivism is sometimes commonly referred to as the “scientific or empiric method” (Creswell, 2003:6). The Post-positivism paradigm evolved from Positivism, of which emanated from the seminal works of Durkheim, (Creswell, 2003; Humphrey, 2013) and is closely associated with quantitative research application (Creswell, 2003). This paradigm was a very popular and widely used paradigm for early social scientists of the 19th century (Creswell, 2003). The Positivist approach to research views the world, and science, as a

reality that can be observed and sensed, and therefore measured and studied, through objective observation (Guba and Lincoln, 1994). The researcher, in Post-positivism research, is an external witness of this reality (Guba and Lincoln, 1994). The ontology directly related from, or as a consequence of post-positivism research, is an objective narration of a carefully conducted experiment and the empirical observation process (Creswell, 2003). Post-positivism includes the process of using hypotheses that test a particular “reality” in the world (Creswell, 2003). Post-positivists agree that an autonomous reality exists which is an imperfect observation, and this needs to be recognised in the research process, where hypotheses need to be falsified through rigorous scientific testing (Guba and Lincoln, 1994:112). Moreover, Post-positivism subscribes to the notion that all human social phenomena can be studied in a similar scientific process, not unlike how scientists would study any variation of other non-living things, such as chemistry or natural science research (Humphrey, 2013).

4.3.2. Paradigms associated with Qualitative Research

Interpretivism is a paradigm that is closely associated with qualitative research (Babbie, 2011). Interpretivism has its roots in phenomenology (Humphrey, 2013). Interpretivism is sometimes referred to as the “constructivism or phenomenological” paradigm, and is often used when the researcher chooses a qualitative approach to their research (Henderson, 2011). According to Humphrey (2013:8), every individual human being has an independent view or reality of the world, and the creation of knowledge theory is subject to the internal “construction of our individual concepts and our world views”. Interpretivism is more humanistic than its polar-opposite positivism. The Interpretivist paradigm argues that the researcher cannot exist outside of the real world and is not independent from the reality they are studying (Gray, 2014). Researchers create different meanings of reality in different ways, based on an inclusive observation of reality (Gray, 2014). Gray (2014) posits that consistent with the Interpretivist paradigmatic viewpoint, social research cannot be conducted in the same fashion as would a researcher conduct scientific research in the natural world. The natural world and the social work are two realities that are entirely different and therefore require different research approaches. Deductive studies such as those studies conducted through the lens of a Positivistic paradigm

are “nomothetic” in nature, in that they study the statistical effects of numbers, Interpretivists however are more concerned with the “ideographic”, the study of the individual (Gray, 2014:24).

4.3.3. Key Difference between Qualitative and Quantitative Research associated Paradigms

According to Gray (2014), the key difference between a paradigms associated with quantitative research such as Post-positivism and qualitative research paradigms such as Interpretivism with respect to their basic belief structure is based on how they view reality. Post Positivists view the research process as external and objective, whereas Interpretist’s view the world, and their research, as a subjective and social entity. The researcher remains disconnected from the research as a Post Positivist, but forms an integral social part of the research in the Interpretist’s viewpoint (Gray, 2014). Information is gained through social engagement and theory is derived from these engagements.

4.3.4. The Paradigm for this Research Paper

The paradigm adopted for this research is post-positivism (Guba and Lincoln, 1994) with the ontological view of a critical realist. With a post positivist research approach, the researcher understands that what is observed may be influenced by bias, upbringing and values. However, and importantly, the researcher still methodically conforms to rigorous evaluation and logical reasoning (Guba and Lincoln, 1994).

The ontology of a critical realist describes a view that reality exists and can be described or defined by what is observed; rather than the view that it exists independently of observation (Guba and Lincoln, 1994). The critical realist therefore states that the reality is that which is observed. Babbie (2011) argues that epistemology involves knowing. The epistemological view of this paradigm, as explained above, will be that of objectivism, where knowledge is gained through objective reason guided by quantitative research methodology techniques (Guba and Lincoln, 1994).

4.4 Methodology

Consistent with the post-positivism paradigm adopted, a deductive research approach was adopted (Gray, 2014) in that quantitative statistical data techniques are to be used to test theory by rejecting or not rejecting the null hypotheses (Guba and Lincoln, 1994). The post-positivism paradigm assumes that in a single point in time, a reality exists in the world, and this reality can be objectively measured through the use of an instrument (Guba and Lincoln, 1994). Consequently, this study follows a survey research approach. Data used in this research paper was collected through the completion of an electronic survey, which was posted via electronic mail to the total population. The researcher acted as an observer to the study and did not participate or influence any part of it.

Figure 4.1 illustrates the methodology of this research paper, representing the systematic and chronological approach to the research aim, ontology, epistemology, research method, data collection and analysis, and interpretation of results.

Figure 4.1 Research Methodology



Source: Developed by Author from Guba and Lincoln (1994); Gray (2014)

4.5 Population and Sample

The sample size needs to be sufficient enough, so that it represents the population, making the sample a subset from the population (Gray 2014). In this research, a Purposive Non-Probability Sampling method was used, in that the entire population group (i.e. all of the Frontline Contact Centre employees for all eight organisations) were used. The total targeted population parameter for this research entailed Contact Centre employees situated at Contact Centre sites of the eight separate organisations.

4.6 Data Collection

The survey questionnaire was distributed to all frontline Contact Centre staff members via email. Respondents were requested, in the email, to complete the questionnaire during scheduled off-phone periods. This time is usually used for personal administration or development, and even though the questionnaire did not take long to complete; the time spent on the questionnaire was approved through management negotiation.

The questionnaire was completed by clicking on a link on the email, which directed the respondents to a single page online survey Google Drive answer sheet. Only a brief explanation of what the research was about and the questions to be completed was on this page. The simplicity of the process and scheduled time off normal work activities was expected to increase the response rate and improve representativeness (Babbie, 2011).

4.7 The Instrument

The instrument used in this research was composed of three measurement sections. The first section measured Servant Leadership, the second measured Quality of Worklife, and the last measured Trust in the leader. The instrument incorporated a combination of the Servant Leadership Survey - SLS (Van Dierendonck and Nuijten, 2011) instrument in the first section, the Work-Related Quality of Life Scale - WRQoLS (Van Laar *et al.*, 2007) instrument to measure Quality of Worklife (QWL) in the second section and Trust in leader scale (Cook and Wall (1980) adapted by

Bartram and Casimir (2006)) to measure Trust in the last section. The instruments were slightly modified by the researcher in that they were merged to form one seamless instrument that the respondents completed electronically in one sitting. The Servant Leadership Survey - SLS (Van Dierendonck and Nuijten, 2011) instrument originally consisted of 30 items, the Work-Related Quality of Life Scale - WRQoLS (Van Laar *et al.*, 2007) instrument consisted of 22 items, and one item measuring overall Quality of Worklife, and the Trust scale consisted of 3 items (Cook and Wall (1980) adapted by Bartram and Casimir (2006)). Baring the biographical information requested, the combined instrument contained 55 items. The instrument therefore included a *Likert Scale* format type of questionnaire, consisting of 30 Servant Leadership items, 23 Quality of Worklife items and three Trust items, which were preceded by ten biographic questions.

The questionnaire's Likert-type scale of the instrument was amended by the researcher, and therefore was not identical to what can be found in the literature, as per the original the Servant Leadership Survey - SLS (Van Dierendonck and Nuijten, 2011) and the Work-Related Quality of Life Scale - WRQoLS (Van Laar *et al.*, 2007) instruments and Trust scale (Cook and Wall (1980) adapted by Bartram and Casimir (2006)). The original scale of the Servant Leadership Survey - SLS (Van Dierendonck and Nuijten, 2011), Work-Related Quality of Life Scale - WRQoLS (Van Laar *et al.*, 2007) and the Trust instruments ranged from 1 to 5. However, this was amended and the combined amended instrument was changed to a rating scale that ranges from 1 to 7. Previous research (Pearse, 2011) suggests that respondents find increased scale granularity of items in questionnaires useful as it allows for more selection options; higher scale granularity is also of statistical benefit to researchers when analysing the data. Pearse (2011: 161) argues that increased scale granularity can assist the researcher with the following:

- “to ensure more precise data is collected,
- to increase the reliability and validity of the data, and
- to ensure that more useful data is gathered”.

Given the complexity of the proposed Structural Equation Model in this research, it was hoped that increased scale granularity would ensure better reliability and validity of the different scales and therefore assist in the statistical process. However, this

increase in the scale granularity may have changed the original structure of the instruments, in that the previous 5-point Likert scales produced a high weighting of agreement choices and it is possible that the wider range of choices on the 7-point scale adopted could influence the levels of agreement.

The amended instrument instructed the respondents to select 1 if they strongly disagreed with the statement; 2 if they somewhat disagreed; 3 if they disagreed; 4 if they were neutral; 5 if they somewhat agreed; 6 if they agreed; and 7 if they strongly agreed with the statement.

4.7.1 Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's Servant Leadership Survey (2011)

As previously mentioned, the first 30 items of the questionnaire were derived from Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's Servant Leadership Survey (2011). This survey is the result of four independent studies conducted in the United Kingdom and the Netherlands (Van Dierendonck and Nuijten, 2011). The first of the studies are results from 789 respondents from a range of vocations. Twenty five percent consisted of replies from the employees in the finance, education and civil services; 20% were teachers; 12% were employees of a fire brigade and the balance were respondents of an online survey (Van Dierendonck and Nuijten, 2011). The second study consisted of 263 respondents who were all from a civil servant background (Van Dierendonck and Nuijten, 2011). The third study showed the result of 236 respondents of which 57% were from service stations (petrol and diesel) and the rest from various managers of business organisations (Van Dierendonck and Nuijten, 2011). The last study was an online study and 384 respondents replied online (Van Dierendonck and Nuijten, 2011). Fifty two percent of the total respondents were women (Van Dierendonck and Nuijten, 2011). A combination of exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses confirmed a set of eight factors from 30 items (Van Dierendonck and Nuijten, 2011). The eight factors in the Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's Servant Leadership Multidimensional Measure (2011) include Standing Back, Forgiveness, Courage, Empowerment, Accountability, Authenticity, Humility, and Stewardship (Van Dierendonck and Nuijten, 2011).

4.7.2 Van Laar, Edwards and Easton WRQoL (2007)

The Van Laar *et al.*'s WRQoL (2007) model first originated from a study of healthcare workers in England. The purpose was to develop a valid and reliable instrument that would measure Quality of Worklife. The study sample included a large pool of 953 respondents, of which a significant percentage was females (86%). Most employees were between the ages of 18 and 44 (52%) and were relatively new in the organisation, between one and five years' experience. The Van Laar *et al.* (2007) study produced a 23 item, six factor model using factor analysis. The six factors included Job and Career Satisfaction, General Well-Being, Stress at Work, Control at Work and Working Conditions. Reliability of the instrument proved to be excellent with an overall Cronbach's Alpha score of 0.91. The instrument also produced very acceptable Confirmatory Factor analysis indices (CFI = 0.94, GFI = 0.93, NFI = 0.92 and RMSEA = 0.05), indicating a good model fit and suggesting it to be a reliable and valid instrument.

Since this initial study, the WRQoL model has been used in a variety of contexts. Edwards, Van Laar, Easton and Kinman (2009) validated the instrument once again, this time using Higher Education employees where a significant sample, $n = 5900$ proved the instrument to be valid and reliable in this context too. The instrument was also used by a study by Easton, Van Laar and Marlow-Vardy (2013) of a Quality of Worklife study of police officers. Five hundred and thirty three respondents confirmed the validity and reliability of the six factor WRQoL model. In this study (Easton *et al.*, 2013) a benchmark score, based on previous research, per factor was introduced. In very recent studies, the instrument has also proved to be valid and reliable in a mix of organisations, countries and contexts. Dunyan, Aytac, Akildiz and Van Laar's (2013) study of 288 employees from different organisations and jobs in Turkey, proved that the instrument could be used in a cross cultural context. Chen, Haniff, Siau, Seet, Loh, Jamil, Sa'at and Baharum's (2014) study of 229 academics measured Quality of Worklife and burnout in academic institutions in Malaysia.

This study made use of the WRQoL scale. However, it excluded one of the items (item 2). Item two, "I feel able to voice opinions and influence changes in my area of work", of the WRQoLS was omitted due to it being deemed by the researcher as slightly confusing and overly complicated in its wording for this context. Moreover,

there is evidence in the literature, that this item has been omitted from the instrument before (Duyan, Aytac, Akyildiz, and Van Laar, 2014: 110). In a previous study, and in consultation with the original authors, item 2 was also omitted due to it “disrupting the model structure”, and hence was omitted from the study. Barring the omitted item however, the other 22 items were loaded into Stata (V15.0) per factor as originally published. Moreover, it must also be noted that as is published in the literature (Van Laar, Edwards and Easton, 2007), the item which measures whether respondents are satisfied with the overall quality of their working life, was not initially included in the CFA model, as it does not form part of any factor structure within the CFA model. This item will be included in the structural equation model at a later stage.

4.7.3 The Trust Scale

The Trust scale used in this study originates from the works of Cook and Wall (1980) which was later adapted by Bartram and Casimir (2006) for use in the Contact Centre context. Cook and Wall's (1980) influential works on the measurement of Trust was a consequence of two studies with a combined sample size of 650, and which was conducted in a blue-collar worker context. The primary focus of the study was to develop three measures, one of which was to measure interpersonal Trust at work. The interpersonal Trust scale measured both Trust of the leader as well as Trust in colleagues. Bartram and Casimir (2006) made use of the Trust-in-leader component of the instrument when they studied how transformational leadership can improve the performance of followers by empowering them and by developing Trust in the leader in a Contact Centre context. In this study, Trust was positioned as a mediating variable between transformational leadership and employee performance (Bartram and Casimir, 2006). The measure was also slightly adapted by Bartram and Casimir (2006) and managed to produce good internal reliability results ($\alpha = 0.78$). This research will use the three Cook and Wall (1980) items of the adapted Bartram and Casimir (2006) four-item Trust scale which includes the following (Bartram and Casimir, 2006:9):

- 1) I can Trust my manager to make sensible decisions for the future of the company;
- 2) I feel quite confident that my manager will always try to treat me fairly;
- 3) My manager can be relied on to uphold my best interests.

Bartram and Casimir (2006) report that confirmatory factor analyses were conducted on the Trust scale uni-dimensionality. The Trust items loaded strongly and the fit indices were deemed satisfactory (GFI = 0.93, CFI = 0.91, SRMR = 0.035) for a single factor representation of the scale.

The scale was adopted for this study due to its uni-dimensionality and appropriateness to the context of the study.

4.8 Data Analysis

The collected data information was stored in a data base repository (Turban *et al.*, 2006) in Google Drive. The Data was then extracted by the researcher and analysed in MS Excel (version 2010) and Stata (V15.0) with the following statistical objectives in mind:

- To test the reliability of the Servant Leadership, Quality of Worklife and Trust data using Cronbach's Alpha;
- To analyse the dimensional structure of the Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife models in the Contact Centre frontline context using the multivariate technique, Confirmatory Factor Analysis;
- To test the Construct Validity of the instrument using Convergent and Discriminant validity analysis.
- To test the causal path between Servant Leadership, Trust and Quality of Worklife using Structural Equation Modelling.
- To test the mediating relationship of Trust between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife.
- To describe (statistically) the current levels of Servant Leadership in each site;
- To describe (statistically) the current levels of Quality of Worklife in each site;
- Identify any significant differences in various biographical data.

4.9 Reliability

Testing for reliability in social research is an important part of any social research project, particularly because the researcher is dealing with abstract theoretical constructs rather than physical variables (Kimberlin and Winterstein, 2008). To test the reliability of an instrument, the researcher aims to check the consistency and reliability of the information supplied by the respondents as to whether they would yield similar results if tested repeatedly (Kimberlin and Winterstein, 2008). An internal consistency testing technique, called Cronbach's co-efficient Alpha is used for this reason (Carmines and Zeller, 1979).

4.9.1 Cronbach's Alpha (Cronbach, 1951)

According to Carmines and Zeller (1979), it is imperative to ensure the internal reliability of data that was processed from a Likert-type questionnaire. However, Cronbach's Alpha (Cronbach, 1951) should not be confused with tests of unidimensionality (Panayides, 2013); it is the measure of internal reliability of test scores. The Cronbach's Alpha (Cronbach, 1951) measurement estimates the proportion of variance of the total number of test scores in relation to how consistent the actual variance is. A Cronbach's Alpha test will illustrate the reliability of the answers supplied by the respondents and is one of the most widely used tests of reliability in social science (Hogan, Benjamin and Brezinksi, 2000).

Kline (2016) argues that any Cronbach's Alpha score that is under 0.7 is questionable and scores above 0.9 are described as excellent, however some authors argue that scores too high could indicate a level of redundancy in items, in that similar questions are asked repeatedly and therefore may propose errors of construct validity (Streiner, 2003).

4.10 Multivariate Analyses: Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Confirmatory Factor Analysis is a technique used to confirm a hypothesized theoretical model; it does this by verifying the factor structure of observed variables (Thompson, 2004). Through Confirmatory Factor Analysis, the researcher is able to

test relationships of variables within theoretical models, and to measure whether this theoretical factor model, which are unobserved latent factors, fits the data set, which are the variables that have been observed (Brown 2006; Thompson, 2004). In contrast with Exploratory Factor Analysis, the latent factors in Confirmatory Factor Analysis are known upfront, and the Confirmatory Factor Analysis procedure tests whether the observed data set fits the latent factor structure. In effect, Confirmatory Factor Analysis is a theory testing procedure (Thompson, 2004). A key difference between Exploratory and Confirmatory Factor Analysis is that Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) is a multivariate statistical procedure that is primarily used to understand the dimensionality of the instrument, as well as indicate to the researcher the number of possible factors due to their relationships with the items (Costello and Osborne, 2005; Furr, 2011). Similarly, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) also analyses the items in relation to their factors but does so through specification of the relationships by the researcher (Furr, 2011, Kline, 2011). So it can be said that as statistical procedures, both EFA and CFA are primarily concerned with the relationships between observed items and latent variables with respect to the amount of variance and covariance each of these relationships explain (Furr, 2011, Kline, 2011). Confirmatory Factor Analysis however, assumes, that through a study of the relevant literature and hypothesis development, the relationship patterns between the latent and observed variables are developed a priori (Kline, 2011). With respect to this research, it is very clear what factor structure the sample should display for both the SLS and WRQoLS. Moreover, due to the SLS and WRQoLS factor structure of the instrument being selected from instruments already in the literature, the number of factors that should be observed, as well as the structure of the corresponding items to be loaded can be aligned.

In EFA the number of factors selected from the observed variable simply depends on the interpretation of the scree plot or number of Eigen values that are greater than one. However, CFA requires more than this as clear paths between latent and observed variables also need to be prescribed.

All variables are standardized in the EFA process, while CFA computes both standardized and unstandardized variance as well as covariance outputs (Furr, 2011, Kline, 2011). Measurement error correlation statistics in EFA are unspecified while measurement errors in CFA are specified a priori and can be modelled

according to theoretical predictions (Furr, 2011, Kline, 2011). Confirmatory Factor Analysis also allows for the factor loadings to be constrained, or equal to one depending on the researcher's model output data, while EFA does not do this (Furr, 2011). EFA also allows items with lower factor loadings to cross load onto factors which are not specified in the literature.

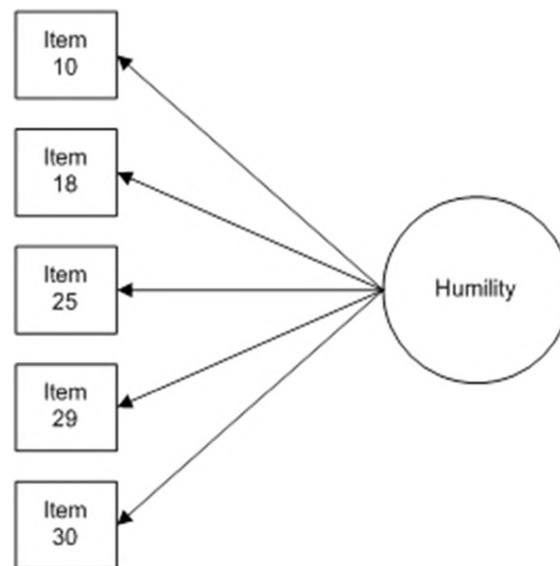
CFA also allows for the data and model to be compared to other models, and make amendments of the model to improve data fit, this is beyond the scope of what is possible with EFA. Moreover, key to this research is that CFA allows for the analysis and testing of higher order factor models (Kline, 2011). Each of the SLS and WRQoLS sections of the instrument have Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife as higher order factors, and each of them have several lower order factors which describe these higher order factors. Moreover, CFA allows for the comparison of the factor structure of SLS and the WRQoLS factor structure. The literature suggests Confirmatory Factor Analysis to be an alternative methodology of factor examination and proposes an alternate method to EFA of confirming factor validity (Furr, 2011). For this and reasons supplied above, CFA was selected as the preferred statistical process.

4.10.1 Observed and Latent Variables

Importantly, and right from the onset of the Confirmatory Factor Analysis process, the researcher needs to understand and differentiate between observed and latent variables (Kline, 2011). Kline (2011:8) posits that observed variables can be "categorical, ordinal, or continuous", but suggest that latent variables can only be continuous. Observed or measured variables are the variables that were actually measured in the study, for example, all of the items on the survey of this research paper can be described as observed variables, as all of these variables were measured through the process of respondents selecting scores on each item (Kline, 2011). In a Confirmatory Factor Analysis model, observed variables will always be illustratively depicted as variables in solid line boxes (Kline, 2011). In contrast however, latent variables are those intangible variables that are proposed in the theoretical models as constructs or factors of the model. Latent variables are denoted in ellipses, or circles, though also with solid lines (Kline, 2011). For example, as illustrated in the model presented in Figure 4.2, it can be noted that the

Servant Leadership factor is illustrated to have observed Variables, which are the measured items depicted as square figures, and latent variables, which are the Humility factor, and the Servant Leadership Construct in circle and ellipses shape. Confirmatory Factor Analysis models are described as measurement models (Furr, 2011). Measurement models can either be multifactor but single level models, such as in the case of Figure 4.2, where the observed variable described the latent variable Humility; or they can multidimensional and include both lower order factors and higher order factors.

Figure 4.2 Section of Servant Leadership Single Level CFA Model

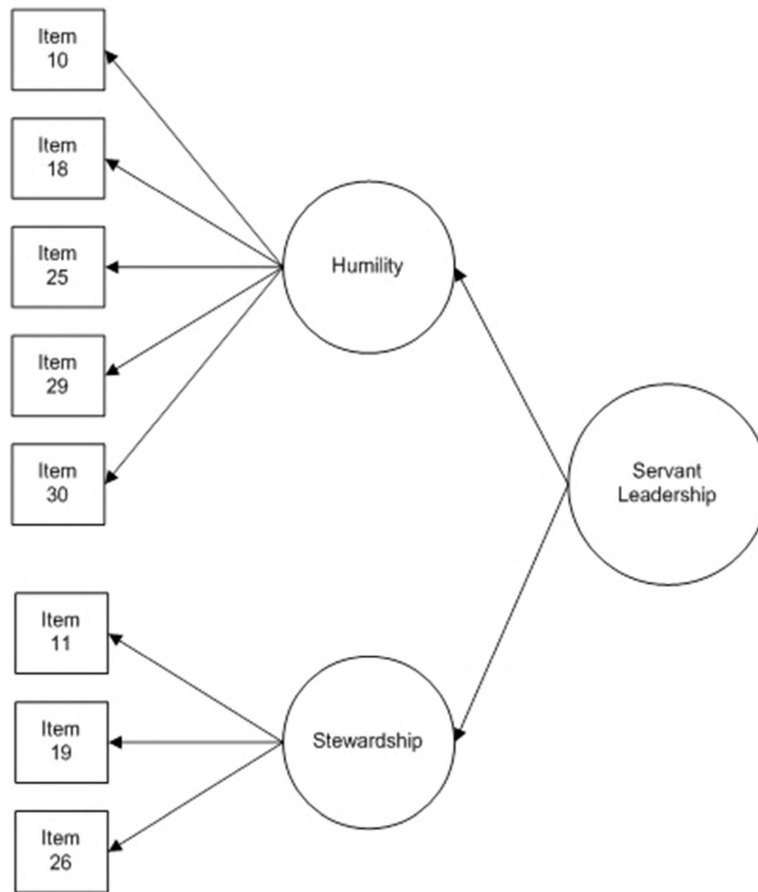


Source: Author's Construction based on Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's Servant Leadership Survey (2011)

As is illustrated in Figure 4.3, where the Humility and Stewardship latent variables are the lower order factors and these describe the higher order factor which is Servant Leadership (Furr, 2011).

The arrow lines denote the prediction of the observed variable from the latent variable (Kline, 2011). After the model estimation process has been conducted, a data weight of the relationship is deduced (Kline, 2011). This regression weight denotes the strength of the relationship between the latent and its observed variables in an unstandardised or standardised notation.

Figure 4.3 Section of Servant Leadership Higher Order CFA Model



Source: Author's Construction Based on Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's Servant Leadership Survey (2011)

Confirmatory Factor Analysis tests whether a hypothesized theory, as stipulated in the literature, which is depicted as observed variables or measured variables and their corresponding latent factors, when loaded into a computer software package, such as Stata, supports the hypothesized theory. The software computes the statistical analysis, and the researcher is then required to assess the results with an array of goodness of fit measures (Kline, 2016).

Confirmatory Factor Analysis can be described as an extension of similar multivariate techniques, such as regression and factor analysis (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson and Tatham, 2006). Confirmatory Factor Analysis is a technique used to confirm a hypothesized theoretical model, and it does this by verifying the factor

structure of observed variables (Thompson, 2004). Through Confirmatory Factor Analysis, the researcher is able to test relationships of variables within a theoretical model. Moreover, Confirmatory Factor Analysis enables the researcher to measure whether a theoretical factor model, which is made up of unobserved latent factors and observed items, fits the data set (Thompson, 2004; Brown 2006).

4.10.2 Confirmatory Factor Analysis of the Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife Models

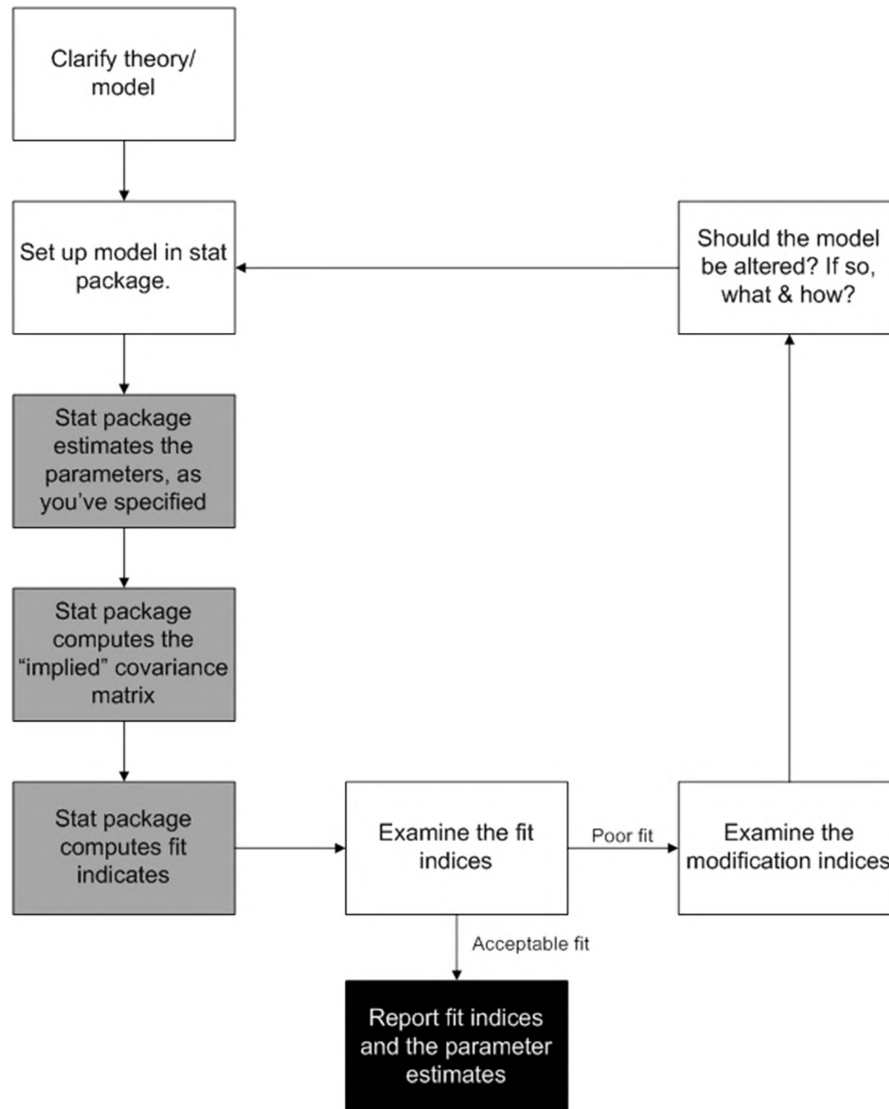
The primary function of the Confirmatory Factor Analysis models was used to test the relationships between the observed variables, lower and higher order factors as hypothesized, and which have been argued in the literature chapters, and investigate if the factor structures are as predicted in the literature (Furr, 2011). Therefore, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was used to validate the Servant Leadership section of the instrument, and the second section of the instrument, Quality of Worklife, as higher order factors, which are described by lower order latent variables.

The CFA models were then analyzed using CFA techniques, consistent with methodical confirmatory factor analysis practice (Ullman, 2006), to ascertain the model fit for this data set. The results of the model will be reported using the following fit indices as suggested by Hooper, Coughlan and Mullen (2008) and Kline (2016):

- chi-square, degrees of freedom and p value;
- chi-square relative to its degree of freedom;
- the comparative fit index (CFI), and;
- the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA);
- the standardized root mean squared residual (SRMR).

Furr (2011) proposes that the process of Confirmatory Factor Analysis includes four distinct steps: i) Specifying the model, ii) Analysis, iii) Interpreting and; iv) Modification of the model. However, Furr (2011:94) argues that before conducting CFA, “collection of responses” and sample size analyses are required as preliminary steps. The process that was followed mirrors Furr’s (2011) suggested CFA process, which is illustrated in Figure 4.4 below.

Figure 4.4 CFA Process Adopted



Source: Adopted from Furr (2011)

4.10.3 Confirmatory Factor Analysis Preliminary Steps

Furr (2011) argues that prior to the Confirmatory Factor Analyses process can being started; certain preliminary steps are required, such as the somewhat self-evident step of collecting the data, and checking sample size.

4.10.3.1 Summarised Description of Collection of Data

The survey questionnaire was distributed to all frontline Contact Centre staff members via email. Respondents were requested, by mail, to complete the questionnaire during scheduled off-phone periods. This time is usually used for personal administration or development, and albeit that the questionnaire will not take long to complete; the time spent on the questionnaire was still approved through management negotiation.

The questionnaire was completed by clicking on a link on the email which directed the respondents to a one-page online survey answer sheet on Google Drive. A brief explanation of what the research will be about and the questions to be completed was on this page.

4.10.3.2 Sample Size

Comrey and Lee (1992) argue that a good rule of thumb when deciding adequate sample size numbers for Factor Analysis is a range test, where below 50 is very poor; between 100 and 200 is poor, above 200 is fair; above 300 is good; above 500 is very good, and above 1,000 is excellent. Thompson (2004) posits that a data set of 200 respondents is the minimum number for Factor Analysis, however, Hair *et al.* (1995) suggests that over 100 is also adequate.

On the other hand, Meyers, Gamst and Guarino (2006) suggest that sample size can be proportioned as a ratio of the number of items. That is, 25 items would require a minimum of 250 respondents, 90 items would require 400, and 500 would need over 700 respondents, and so on. A good rule of thumb for determining the minimum sample size for CFA would be a sample size that is five times the number of variables (Bentler and Chou, 1987), while Garver and Mentzer (1999) argued that any sample over 200 is sufficient. Although there is not agreement within the literature what the minimum sample size number should be to guide researchers without reservation, it is to note that the sample size of this study met Thompson's (2004), Meyer *et al.* (2006) and Hair *et al.*'s (1995) recommended minimum sample amounts.

4.10.3.3 CFA Step One, Model Specification and Identification

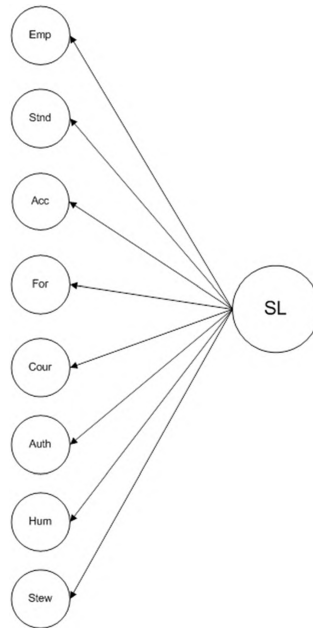
As previously mentioned, Furr (2011) suggests that the process of Confirmatory Factor Analysis include four distinct steps: i) Specifying the model, ii) Analysis, iii) Interpreting and; iv) Modification of the model. What follows is a discussion of each step.

4.10.3.3.1 Model 1 Specification

In previous chapters the conceptual framework for this research was developed, the SLS measurement model (Van Dierendonck and Nuijten, 2010) is hypothesised to measure the higher order factor of Servant Leadership. Figure 4.5 illustrates how the eight lower order factors of Humility (Hum), Empowerment (Emp), Accountability (Acc), Forgiveness (For), Standing Back (Stn), Stewardship (Stew), Courage (Cour) and Authenticity (Auth) measure the higher order factor Servant Leadership. Figure 4.6, illustrates the QWL model (Van Laar, Edwards and Easton, 2007), which measures how Quality of Worklife is measured through six lower order factors of General Well Being (GWB), Job Career Satisfaction (JCS), Home Work Interface (HWI), Stress at Work (SAW) and Control at Work (CAW) and Working Conditions (WC). Furr (2011) argues that key to model specification is the identification of the number of factors in the model; the associations between items and factors and the associations between factors.

Figure 4.5 illustrates how the eight lower order factors load onto the higher order Servant Leadership factor.

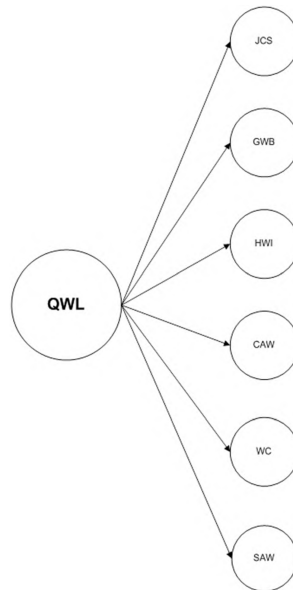
Figure 4.5: SLS CFA Model



Source: SLS (Van Dierendonck and Nuijten, 2010)

Figure 4.6 illustrates how the six lower order factors load onto the higher order Quality of Worklife factor.

Figure 4.6: WRQoLS CFA Model



Source: Quality of Life Scale - QWL (Van Laar, Edwards and Easton, 2007)

Items which were hypothesised to load onto each of the Servant Leadership factors, are illustrated in Table 4.1 below:

Table 4.1 SLS Items per Factor

SLS Factors	Empowerment	Standing back	Accountability	Forgiveness	Courage	Authenticity	Humility	Stewardship
Item no.	1	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
	2	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
	3	21	22	23		24	25	26
	4					28	29	
	12						30	
	20							
	27							

Source: Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's Servant Leadership Survey (2011).

Items which were hypothesised to load onto each of the Quality of Worklife factors, are illustrated Table 4.2 below:

Table 4.2 QWL Items per Factor

QWL Factors	Job Career Satisfaction	Control at Work	General Well Being	Home-Work Interfa	Stress at Work	Working Conditions
Item no.	1	12	4	5	7	13
	3	23	9	6	19	16
	8		10	14		22
	11		15			
	18		17			
	20		21			

Source: Quality of Life Scale - WRQoLS (Van Laar *et al.*, 2007)

4.10.3.3.2 Model 1 Identification

According to Weston and Gore (2006), to determine whether the Model is appropriate for Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Structural Equation Modelling with respects to elements of Model Identification is a fairly simple process. Not unlike other prerequisite criteria, Model Identification is a prerequisite for CFA and SEM (Weston and Gore, 2006) in that model identification is a condition that must be met prior to the process of either CFA or SEM. Kline (2011:93) argues that a CFA or SEM model is only said to be Identified, when it can be calculated that it is theoretically possible to compute an "estimate for every parameter". A CFA model can either be over-identified, under-identified or just-identified (Kline, 2011). The process of determining whether a model is over-identified, under-identified or just-identified is by examining the proposed model's degrees of freedom. In a just-

identified model we have 0 degrees of freedom, in an over-identified model the degrees of freedom equate to figure of greater than zero and under-identified calculate to less than zero (Weston and Gore, 2006). Researchers calculate the number of degrees of freedom in a model by subtracting the number of parameters to be estimated from the number of known elements (variances and covariance's) in the correlation matrix (Weston and Gore, 2006:732). The formula for calculating all the variances and covariance's in any CFA for the purposes of identification is as follows $\{k \times (k+1)\} / 2$ pieces of information if there is k observed variables in the model. As previously mentioned, Kline (2011) suggest that a result that is greater than zero will state the model is over-identified and the researcher will be able to continue the CFA process. If the results in this research produced a negative result, this would have suggested a model that is *under-identified*. To calculate if the model is identified, the researcher subtracted the parameters to be estimated from the number of known elements in the correlation matrix (Kline, 2011). A negative result would mean that the researcher would have to go back to the Model Specification step of the process (Kline, 2011).

4.10.3.4 CFA Step Two, Model Analyses

According to Furr (2011:97), "After specifying the hypothesised model, researchers submit their specifications and their scale's data for analysis, and the software goes to work." The model analysis step includes that after the data is entered into the statistical software package the model output is then analysed. Model analysis is a four phase process according to Furr (2011), firstly to "compute the items' actual variances and the actual covariance's among the items"; secondly the software estimates the parameters and tests the factor loadings; thirdly the "software uses the estimated parameters to create "implied" item variances and covariance's". In other words the software attempts to match the actual variances and covariance's of the model with what has been hypothesised; and lastly the software calculates, through the use of fit indices, whether the hypothesised model is a good fit or not. According to Weston and Gore (2006), researchers will interpret results according to the significance of the tested relationships and the amount of explained variance pertaining to each construct. The significance of the parameter estimates is particularly important when reporting on a model, as the model can only be reported as valid, if the parameter estimates are significant (Weston and Gore, 2006). With

respect to this research, the data from the respondents was entered into Stata (v15.0) in alignment with their item and factor structure, which was in accordance with the literature and presented as hypothesised earlier in this chapter (Van Laar *et al.*, 2007; Van Dierendonck and Nuijten, 2011). Confirmatory maximum likelihood factor analysis was then conducted and the results of the model estimations will be discussed in the reporting step of the CFA process in the next chapter.

For the purpose of assessing whether the hypothesised model fits the data, the following hypothesis was used:

H6₀: The data fits the model and the model converges.

H6_a: The data does not fit the model and the model does not converge.

The result of this hypothesis is presented in Chapter Five and the model estimates will be discussed in relation to the model fit for this data set. The results of the model are reported using the chi-square, degrees of freedom and p value, chi-square relative to its degree of freedom, the comparative fit index (CFI), the standardized root mean squared residual (SRMR) and the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) as suggested by Hooper *et al.* (2008) and Kline (2016). Model fit and its related indices are discussed below.

4.10.3.5 CFA Step Three, Interpreting and Reporting

Step three of the CFA process is related to reporting the model output in relation to the interpretation of the model fit indices, in order to ascertain whether the model fits the sample data set as hypothesised (Furr, 2011).

4.10.3.5.1 Model Fit

Many scholars suggest a range of indices measures to ascertain whether the sample data fits the model, which has been hypothesised in theory (Hair *et al.*, 2006; Hu and Bentler, 1999; Brown, 2006; Kline, 2011). It is in the stage of the Confirmatory Factor Analysis process that researchers will determine whether the theoretical model can be empirically substantiated. These scholars also suggest that researchers should not only use one measure, but a combination of a few measures to determine model fit. Kline (2016) suggests a combination of a few measures, which are viewed by

scholars as the most informative fit measures to use to measure good model fit, as mentioned above, these measures include chi-square, degrees of freedom and p value, chi-square relative to its degree of freedom, the comparative fit index (CFI), the standardized root mean squared residual (SRMR) and the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA). Kline (2016:269) posits these indices to be an effective grouping of indices to adequately measure model fit, as they consist of “a model test statistic and three approximate fit indexes”.

4.10.3.5.2 Chi-Square

The Chi-square statistic χ^2 is sometimes referred as test of bad fit (Hooper *et al.*, 2008). It is an absolute fit index as it tests whether the sample data fits the model (Weston and Gore, 2006). Significance in the χ^2 statistic is a test of whether the model fits or not (Weston and Gore, 2006). If the χ^2 is significant, the model is said not to fit the sample data well, however non-significant results illustrate better fitting models (Weston and Gore, 2006). According to Bentler and Bonnet (1980), the chi-square test is also very sensitive to sample size, and the higher the sample population, the higher the chance of the test proving to be significant. When the chi squared is divided by the degrees of freedom however, as suggested by Schumacker and Lomax (2004), (χ^2 / df), the relative chi squared becomes less affected by the sample size, and any result that is equal to, or below 3 is determined as a good fit index (Hooper *et al.*, 2008). However, it is also stated within the literature that less than five is also somewhat acceptable (Wheaton, Muthen, Alwin and Summers, 1977).

4.10.3.5.3 Comparative Fit Index (CFI)

The Comparative Fit index (CFI) is an incremental fit index (Western and Gore). The CFI is often used to determine model fit by researches (Kline, 2011) however, due to its sensitivity with respect to sample size, that higher scores are more acceptable (Hooper *et al.*, 2008). Many researchers in social science research present this as evidence of model fit, but few researchers solely depend on only the CFI result (Hooper *et al.*, 2008). The CFI index compares the presented model with the baseline model, where the baseline model assumes no correlations between the latent variables (Kline, 2011). Results results above 0.9 indicate good fitting models

(Kline, 2011), however Bollen (1989) argues that marginally lower scores are still acceptable if they are illustrative of progress in a research field, Hu and Bentler (1999) also indicate results slightly below 0.9 can also be described adequate fitting models.

4.10.3.5.4 Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)

Not unlike the Chi Squared measure, the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), is “measure of non-centrality relative to sample size and degrees of freedom” (Ullman, 2006:44), which measures the goodness of fit of a model from the point of zero; zero being a perfect fit (Kline, 2016). Kline (2016) argues that is important to also include the RMSEA, and results under 0.06 represent a good fit. Hu and Bentler (1999) also suggests a RMSEA result close to 0.06 as a cut-off, while Steiger (2007) posits that values less than 0.07 represent an adequate model fit.

4.10.3.5.5 Standardized root mean squared residual (SRMR)

The higher the SRMR value, the poorer the model fit (Kline 2016). Kline (2016:277) suggests that the SRMR is the “It is a standardized version of the root mean square residual (RMR), which is a measure of the mean absolute covariance residual”. Values exceeding 1 generally indicate a poor model fit (Kline 2016) and those below 0.08 represent a good model fit (Hu and Bentler, 1999).

After model fit, the last of the CFA steps as suggested by Furr (2011) is Model Modification which is dicussed next.

4.10.3.6 CFA Step Four, Model Modification

Should the model indices not give the required results, the researcher may test alternative models that fit within the theoretical paradigm of the central hypotheses, and which changes to the model will be deemed to be theoretically justified (Kline, 2011). According the Weston and Gore (2006), it only on very rare occasions that the first model that is proposed fits adequately, or is the best fit, and modifications are consequently needed. Model modification however, should not only be done on

the basis of improved statistical fit but every modification of the model needs to be theoretically sound as well (Weston and Gore, 2006; Furr, 2011).

Furr, (2011:102) argues that researchers wanting to improve model fit should “examine modification indices to identify potentially useful revisions to a measurement model”. Furr (2011) suggests that where parameters have larger modification indices, that it is in these parameters, where the possibility of model improvement exist. However, as previously mentioned, modifications need to be made with care and only when there is plausible theoretical justification (Furr, 2011, Kline, 2011).

4.11 Validity

An instrument can only be said to be a suitable scientific tool if it measures that which it is intended to measure, in other words, whether it is valid (Hair *et al.* 1998; Kimberlin and Winterstein, 2008). According to Babbie (2011:132), “validity is a term describing a measure that accurately reflects the concepts it is intended to measure”. Validity is the certainty or accuracy assurance that the researcher gets from the results of an instrument and therefore is able to make the assumption that there are limited research errors pertaining to construct identification (Kimberlin and Winterstein, 2008). According to Kimberlin and Winterstein (2008:2278), “validity requires that an instrument is reliable, but an instrument can be reliable without being valid”. In other words, although there may be elements of reliability in respondent’s answers, this does not necessarily mean the items are relating to an intended and specific theoretical construct. To ensure alignment of what is measured is precisely what is intended to be measured; the researcher needs to pay particular attention to the validity of the instrument (Kimberlin and Winterstein, 2008).

The measure of construct validity of, and within instruments, includes validity evidence from elements such as content validity and criterion related validity (Kimberlin and Winterstein, 2008). Content validity supposes that the content of a construct, in other word the items that make up the construct, do indeed fit this construct. Content Validity is a theoretically driven validity measure that has been proposed and accepted in literature (Kimberlin and Winterstein, 2008). A similar

validity type which measures whether the instrument is measuring “on its face” what it is intended to measure is that of face validity (Babbie, 2011:132). However, criterion validity is a process of evaluating relationships between items and is studied through a variety of different statistical tests, that test correlations whether items fit constructs as hypothesised in literature (Kimberlin and Winterstein, 2008). A similar validity type to that of criterion is construct validity, and it is determined through measurements of convergent and divergent validity (Fornell and Larcker, 1981; Hair *et al.*, 2006). Construct validity determines “the degree to which a measure relates to other variables as expected within a system of theoretical relationships” (Babbie, 2011:133). A blend of face and construct validity evidence is needed to argue validity of a measure and this is discussed below.

4.11.1 Face Validity

Face validity is a type of criterion validity and is the measure of validity of an instrument that looks, on face value, to be measuring what it is supposed to measure. Face validity is the subjective conformation that the instrument is measuring what it is intended to be measuring, and is defined as “the extent to which the indicator set is subjectively viewed as covering the concept it purports to measure” (Leemans, Deliens, Francke, Vander Stichele, Van den Block and Cohen, 2015:75). It can therefore be said that in this research, the face value of the instrument would be to ensure that the instrument measures what it is intended to measure. That is, does the instrument of this research measure Servant Leadership behaviour and the factors associated with it, as well as the level of Quality of Worklife and its associated factors? As discussed in the previous literature sections, given that both the Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife sections of the instrument have been robustly tested within the literature, both methodologically as well as from a content perspective, it is therefore concluded that the criteria for face validity has been met for this instrument.

4.11.2 Convergent Validity

Convergent validity is a form of construct validity and measures the share of portion of variance that each item shares in a particular factor, in other words, to what degree each particular item shares a portion of variance with the other items in the same factor (Hair *et al.*, 2006). Convergent validity would therefore measure the degree to which items of theoretical similarity would converge on each other. For example, the lower order factor of Forgiveness has three items, namely: “my supervisor keeps criticizing people for the mistakes they have made in their work; my supervisor maintains a hard attitude towards people who have offended him/her at work; and, my manager finds it difficult to forget things that went wrong in the past” (Easton and Van Laar, 2012:34). Convergent validity would measure what portion of variance is shared by each item, indicating to what degree they should be similar. Convergent validity is measured using the average variance extracted (AVE) method (Fornell and Larcker, 1981; Hair *et al.*, 2006). AVE is calculated as the sum of the standardised loadings over (the sum of the standardised loadings less the sum of the indicator measurement error) (Fornell and Larcker, 1981; Hair *et al.*, 2006). Hair *et al.*, (2006) argue that the threshold for AVE is that the average variance extracted must be greater than 0.5. Each of the Servant Leadership factors, as well as each of the Quality of Worklife factors were tested using this technique to ensure that convergent validity was achieved.

4.11.3 Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity is also a form of construct validity and tests whether factors which are supposed to be unrelated and independent, or that they discriminate from each other, are in fact different. In this research, calculations of discriminant validity aim to show that the factors of Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife are in fact independent from one another.

Hair *et al.*, (2006: 778) posit that to determine construct validity, it needs to be evident that “the variance extracted estimates should be greater than the squared correlation estimate”. Using the average variance extraction method (Fornell and Larcker, 1981), this research illustrated that the AVE estimates for any two of the factors, were greater than the squared correlation between any two of the second order factors in order to illustrate that discriminant validity has been achieved. The

discriminant validity for all lower order factors of both Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife were tested.

4.12 Multivariate Analysis: Structural Equation Modelling

Structural Equation Modelling is a multivariate data analytics technique (Weston and Gore 2006) widely used to establish causal relationships amongst variables. The key objective of Structural Equation Modelling is to study the relationship between observed variables, and unobserved latent factors, in that it tests hypotheses of relationships between variables (Ullman, 2006). Structural Equation Modelling is a confirmatory technique generally used to test theory (Weston and Gore 2006). Variables in these relationships can either act as independent or dependent variables (Ullman, 2006) and one of the unique abilities of Structural Equation Modelling is that it is a multivariate procedure that can test multiple simultaneous relationships between dependent and independent variables (Ullman, 1996). Structural Equation Modelling is also sometimes referred to as the “Causal Model” (Ullman, 2006:36), and this can be attributed to Structural Equation Modelling often being used to test and explain casual relationships between dependent and independent variables. Kline (2011) does however caution that researchers should be very careful to make statements of causality purely from the results of a Structural Equation Modelling analysis, as statistical correlations cannot predict directional causality, so the statistical evidence always needs to be accompanied and substantiated through rigorous literature confirmation that supports the Content Validity. The Structural Equation Modelling process starts with a hypothesis of relationships between variables that is conceptualised after rigorous study of literature (Ullman, 2006). After the researcher has collected a data set, the Structural Equation Modelling process that follows is the computation analysis technique, which measures how well the data fits the hypothesised theoretical relationships of variables (Kline, 2011). Structural Equation Modelling’s key advantage as a data analysis technique is that it can simultaneously test different structural relationships between variables (Ullman, 1996) and is sometimes described to students of Statistics as a combination of factor analysis and multiple regression analysis, that estimate correlations of relationships between various variables (Kline, 2011). What

follows is a discussion on the steps used in the Structural Equation Modelling process.

4.12.1 Steps in Structural Equation Modelling

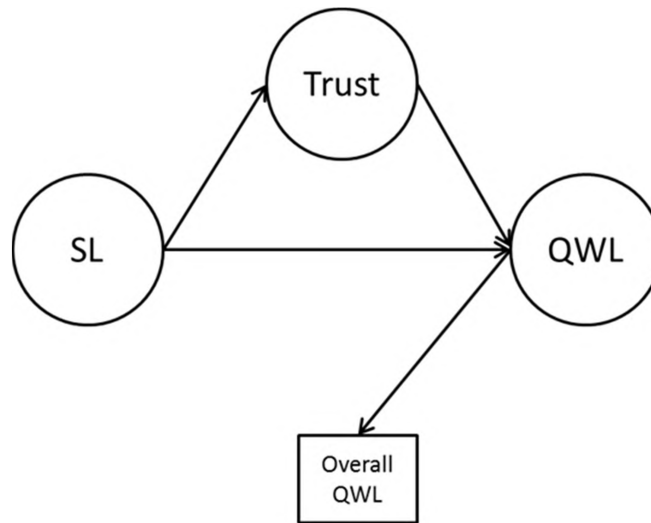
After a study of the works of influential Structural Equation Modelling authors such as Hoyle (1995), Kaplan (2000), and Schumacher and Lomax (2004); West and Gore (2006:719) posit that there are six steps to consider when doing Structural Equation Modelling. Weston and Gore (2006) reveal that experts in the field of Structural Equation Modelling have agreed on the premise that six steps are required for conducting Structural Equation Modelling. Weston and Gore, (2006:729) argue that the process of Structural Equation Modelling includes the following steps: “model specification, identification, data collection and screening, estimation, evaluation, and modification”. Kline (2016) similarly argues that the process of Structural Equation Modelling includes the process of specifying the model, evaluating model identification, screening the data, model estimation and evaluating the model fit, and then either re-specifying or reporting the model results. This research thesis therefore used the process as depicted by Kline (2016).

4.12.1.1 SEM Step1, Model Specification

The Model Specification step is the first step in the Structural Equation Modelling process and according to Kline (2016), arguably the most important. Model Specification is concerned with the presentation of generation of the hypothesised model that is to be tested (Weston and Gore, 2006). In other words, this is the step where the researcher proposes the hypothesised relationships between the latent and observed variables a priori (Weston and Gore, 2006). The relationships in the model that are proposed are developed through an extensive study of the literature and are postulated in a hypothesised model.

At a very high level, the schematic hypothesised model for this research is illustrated below. Figure 4.7 shows in a path diagram format, the suggested causal relationship between the latent variables Servant Leadership, Trust and Quality of Worklife in a Contact Centre context.

Figure 4.7 Model Specification Path Diagram



Source: Authors Hypothesis

The key theoretical framework for this hypothesised causal relationships were developed in Chapters two and three of this researcher paper. In the context of this research model specification, the independent or exogenous variable, Servant Leadership, has a significant causal relationship with the dependent, or endogenous variable, Quality of Worklife and that Trust plays a mediating role between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife positively affecting Overall Quality of Worklife. The proposed principle hypotheses for this research, as developed in the previous literature chapters, are stated as follows:

Hypothesis 1:

Null Hypothesis (H_{1_0}): There is no statistically significant causal relationship between Servant Leadership behaviour and Quality of Worklife in the frontline customer service context.

Alternative Hypothesis (H_{1_a}): Servant leadership behaviour has a statistically significant and positive causal relationship with Quality of Worklife in the frontline customer service context.

Hypothesis 2

Null Hypothesis (H2₀): There is no statistically significant causal relationship between Servant Leadership behaviour and Trust in the frontline customer service context.

Alternative Hypothesis (H2_a): Servant Leadership behaviour has a statistically significant and positive causal relationship with Trust in the frontline customer service context.

Hypothesis 3

Null Hypothesis (H3₀): There is no statistically significant causal relationship between Trust and Quality of Worklife in the frontline customer service context.

Alternative Hypothesis (H3_a): Trust has a statistically significant and positive causal relationship with Quality of Worklife in the frontline customer service context.

4.12.1.2 SEM Step 2, Evaluate Model identification

As in the process of Confirmatory Factor Analysis, Kline (2011:93) argues that a Structural Equation model is only said to be identified, when it can be calculated that it is theoretically possible to compute an “estimate for every parameter”. A Structural Equation model can either be over-identified, under-identified or just-identified (Kline, 2016). As explained earlier in the chapter, the process of determining whether a model is over-identified, under-identified or just-identified is based on the proposed model’s degrees of freedom (Weston and Gore, 2006). Kline (2016) suggest that a result that is equal to greater than zero, will state the model is over-identified and therefore this model would be classified as *identified* and the researcher will therefore be ready to continue the Structural Equation Modelling process. If the results in this research produced a negative result, this would have suggested a model that is *under-identified*, while an equal sum of the parameters to be estimated from the number of known elements in the correlation matrix will result on a *just identified* model and would mean that the researcher would have to go back to the Model Specification process (Kline, 2016).

4.12.1.3 SEM Step 3, Collecting, preparing and screening the data

Like in most statistical analyses procedures, the adequacy of sample size for Structural Equation Modelling is of great importance. As previously stated in CFA, sample size plays an extremely important role in the determination of whether the sample data that the researcher is working with is of sufficient size in order to conduct Structural Equation Modelling, which would produce meaningful results (Hair *et al.*, 2006). Bentler and Chou (1987) argue that a good rule of thumb for minimum sample size would be five times per variable. In other words, should the model contain 10 variables, the minimum respondents needed would be 50. Weston and Gore support Garver and Mentzer's (1999) position that any sample over 200 is sufficient to conduct Structural Equation Modelling.

Using these indicators as a guide, the sample size for Structural Equation Modelling for this research is deemed adequate in that the respondents totalled 555 and the final set of data used contained 56 items.

After the data is collected, the researcher must pay particular attention to issues of multi-collinearity and outliers (Weston and Gore, 2006). Multi-collinearity can cause dysfunction in the statistical operation of Structural Equation Modelling when the variables being measured are so highly correlated that they become "essentially redundant" (Weston and Gore, 2006:734). Moreover, extreme scores, as in unusually very high or very low, are an indication of outliers and should be addressed before conducting Structural Equation Modelling (Weston and Gore, 2006). Prior to conducting Structural Equation Modelling, the sample data must also be screened for missing data (Kline, 2016). Researchers should either remove the partial data element completely or explain how it is to be dealt with within the research (Weston and Gore, 2006). To combat this issue in this research thesis, the researcher included a rule on the respondent's electronic questionnaire that would not permit the respondent to electronically submit a questionnaire with any missing data elements in it.

The researcher must also test for normality of the data prior to conducting Structural Equation Modelling, as data that is non-normally distributed could supply incorrect model fit and interpretation results (Weston and Gore, 2006). Kline (2016) posits that in order to test for normality, the reader needs to investigate the skewness and

kurtosis of the sample data. A Skewness indicator greater than 3 will indicate concerns with normality (i.e. that the sample data is not normally distributed) (Chou and Bentler, 1995 *cited in* Weston and Gore, 2006:735). According to Kline (2011), kurtosis indicators should not read greater than 10.

4.12.1.4 SEM Step 4, Model Estimation and Fit

This researcher used Stata (15.0) to conduct the structural equation modelling analysis. If the model does not produce a satisfactory fit, the researcher will need re-analyse the model. However, should the model fit adequately, the researcher can move onto interpreting the estimates. The estimates of this model are discussed in the results chapter (Chapter 5) and the discussion chapter (Chapter 6).

By analysing the output of the unstandardized estimates of the path coefficients, the researcher is able to identify which paths are significant (Weston and Gore, 2006). Significance is determined through the analysis of the critical ratio (z score). The critical ratio must be greater or equal to 1.96 ($p < 0.05$). After significance of the paths is determined, the model fit is examined.

Similarly to the case with Confirmatory Factor Analysis, the model is then analysed using SEM techniques, consistent with methodical CFA and SEM practice (Kline, 2016; Ullman, 2006), to ascertain the model fit for this data set. The results of the SEM model were reported using the following fit indices as suggested by Hooper, Coughlan and Mullen (2008) and Kline (2016):

- chi-square, degrees of freedom and p value;
- chi-square relative to its degree of freedom (< 3);
- the comparative fit index (CFI) (> 0.9)
- the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) (< 0.07)
- the standardized root mean squared residual (SRMR) (< 0.08).

4.12.1.5 SEM Step 5, Model Modification and Possible Alternative Models

As with Confirmatory Factor Analysis, model modification should not only be done on the basis of improved statistical fit but every modification of the model needs to be theoretically sound as well (Furr, 2011; Weston and Gore, 2006). Possible

theoretically appropriate alternative paths and models should also be also considered to investigate possible improvements to the model and model fit (Kline, 2016; Weston and Gore, 2006). The process is completed with the researcher presenting the best fitting, most theoretically appropriate model to the literature in order to stimulated discussions on its findings.

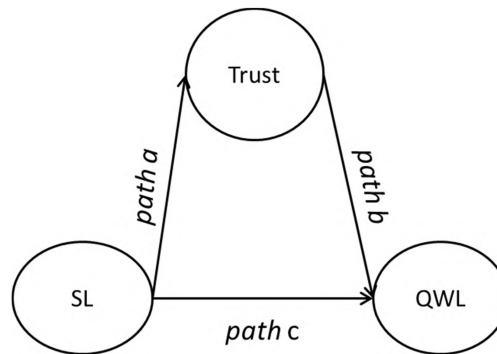
The next section of the chapter will discuss the procedure for analysing the mediating role of Trust in the SEM model.

4.13 Mediation

Baron and Kenny (1986) initially proposed a three step process to ascertaining the mediation of variables. This process included testing that predictor variable was significantly related to the mediating variable; then testing whether the mediating variable was significantly related to outcome variable, and lastly whether the relationship of the predicting variable to the outcome variable diminished when a mediating variable was added to the model. To ascertain whether the full or partial mediation exists, they suggested a similar four step process. The four steps are summarised as follows:

- 1) Prove that the predictor variable has a statistically significant relationship with the outcome variable (as illustrated in Figure 4.8 *path c*);
- 2) Prove that the predictor has a statistically significant relationship with the mediator (as illustrated in Figure 4.8 *path a*);
- 3) Prove that the mediator has a statistically significant relationship with the outcome variable (as illustrated in Figure 4.8 *path b*);

Figure 4.8: Steps of Mediation Analysis

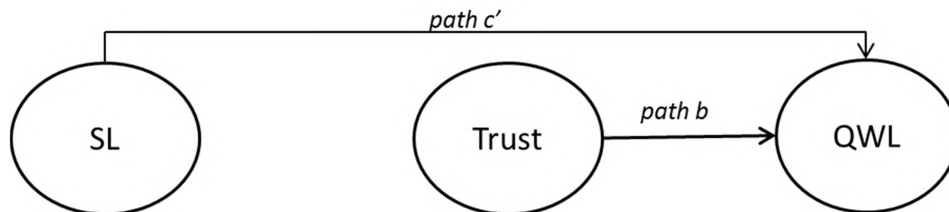


Source: Authors Hypothesis

And lastly, step four:

- 4) Prove that the predictor variable no longer has any effect on the outcome variable when the mediator has been controlled (as illustrated in Figure 4.9 *path c'*).

Figure 4.9: Mediation Step 4:



Source: Baron and Kenny (1986)

The hypotheses for this research, with respect to the mediating effect of Trust on the relationship between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife as developed in the previous literature chapters, is stated as follows:

Hypothesis 4

Null Hypothesis (H4₀): Trust does not mediate the relationship between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife in the frontline customer service context.

Alternative Hypothesis (H4_a): Trust is a statistically significant mediator of the relationship between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife in the frontline customer service context.

4.14 Statistical Description

Statistical description is the use of data and graphical techniques to convey special and relative information about a set of data, and to summarise findings that add informative value about the data set (Hanneman, Kposowa and Riddle, 2013; Radloff, 2012).

This section of the research design process describes, in statistical format, the current levels of the constructs researched, with reference to the total sample of Contact Centre agents with relation to their levels of Servant leadership behaviour experienced, perceived Trust in leader and present Quality of Worklife. The factors of each of the constructs are also statistically described.

Descriptive statistics contain measures of central tendency such as the Mean (μ) which indicates a point estimate of the sample data, and describes the average (Hanneman *et al.*, 2013; Radloff, 2012). While understanding the average is important to the reader, variance from this average is also of useful information. A measure of variance within the data set that informs the reader about the dispersion of the sample population is the measure of standard deviation (Hanneman *et al.*, 2013; Radloff, 2012). Low standard deviation results imply that there are relatively uniform responses to items in a questionnaire, indicating that there are relatively small variances from the sample mean (Johnson and Wichern, 1998). Standard Deviation is different to Standard Error, as the Standard Error reflects the accuracy of the mean. Not unlike Standard Deviation however, a smaller Standard Error figure suggests that population is a good reflection of the mean (Hanneman *et al.*, 2013; Radloff, 2012). Standard Error however, is sensitive to sample size, as a larger

sample size will generally give smaller Standard Error results (Hanneman *et al.*, 2013; Radloff, 2012).

The data for this research is presented in Chapter Five in table and graphical format and is aimed to give important and relevant information about key elements of the data set to the reader.

4.14.1 Inferential Statistics - Analysis of Variance

Hypothesis testing involves testing for the alternative hypothesis, this involves either a one tailed, greater than or equal test, or a two tailed, if there is a difference in values test (Hanneman *et al.*, 2013; Radloff, 2012).

The t-test is an appropriate test for detecting differences in data groups, but has a statistical limit of testing only two groups at a time (Hanneman *et al.*, 2013; Radloff, 2012). The Analysis of Variance test is used to test differences in data sets that can also include more than two groups (Hanneman *et al.*, 2013; Radloff, 2012), as is the case for some of tests in this research thesis. The researcher used the Anova test, to test significant differences in mean scores of certain biographical categories. The testing of differences in mean scores is to contribute to the theoretical debate that the researcher puts forward within relation to the research objectives, particularly to substantiate claims and further discussions of generality.

4.15 Ethics

The research proposal for this study was presented to, and approved by the Rhodes University's Faculty of Commerce Higher Degrees Committee. The proposal contained a description of the key theoretical considerations and how they would be dealt with. In accordance with Rhodes University's ethical protocols, the following key ethical dimensions were considered:

- Information to subjects;
- Informed consent of subjects;
- Risks and benefits to subjects;
- Privacy of subjects; and,
- Anonymity of subjects.

With respect to the information supplied to subjects, the researcher identified his association with Rhodes University as PhD student nature of the research, its purpose and possible usefulness to the organisation to each of the organisations researched. Only after express written consent to participate in the research was obtained from each of the organisations management, did the research commence. Anonymity of the respondents was preserved through the anonymous process of survey completion. This was accomplished through the completion of an anonymous survey through google drive. The findings of the research were then thoroughly investigated and truly reported.

The researcher is a manager of one of the organisations researched, albeit it not in the Contact Centre department per se, however was aware of issues pertaining to subjectivity and bias (Babbie, 2011) and put “personal values and views aside for the duration of the research” (Babbie, 2011:493). The researcher was also aware that employees are often bombarded with many surveys and the issue of survey fatigue could be a concern. The researcher did not use his management position to place undue pressure on respondents in order to increase response rates (Babbie, 2011) or influence results. The front page of the questionnaire did explain that participation in this research is voluntary and that the respondents will be free to opt out at any stage if they wanted to. Researchers are ethically obligated to their respondents (Babbie and Mouton, 2001); and Bassey’s (1999) respect for persons, democracy and truth were a guiding influence for the researcher.

4.16 Conclusion

The research methodology explained through this chapter is done in order that the research findings that are proposed, is purposed to produce knowledge of scholarly value. The researcher would like to put forward that this knowledge is achieved through the careful consideration of research methodology, as explained within and is presented in this chapter, which will hold up to academic peer reviewed scrutiny.

The rigor of the research methodology demonstrated should therefore be evident in the research presented, so that it meets the requirements of academic research. Moreover, the methodological process followed should also indicate to the reader the

researcher's understanding of each of the elements of the process (Gummersonn, 2000). This research methodology chapter discussed the crucial issues of reliability and validity, explained the process used for the multivariate confirmatory factor analysis, structural equation modelling and mediation analysis processes, as well as discussed how the data set will be described statistically and hypotheses will be tested.

The next chapter reports the findings of the research.

Chapter 5 – Results

5.1 Introduction:

The central hypothesis and *primary* objective of the study was to test whether Servant Leadership behaviour has a significant and positive relationship with Quality of Worklife, as well as to test whether this relationship is partially mediated by Trust in the Contact Centre frontline context.

This research thesis wished to achieve the following:

- I. *To validate the SLS and QWL instruments that measures both Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife in the South African Contact Centre frontline context.*
- II. *To use Structural Equation Modelling to measure the relationships between Servant Leadership, Trust and Quality of Worklife.*
- III. *To assess whether Trust played a mediating role in the relationship between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife*
- IV. *To measure if there were any differences in Servant Leadership, Trust and Quality of Worklife with respect to the following:*
 - *Whether there are statistically significant differences in mean scores per organisation;*
 - *Whether there are statistically significant differences in mean scores in age of respondents;*
 - *Whether there are statistically significant differences in mean scores in gender of respondents;*
 - *Whether there are statistically significant differences in mean scores in age of supervisors;*
 - *Whether there are statistically significant differences in mean scores in gender of supervisor;*

- *Whether there are statistically significant differences in mean scores of type of job;*

These analyses involved assessing and comparing Servant Leadership, Trust and Quality of Worklife levels of the frontline supervisors of the eight organisations which were researched.

- V. *To identify potential problems that could result due to deficiencies found in Servant Leadership behaviour that may lead to a lower Quality of Worklife.*
- VI. *To make recommendations to the organisations to assist frontline leaders to improve the working lives of Contact Centre agents.*

In relation to the goals of the research, the proposed principle hypotheses for this research, as developed in the previous literature chapters, are stated as follows:

Hypothesis 1:

Null Hypothesis (H1₀): There is no statistically significant causal relationship between Servant Leadership behaviour and Quality of Worklife in the frontline customer service context.

Alternative Hypothesis (H1_a): Servant leadership behaviour has a statistically significant and positive causal relationship with Quality of Worklife in the frontline customer service context.

Hypothesis 2

Null Hypothesis (H2₀): There is no statistically significant causal relationship between Servant Leadership behaviour and Trust in the frontline customer service context.

Alternative Hypothesis (H2_a): Servant Leadership behaviour has a statistically significant and positive causal relationship with Trust in the frontline customer service context.

Hypothesis 3

Null Hypothesis (H3₀): There is no statistically significant causal relationship between Trust and Quality of Worklife in the frontline customer service context.

Alternative Hypothesis (H3_a): Trust has a statistically significant and positive causal relationship with Quality of Worklife in the frontline customer service context.

Hypothesis 4

Null Hypothesis (H4₀): Trust does not mediate the relationship between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife in the frontline customer service context.

Alternative Hypothesis (H4_a): Trust is a statistically significant mediator of the relationship between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife in the frontline customer service context.

Hypothesis 5:

Null Hypothesis (H5₀): There is no statistically significant difference in the level of Servant leadership, Quality of Worklife and Trust experienced by the frontline employees with respect to the following:

- i) Between Organisations (Servant Leadership: H5.1, Quality of Worklife: H5.2, Trust: H5.3);
- ii) Between Age of Respondents (Servant Leadership: H5.4, Quality of Worklife: H5.5, Trust: H5.6);
- iii) Between Gender of Respondents (Servant Leadership: H5.7, Quality of Worklife: H5.8, Trust: H5.9);
- iv) Between Age of Supervisor, (Servant Leadership: H5.10, Quality of Worklife: H5.11, Trust: H5.12);
- v) Between Gender of Supervisor, (Servant Leadership: H5.13, Quality of Worklife: H5.14, Trust: H5.15);
- vi) Between Type of Job, (Servant Leadership: H5.16, Quality of Worklife: H5.17, Trust: H5.18);

Alternative Hypothesis (H5_a): There is a statistically significant difference in the level of Servant leadership, Quality of Worklife and Trust experienced by the frontline employees with respect to the following:

- i) Between Organisations (Servant Leadership: H5.1, Quality of Worklife: H5.2, Trust: H5.3);
- ii) Between Age of Respondents (Servant Leadership: H5.4, Quality of Worklife: H5.5, Trust: H5.6);
- iii) Between Gender of Respondents (Servant Leadership: H5.7, Quality of Worklife: H5.8, Trust: H5.9);
- iv) Between Age of Supervisor, (Servant Leadership: H5.10, Quality of Worklife: H5.11, Trust: H5.12);
- v) Between Gender of Supervisor, (Servant Leadership: H5.13, Quality of Worklife: H5.14, Trust: H5.15);
- vi) Between Type of Job, (Servant Leadership: H5.16, Quality of Worklife: H5.17, Trust: H5.18);

To test these hypotheses, a survey questionnaire was administered to 555 Contact Centre employees in eight organisations. The first section (30 items) of the instrument measured Servant Leadership behaviour (Van Dierendonck and Nuijten, 2011) the next 23 items measured Quality of Worklife (Van Laar, Edwards and Easton, 2007) and the last three items were used to measure employee Trust of their supervisor (Cook and Wall, 1980). The completed questionnaires were exported into to Micro Soft Excel (v. 10) and Stata (v. 15.0), in order to perform a series of statistical tests.

The statistical processes that followed included:

- I. Reliability and Validity analyses for the different instruments using Cronbach's Alpha, Exploratory Factor Analysis and Confirmatory Factor Analysis.
- II. Structural Equation modelling to determine the causal relationships;
- III. Mediation Analysis;
- IV. A statistical description of the current levels of Servant Leadership, Quality of Worklife and Trust in each site;

- V. The identification of any significant differences in the mean scores using ANOVA.

The results of each of these tests are now discussed in this chapter below. However, the chapter begins with an analysis of the biographical information of the sample population.

5.2 Biographical Information

The following tables and figures below illustrate the biographic data of the sample population.

5.2.1 Sample per Organisation

Table 5.1 and Figure 5.1; illustrate the number of respondents that the questionnaires were sent to at the eight research sites, as well as the response rates. A total number of 555 (n = 555) useable completed questionnaires were collected.

The population parameter included approximately 1610 Contact Centre Department employees at the eight organisations in seven different geographic locations across the country. The respondents were all frontline customer service Contact Centre agents. Of the 555 respondents, Organisation # 1 (which is a privately owned company) accounted for 27% of the respondents, Organisation # 2 (which is the second privately company) accounted for 4% of the returns. Organisation # 3 (the State Owned Entity) accounted for twenty one percent. Organisation # 4 (The State Owned Entity # 2) accounted for 10% of the respondents. Organisation # 5 (The State Owned Entity # 3) accounted for 9% of the respondents and the Organisation # 6 (The Telecommunications Company) equated to 3% of the total respondents. Organisations # 7 and # 8 (the Outsourcer and the Insurance Company) made up the remaining 18% and 7%.

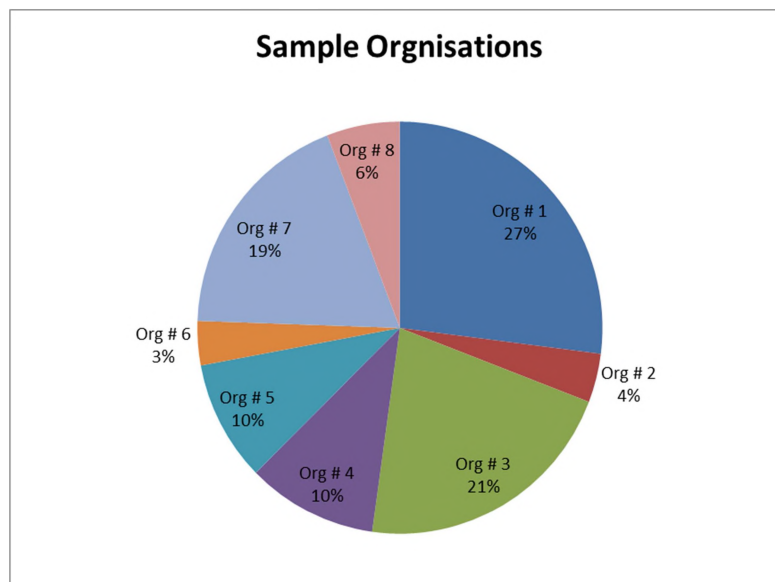
The response rates per organisation ranged from 22% in Organisation # 6, to 42% in Organisation # 5.

Table 5.1 Total number of responses per Organisation

	Questionnaires sent	Responded	Percentage responded	Percentage of total
Org # 1	400	148	37.00%	27%
Org # 2	65	21	32.31%	4%
Org # 3	390	117	30.00%	21%
Org # 4	158	57	36.08%	10%
Org # 5	123	52	42.28%	9%
Org # 6	85	19	22.35%	3%
Org # 7	300	102	34.00%	18%
Org # 8	89	39	43.82%	7%
Total	1610	555	34.47%	100%

Source: Respondents

Figure 5.1: Pie Chart of Organisation sample spread



Source: Respondents

5.2.2 Biographic Data of Agents

Babbie (2011) argues that it is important for the researcher to understand the biographical makeup of the targeted sample as well as the respondents to ensure that they are representative of the total population in order to present results that are realistically representative of the total population. Table 5.2 presents a summary of the biographic results.

Table 5.2: Biographic data of agent responses

Agent Gender		n	%	Age of Agent (years)		n	%
Female		391	70%	Less than 25		104	19%
Male		164	30%	25 to 35		332	60%
Total		555	100%	36 to 45		79	14%
				46 to 55		27	5%
				56 to 65		13	2%
				Total		555	100%
Qualifications of Agent		n	%	Type of Agent work		n	%
Less than Grade 12		13	2%	Inbound		135	24%
Grade 12		340	61%	Outbound		267	48%
Diploma		132	24%	Backoffice		59	11%
University Degree		51	9%	Mix		94	17%
Post Graduate Degree		19	3%	Total		555	100%
Total		555	100%				
Race of Agent		n	%	Work Experience of Agent (years)		n	%
White		46	8%	Less than 5		251	45%
Coloured		94	17%	5 to 10		196	35%
African		349	63%	11 to 15		46	8%
Indian		66	12%	16 to 20		24	4%
Total		555	100%	21 to 25		11	2%
				Greater than 25		27	5%
				Total		555	100%

Source: Respondents

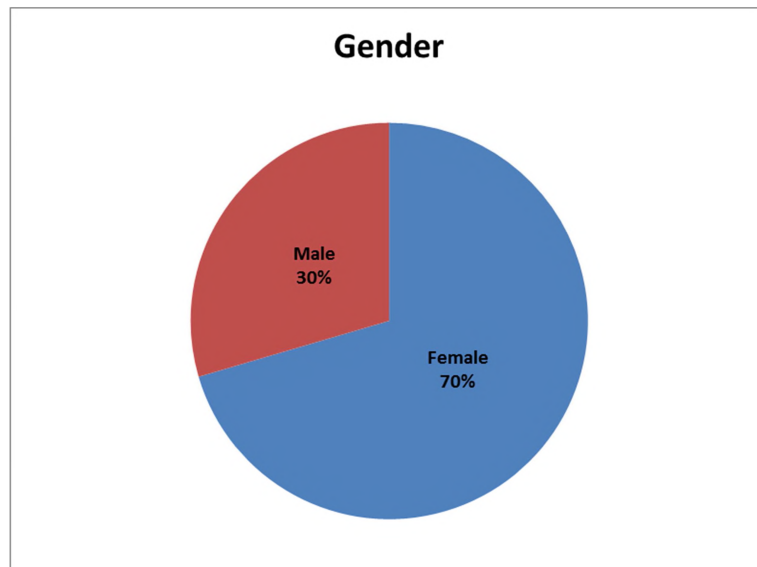
5.2.3 Distribution of Gender of Agents

As reflected in Table 5.3 and Figure 5.2, of the 555 questionnaires responses received, 70% (n = 391) were female and 30% (n = 164) were male. The overwhelming majority of female agent employees versus male employees are not uncommon to the Contact Centre working environment (Belt, Richardson and Webster, 2000).

Table 5.3: Biographic data of gender

Female	391
Male	164
Total	555

Source: Respondents

Figure 5.2: Pie Chart of gender

Source: Respondents

5.2.4 Distribution of Age of Agents

As reflected in Table 5.4 and Figure 5.3, the largest majority of the respondents (60%, n = 332) were in the 25 to 35 age category. Second most frequent were the less than 25's (19%, n = 104), then 36 – 45 (14%, n = 79). The minority of the sample included agents 46 – 55 (5%, n = 27) and lastly was the category 56 – 65 (2%, n = 13).

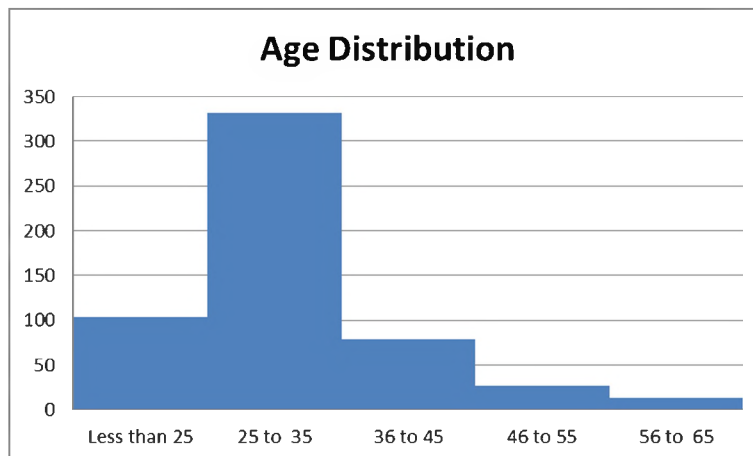
Given that a Contact Centre Service Agent is usually an entry point into the organisation, this frequency distribution can be logically justified as illustrative of a typical Contact Centre working environment.

Table 5.4: Biographic data of Age of Agents

Age of Agent (years)	n	%
Less than 25	104	19%
25 to 35	332	60%
36 to 45	79	14%
46 to 55	27	5%
56 to 65	13	2%
Total	555	100%

Source: Respondents

Figure 5.3: Graph: Biographic data of Age of Agents



Source: Respondents

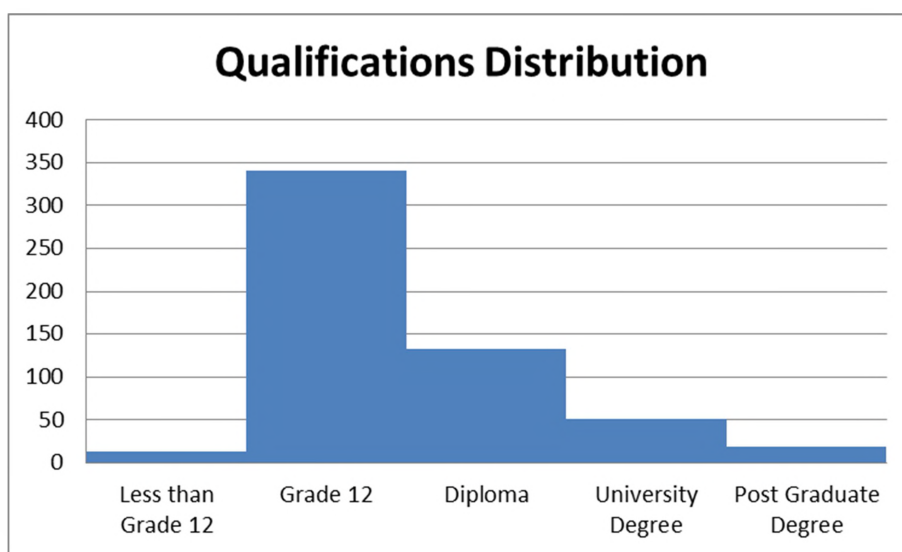
5.2.5 Distribution of Qualifications of Agents

As reflected in Table 5.5 and Figure 5.4, very few agents held less than a matric qualification (2%, $n = 13$), with the vast majority (61%, $n = 340$) holding a grade 12 certificate. Nine percent of the agents ($n = 51$) possessed a university undergraduate degree and four percent ($n = 19$) held a post graduate degree.

Table 5.5: Biographic data of Qualifications of Agents

Qualifications of Agent	n	%
Less than Grade 12	13	2%
Grade 12	340	61%
Diploma	132	24%
University Degree	51	9%
Post Graduate Degree	19	3%
Total	555	100%

Source: Respondents

Figure 5.4 Graph: Biographic data of Qualifications of Agents

Source: Respondents

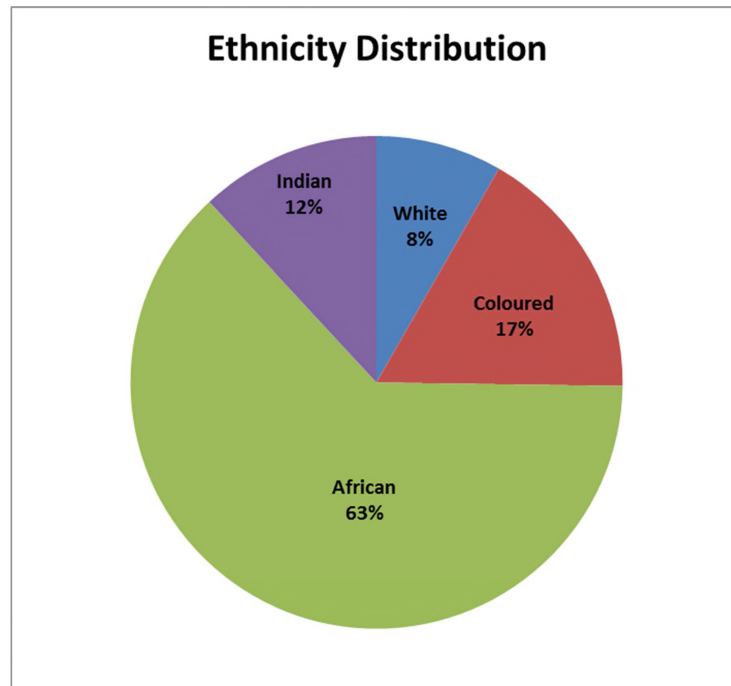
5.2.6 Race of Agents

The four major race groups of South Africa were included. In South Africa, race is classified as Black, White, Indian or Coloured. As reflected in Table 5.6 and Figure 5.5, the majority of the respondents were Black African (63%, n = 349), followed by Coloured agents (17%, n = 94), Indian (12%, n = 17) and White (8%, n = 46).

Table 5.6: Biographic data of Qualifications of Agents

Race of Agent	n	%
White	46	8%
Coloured	94	17%
African	349	63%
Indian	66	12%
Total	555	100%

Source: Respondents

Figure 5.5: Biographic data of Race

Source: Respondents

5.2.7 Distribution of Agents' years of work experience

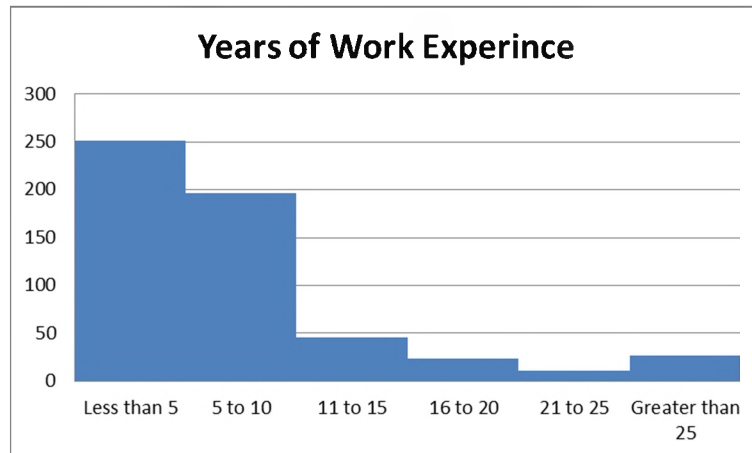
Similar to the age of the respondents, the distribution of the years' of work experience also illustrates a frequency distribution of a department, which could be classified as an entry point to the organisation. As reflected in Table 5.7 and Figure 5.6, the large majority of the respondents (45%, n = 251) were in the less than five years category. Second most frequent were the five to 10 year's (35%, n = 196), then the eleven to fifteen (8%, n = 46). The minority of the sample included agents that had sixteen to twenty years' experience or more.

Table 5.7: Biographic data of Years of Experience of Agents

Work Experience of Agent (years)	n	%
Less than 5	251	45%
5 to 10	196	35%
11 to 15	46	8%
16 to 20	24	4%
21 to 25	11	2%
Greater than 25	27	5%
Total	555	100%

Source: Respondents

Figure 5.6: Biographic data of Years of Experience



Source: Respondents

5.2.8 Biographic Data of Agents' Supervisors

Each respondent was asked in the questionnaire to give biographic details of their immediate supervisors, Table 5.8, illustrates the results of those answers.

Sixty-four percent (57%, n = 317) of the respondents indicated that they had female supervisors and 43% (n = 238) indicated that their supervisors were male. The majority of the respondents indicated that they had African supervisors (39%, n = 216), followed by Indian (29%, n = 160), and White (16%, n = 90) and Coloured (16%, n = 89).

Table 5.8: Biographic data of Agents' Supervisors

Agents Supervisor Gender			Supervisor Race			Agents Supervisor Age (years)		
	n	%		n	%		n	%
Female	317	57%	White	90	16%	Less than 25	30	5%
Male	238	43%	Coloured	89	16%	25 to 35	298	54%
Total	555	100%	African	216	39%	36 to 45	147	26%
			Indian	160	29%	46 to 55	70	13%
			Total	555	100%	56 to 65	10	2%
						Total	555	100%

Source: Respondents

5.3 Reliability

5.3.1 Cronbach's coefficient Alpha

To test the reliability of an instrument, the researcher checked the consistency and reliability of the information supplied by the respondents as to whether they would yield similar results if tested repeatedly (Kimberlin and Winterstein, 2008).

What follows are Cronbach's Alpha reliability tests for both the Servant Leadership Survey - SLS section (Van Dierendonck and Nuijten, 2010), the Work-Related Quality of Life Scale – QWL section (Van Laar, Edwards and Easton, 2007) and the Trust section (Cook and Wall, 1980) of the instrument administered.

It must be noted at this stage that all negatively phrased items in the SLS and QWL sections were reversed prior to any analysis conducted.

5.3.1.1 Cronbach's Alpha of Servant Leadership Survey (SLS)

The servant leadership section of the instrument used to administer the questions was the Servant Leadership Survey (SLS) (Van Dierendonck and Nuijten, 2011). A Cronbach's Alpha test was conducted to test the reliability of responses.

Firstly, a Cronbach's Alpha analysis was conducted for the SLS section of the instrument. The results of the SLS reliability assessment (n = 555) were calculated to 0.95 and therefore can be described as excellent reliability results (Kline, 2016).

Following the Cronbach's Alpha analyses of the total model, a Cronbach's Alpha analysis was conducted for the individual factors of the SLS.

The corresponding items of each Servant Leadership factor were grouped as illustrated in Table 5.9, which is according to how they were originally published (Van Dierendonck and Nuijten, 2010). Cronbach's Alpha scores per factor were then computed.

Table 5.9: SLS - Items per Factor

SLS Factors	Empowerment	Standing back	Accountability	Forgiveness	Courage	Authenticity	Humility	Stewardship
Item no.	1	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
	2	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
	3	21	22	23		24	25	26
	4					28	29	
	12						30	
	20							
	27							

Source: Van Dierendonck and Nuijten (2010)

Table 5.10 illustrates the results of the Cronbach's Alpha scores calculated for each of the Servant Leadership factors.

Table 5.10: Cronbach's Alpha of SLS Reliability Results

SLS	
Empowerment	0.91
Standing back	0.73
Accountability	0.7
Forgiveness	0.72
Courage	0.69
Authenticity	0.65
Humility	0.9
Stewardship	0.83
Total	0.95

Source: Stata (v 15.0)

The factor results, according to the Cronbach's Alpha calculations as illustrated in Table 5.10, suggest that Empowerment, Humility and Stewardship can be described as excellent reliability results, while Standing Back, Accountability and Forgiveness can be described as adequate results (Kline 2016). Courage and Authenticity can be described as lower but still satisfactory in terms of their Cronbach's Alpha scores as they measured only marginally lower than 0.7 (Kline 2016).

5.3.1.2 Cronbach's Alpha – Quality of Work-Life (QWL)

To measure Quality of Worklife, the Work-Related Quality of Life Scale (QWL) (Van Laar, Edwards and Easton, 2007) was used in the second section of the instrument. Table 5.11 illustrates the Cronbach's Alpha scores. A Cronbach's Alpha test was conducted to test the reliability of responses.

Firstly, a Cronbach's Alpha analysis was conducted for the total combined items of the QWL section of the instrument. The results of the QWL reliability assessment (n = 555) were calculated to 0.91 and therefore can be described as excellent reliability result (Kline, 2016).

Following the Cronbach's Alpha analyses of the total model, a reliability analyses was conducted for the individual factors of the QWL section of the instrument as illustrated in Table 5.11.

Table 5.11: QWL Items per Factor

Source: Work-Related Quality of Life Scale – QWL (Van Laar, Edwards and Easton, 2007)

QWL Factors	Job Career Satisfaction	Control at Work	General Well Being	Home-Work Interfa	Stress at Work	Working Conditions
Item no.	1	12	4	5	7	13
	3	23		6	19	16
	8		10	14		22
	11		15			
	18		17			
	20		21			

Table 5.12 Cronbach's Alpha of QWL Reliability Results

QWL	
JCS	0.8
CAW	0.7
GWB	0.81
HWI	0.68
SAW	0.65
WC	0.72
Total	0.91

Source: Source: Stata (v 15.0)

Table 5.12 provides the results of the QWL reliability assessment per factor. The factor results, according to the Cronbach's Alpha calculations, suggest that General Well Being and Job Career Satisfaction can be described as producing a good reliability results, while Control at Work and Working Conditions can be described adequate results (Kline, 2016). Home-Work Interface and Stress at Work can be described as slightly lower reliability results albeit still satisfactory as they measured only marginally lower than 0.7 (Kline, 2016).

5.3.1.3 Trust

A Cronbach's Alpha analysis was conducted for the Trust section (three items in one factor) of the instrument. The results of the Trust (Cook and Wall, 1980) reliability assessment (n = 555) was calculated to be 0.89 and therefore can be described as an excellent reliability result (Kline, 2016).

5.3.1.4 Reliability Conclusion

It may be concluded that both the SLS, QWL and Trust sections of the instrument show good reliability results when the total items are analysed together. This is not a surprising finding, in that it is well documented in the literature that higher Cronbach's Alpha figures are expected when there are higher numbers of items grouped together (Panayides, 2013). However, and also not too surprising is that when each of the instrument's factors are analysed on their own, as individual factors as prescribed in the literature, some lower, but still acceptable Cronbach's Alpha reliability results are computed.

5.4 Multivariate Analyses - Confirmatory Factor Analysis

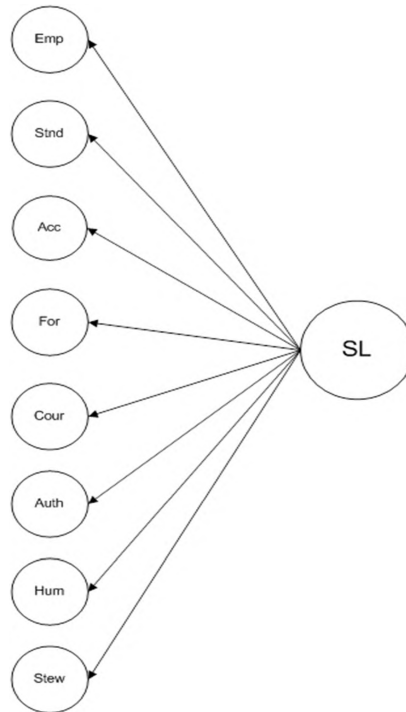
Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was used to primarily test the SLS (Van Dierendonck and Nuijten, 2010) and QWL (Van Laar, Edwards and Easton, 2007) models as described in the literature, but in the South African Contact Centre Context.

Both the SLS and the QWL data was analysed with the aid of the statistical program Stata (v15.0).

5.4.1 Model 1 Specification

As discussed earlier in previous chapter, Furr (2001) argues that the first step in CFA process is Model Specification and Identification. In previous chapters the conceptual framework for this research was developed, the SLS measurement model (Van Dierendonck and Nuijten, 2010) is hypothesised to measure the higher order factor of Servant Leadership. Figure 5.7 illustrates how the eight lower order factors of Humility, Empowerment, Accountability, Forgiveness, Standing Back, Stewardship, Courage and Authenticity describe the higher order factor Servant Leadership.

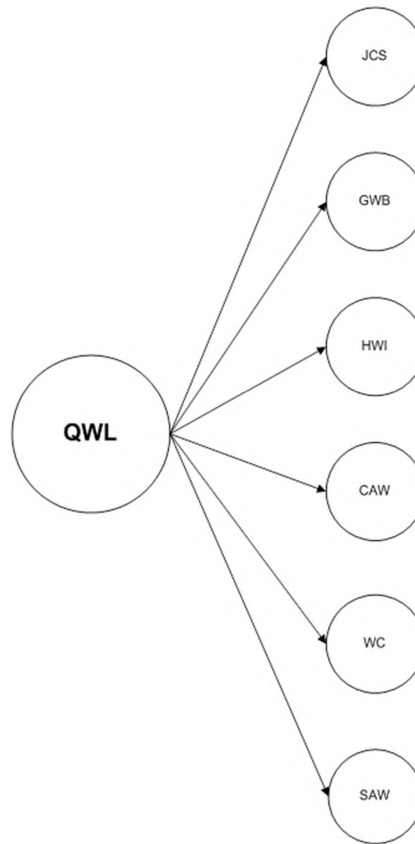
Figure 5.7: SLS CFA



Source: SLS (Van Dierendonck and Nuijten, 2010)

Figure 5.8, illustrates the QWL (Van Laar, Edwards and Easton, 2007) model, which measures Quality of Worklife is measured through six lower order factors of General Well Being, Job Career Satisfaction, Home Work Interface, Stress at Work, Control at Work and Working Conditions.

Figure 5.8: QWL CFA Model



Source: Quality of Life Scale - QWL (Van Laar, Edwards and Easton, 2007)

5.4.1.1 Model Identification

It is to be noted that both the SLS and QWL models are classified as *over-identified* due to there being:

- 465 distinct number of sample moments ($30(31)/2$) and 60 parameters to be estimated, thereby leaving 405 degrees of freedom for the SLS model; and,
- 253 distinct number of sample moments ($22(23)/2$) and 43 parameters to be estimated, thereby leaving 210 degrees of freedom for the QWL model.

5.4.2 SLS and QWL Model Analyses, Interpreting and Reporting Output

The data from the respondents was entered into Stata (v15.0) in alignment with their item and factor structure, which was in accordance with the literature (Van Laar *et al.*, 2007; Van Dierendonck and Nuijten, 2011) and presented, as hypothesised in section 5.4.1 of this chapter. Confirmatory factor analysis was then conducted and the results of both SLS and QWL models and the estimations are discussed below.

5.4.2.1 SLS Confirmatory Factor Analysis Model

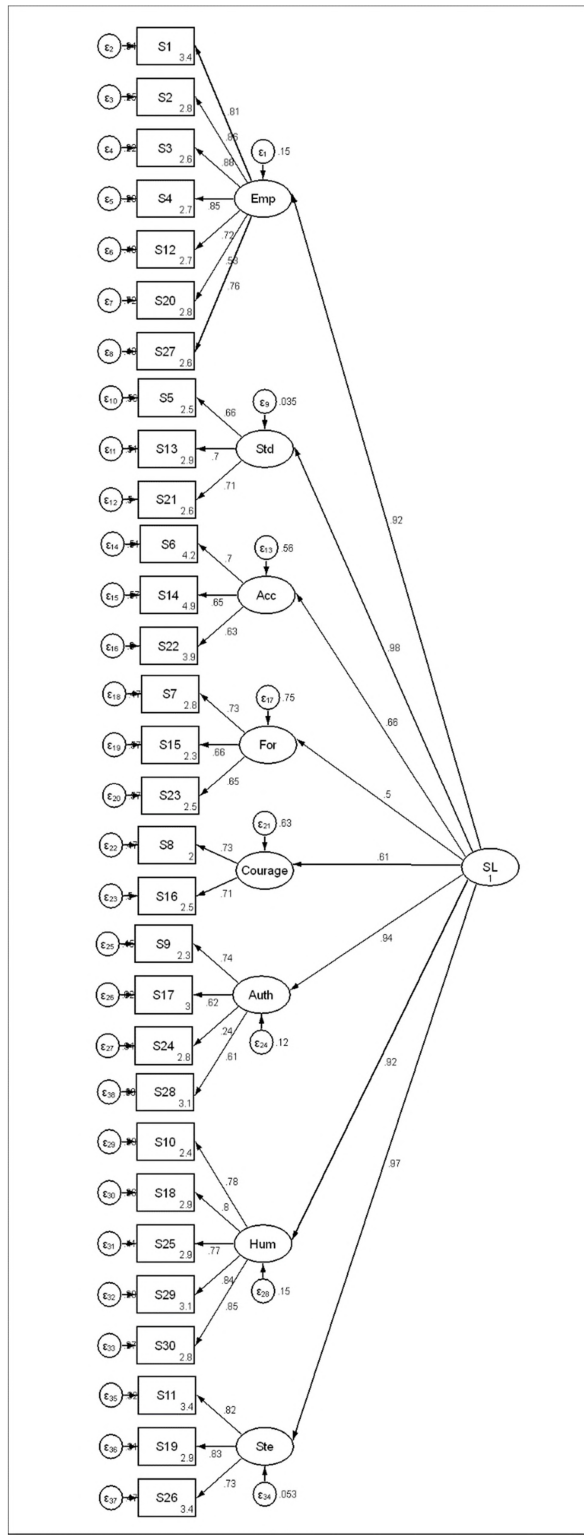
For the purpose of assessing whether the hypothesised model fits the data, the following hypothesis was used:

H6₀: The data fits the SLS model and the model converges.

H6_a: The data does not fit the SLS model and the model does not converge.

The results failed to reject the null hypothesis, as illustrated in Fig 5.9, the SLS model converged after 14 iterations.

Figure 5.9 CFA SLS Model



Source: Stata (v.15.0)

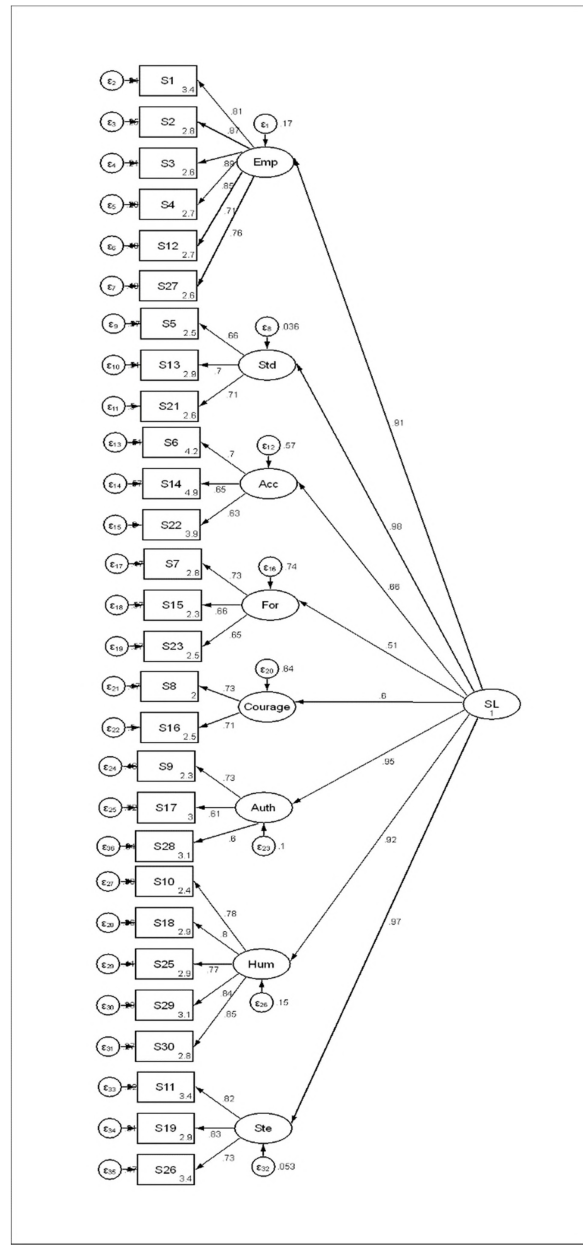
The higher order SLS CFA model was then tested in relation to how well the data fit the model. The SLS model produced a RMSEA result of 0.062, depicting an acceptable fitting model and a RMSR result of 0.051, depicting a good fitting model. The SLS model's CFI index was computed to be 0.913, above the generally accepted threshold.

The significant chi squared however suggested concerns of a flawed model (Chi-square = 1246, df = 397, $p < .0001$), or rather, illustrate a bad fit (Kline, 2011). However according to Bentler and Bonnet (1980), the Chi squared test is very sensitive to sample size and the higher the sample population, the higher the chance of the test proving to be significant. When the Chi squared is divided by the degrees of freedom however, as suggested by (Schumacker and Lomax, 2004), the relative Chi squared (χ^2/df) becomes less affected by the sample size, any result of below 3 is determined as a good fit index. The SLS model produced a relative chi squared result of 3.13, slightly above the threshold of 3. The relative Chi squared (χ^2/df) result therefore did suggest further investigation was warranted.

While overall, this model produced strong item factor loadings, two items seemed to be disrupting the factor structure and produced lower loadings. Item 20 (i.e. "My manager enables me to solve problems myself instead of just telling me what to do") with a loading of 0.53 does not suit the highly scripted nature of a Contact Centre environment that was described in Chapter One. Item 24 (i.e. "My manager is prepared to express his/her feelings even if this might have undesirable consequences") with a loading of 0.24 does not seem to resonate with the Contact Centre context, which relies upon the emotional labour of the agents. Consequently, these two items were removed.

The instrument's reliability was then re-tested and the SEM model was re-run. With respect to the reliability of the instrument, it is interesting to note that scale reliability of the Empowerment and Authenticity factors improved to 0.92 and 0.67 respectively after the removal of the two items, however the overall SLS reliability remained at 0.95. The amended SEM model is represented in Figure 5.10 and discussed below.

Figure 5.10 Amended CFA SLS Model



Source: Stata (v.15.0)

The amended SLS CFA model produced the following fit results: The significant chi squared (Chi-square = 1009.038, $df = 342$, $p = < .0001$) again suggested concerns of a flawed model, or rather, illustrate a bad fit (Kline, 2011). The p-value should read greater than or equal to 0.05 (Schermelleh-Engel and Moosbrugger, 2003). The literature suggests that the p-value might not be statistically significant for larger samples, such as those greater than 200, provided that there is an overall good

model fit. The QWL model produced a relative chi squared result of 2.95, suggesting a good fitting model fit. The Root Mean Squared Error of Approximation computation produced a RMSEA result of 0.059, suggesting a good fitting model fit (Kline, 2016). The Comparative Fit Index (CFI) was computed to be 0.93, which is above the generally accepted threshold (Hu and Bentler, 1999) and the Standardized Root Mean Squared Residual (RMSR) produced a result of 0.045, depicting an excellent fitting model.

Weston and Gore (2006) argue that measures of the significance of paths in conjunction with fit indices are representative of acceptable models. The next section analyses the significance of the paths of the model as specified in an earlier step.

Table 5.13 illustrates the standardized factor loadings.

Table 5.13: SLS Model Standardized path estimates

Standardized	Coef.	Std. Err.	z	P>z	[95% Conf.	Interval]
Emp <- SL	0.91	0.011225	81.34	0.000	0.891022	0.935021
Stn <-SL	0.98	0.016295	60.24	0.000	0.949747	1.013624
Acc <- SL	0.66	0.035231	18.65	0.000	0.588082	0.726185
For <- SL	0.51	0.041355	12.21	0.000	0.423953	0.58606
Cour <- SL	0.60	0.039422	15.3	0.000	0.525701	0.680234
Auth <- SL	0.95	0.02042	46.41	0.000	0.907737	0.987783
Hum <- SL	0.92	0.011193	82.6	0.000	0.902644	0.946521
Ste <- SL	0.97	0.010585	91.96	0.000	0.95265	0.99414

Source: Stata (v.15.0)

Table 5.14 illustrates the unstandardized factor loadings.

Table 5.14: SLS Model Un-Standardized path estimates

Unstandardized	Coef.	Std. Err.	z	P>z	[95%]	
					Conf.	Interval]
Emp <- SL	1	(constrained)				
Stn <- SL	1.021905	0.065053	15.71	0.000	0.894404	1.149406
Acc <- SL	0.530322	0.047056	11.27	0.000	0.438093	0.622551
For <- SL	0.557788	0.060468	9.22	0.000	0.439274	0.676302
Cour <- SL	0.703584	0.068533	10.27	0.000	0.569261	0.837907
Auth <- SL	1.09359	0.065217	16.77	0.000	0.965767	1.221414
Hum <- SL	1.11291	0.062143	17.91	0.000	0.991113	1.234707
Ste <- SL	1.074898	0.053758	20	0.000	0.969534	1.180261

Source: Stata (v.15.0)

By analysing the output of the unstandardized estimates of the path coefficients, the researcher is able to identify which paths are significant (Weston and Gore, 2006). Significance is determined through the analysis of the critical ratio (z score). The critical ratio must be greater or equal to 1.96 ($p < 0.0001$). On analysis of the unstandardized estimates, as illustrated in Table 5.14, all of the paths were determined significant, as all were > 1.96 ($p < 0.05$). The lowest z score of the paths, For \leftarrow SL, computed to 9.22 ($p < 0.0001$). It can therefore be deduced from the unstandardized factor loadings in the SLS CFA model, that the relationship of the higher order factor Servant Leadership, with all of the lower order factors, was significant. On inspection, the factor loadings of the items and the factor dimensions showed mostly very strong loadings. The factors loadings were as follows: Stewardship (0.97, $p < .0001$), Standing Back (0.98, $p < .0001$), Empowerment (0.91, $p < .0001$), Humility (0.92, $p < .0001$) Accountability (0.66, $p < .0001$), Forgiveness (0.51, $p < .0001$), Courage (0.60, $p < .0001$) and Authenticity (0.95, $p < .0001$). As is displayed in the Table 5.14, no negative values for the standardized path estimates were obtained and all of the parameter estimates are positive. The path coefficients

from each one of the individual latent constructs to each of its corresponding observed variables is significant.

It is argued that from the analyses and interpretations above, it can be concluded that the SLS model is an acceptable fitting and reliable model for this data set.

5.4.2.2 QWL CFA Model

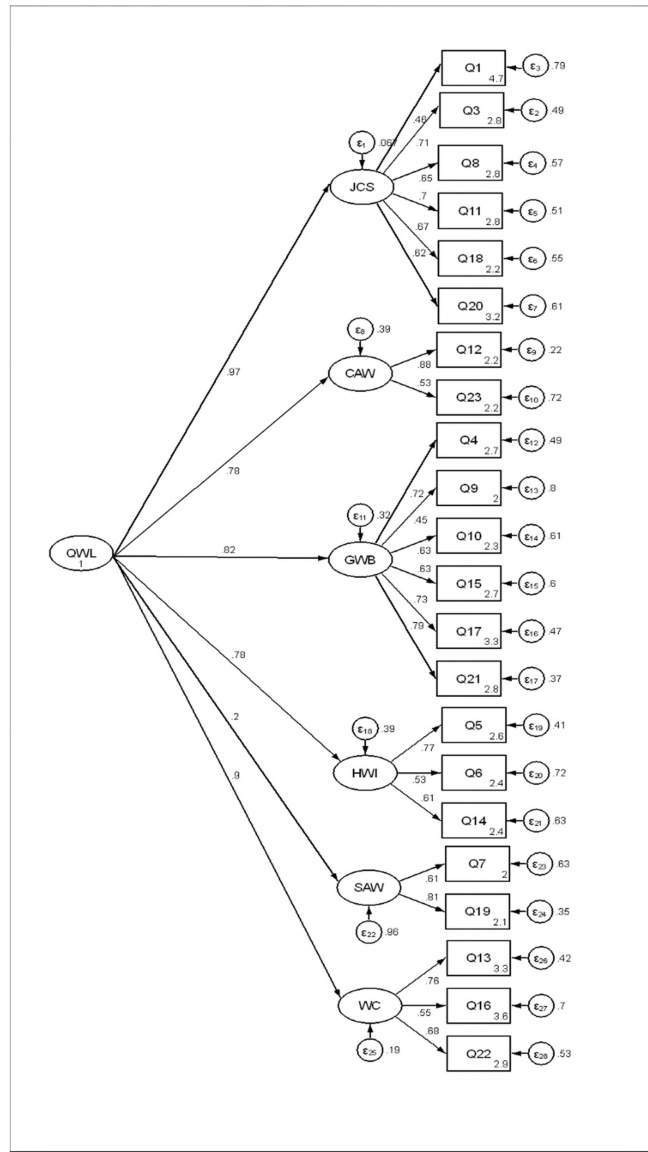
For purpose of assessing whether the hypothesised Quality of Worklife (QWL) model fits the data set, the following hypothesis was used:

H6₀: The data fits the QWL model and the model converges.

H6_a: The data does not fit the QWL model and the model does not converge.

The results failed to reject the null hypothesis, as illustrated in Fig 5.11, the QWL model converged after 9 iterations.

Figure 5.11 CFA QWL Model



Source: Stata (v.15.0)

The QWL CFA model was tested and produced the following fit results: The significant chi squared (Chi-square = 787.197, df = 203, $p < .0001$) suggested concerns of a flawed model (Kline, 2011). The QWL model produced a χ^2/df result of 3.87, above the threshold of 3 which also suggested a poor fitting model fit. The Root Mean Squared Error of Approximation computation produced a result of 0.072, marginally over the threshold.

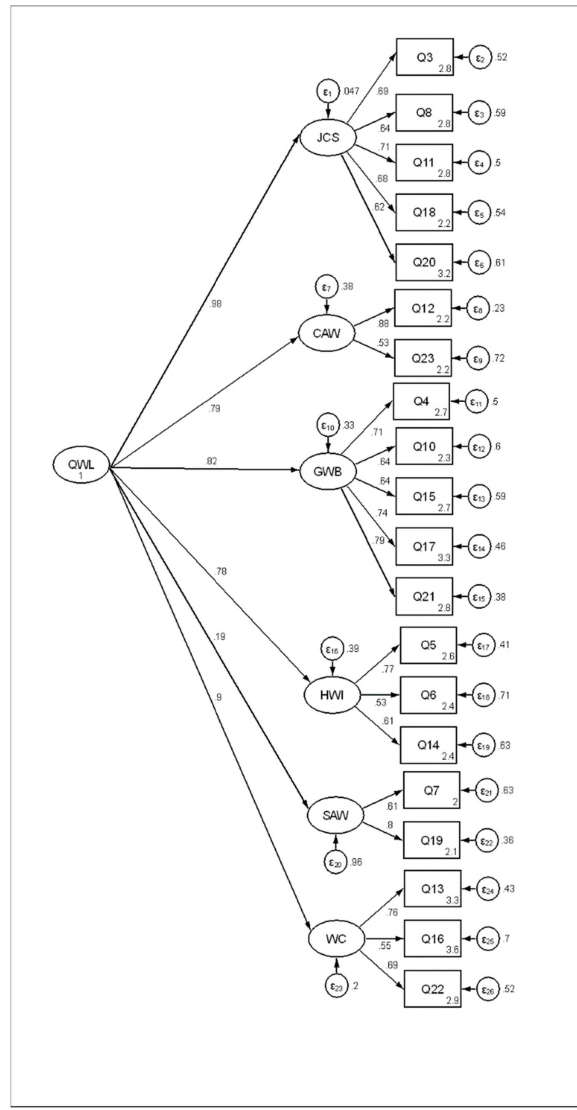
The Comparative Fit Index (CFI) was computed to be 0.87 which is not above the generally accepted threshold. The Standardized root mean squared residual (RMSR) produced a result of 0.057, depicted an adequate fit.

From the analyses and interpretation above, it can be concluded that most of the indices did not meet acceptable threshold requirements and therefore the QWL model may need amendment and modification.

On investigating the model further, two items seemed to be disrupting the factor structure and produced lower loadings. Item 1 (i.e. "I have a clear set of goals and aims to enable me to do my job") which produced a loading of 0.46, and item 9 (i.e. "Recently, I have been feeling unhappy and depressed") which produced a loading of 0.45, does not seem to resonate with the Contact Centre context and these were removed. The instrument's reliability was then re-tested and the SEM model was re-run.

After the items were removed, the reliability was re-assessed and the scale reliability of the Job Career Satisfaction and General Wellbeing factors improved to 0.80 and 0.82 respectively, while the overall QWL reliability remained at 0.91. The amended SEM model is represented in Figure 5.12 and discussed below.

Figure 5.12 Amended CFA QWL Model



Source: Stata (v.15.0)

The amended QWL CFA model produced the following fit results: The significant chi squared (Chi-square = 592.93, df = 164, $p < .0001$) still suggested concerns of a bad fit (Kline, 2005). The QWL model produced a χ^2/df result of 3.6, above the threshold of 3. The Root Mean Squared Error of Approximation computation produced a RMSEA result of 0.069, a result marginally below the threshold.

The Comparative Fit Index (CFI) was computed to be 0.89 which is slightly below the generally accepted threshold and the Standardized root mean squared residual (RMSR) produced a result of 0.051, depicted an adequate fit.

From the analyses and interpretation above, it can be concluded that some of the indices did not meet acceptable threshold requirements and therefore the amended QWL model may need modification.

5.4.2.2.1 QWL CFA Model Modification

According to the Weston and Gore (2006), CFA and SEM models often need model modifications. Model modification however, should not only be done on the basis of improved statistical fit but every modification of the model needs to be theoretically sound as well (Furr, 2011; Weston and Gore, 2006). The QWL model showed possible areas of improvement through model modification and are discussed below.

An examination of the modification indices of the model and a cross validation of the theory suggested that possible modifications to the model could be on the following:

Item 3 and 8

The modification Indices for item 3 (i.e. "I have the opportunity to use my abilities at work") and item 8 (i.e. "When I have done a good job it is acknowledged by my line manager") computed to 11.360. It is possible that, when considering job career satisfaction in the scripted environment of the Contact Centre, having opportunities to use their abilities results in the kind of performance that the employer requires. Consequently, being acknowledged for using these abilities to do a good job is likely. Therefore, responses to these two items may not be too dissimilar from one another, as they are co-correlated in this context.

Item 3 and 20

The modification Indices for the item 3 (i.e. "I have the opportunity to use my abilities at work") and item 20 (i.e. "I am satisfied with the training I receive in order to perform my present job") computed to 14.670. A similar argument as was developed about items 3 and 8 can be developed here. Having the correct training enables an employee to do their job better, and therefore the two items could be considered as not too dissimilar from one another from the perspective of job career satisfaction, and were therefore co-correlated in this context.

Item 5 and 14

The modification Indices for the item 5 (i.e. "My employer provides adequate facilities and flexibility for me to fit work in around my family life") and item 14 (i.e. "My line supervisor actively promotes flexible working hours or patterns") computed to 33.952. Both items deal with the flexibility of working hours, which is built into the routine of the Contact Centre, and which is managed by the supervisor. It is therefore not surprising in this context, that respondents could view the employer and the supervisor synonymously. As a result, these two items could be co-correlated.

Item 10 and 15

The modification Indices for the item 10 (i.e. "I am satisfied with my life") and item 15 (i.e. "In most ways my life is close to ideal") computed to 23.391. It is plausible that, for contact centre employees, being satisfied with life and feeling that life is close to being ideal, were not considered to be too dissimilar from one another, and therefore they could be co-correlated in this context.

Item 10 and 17

The modification Indices for the item 10 (i.e. "I am satisfied with my life") and item 17 (i.e. "Generally things work out well for me") computed to 14.156. It is plausible that being satisfied with life and feeling that things are working out well, are not considered too dissimilar from one another and therefore an argument could be made that they be co-correlated in this sample.

Item 4 and 15

The modification Indices for the item 4 (i.e. "I feel well at the moment") and item 15 (i.e. "In most ways my life is close to ideal") computed to 15.867. As with items 10 and 17, the two items may not be considered as too dissimilar from one another by the respondents and therefore an argument could be made that they be co-correlated in this study.

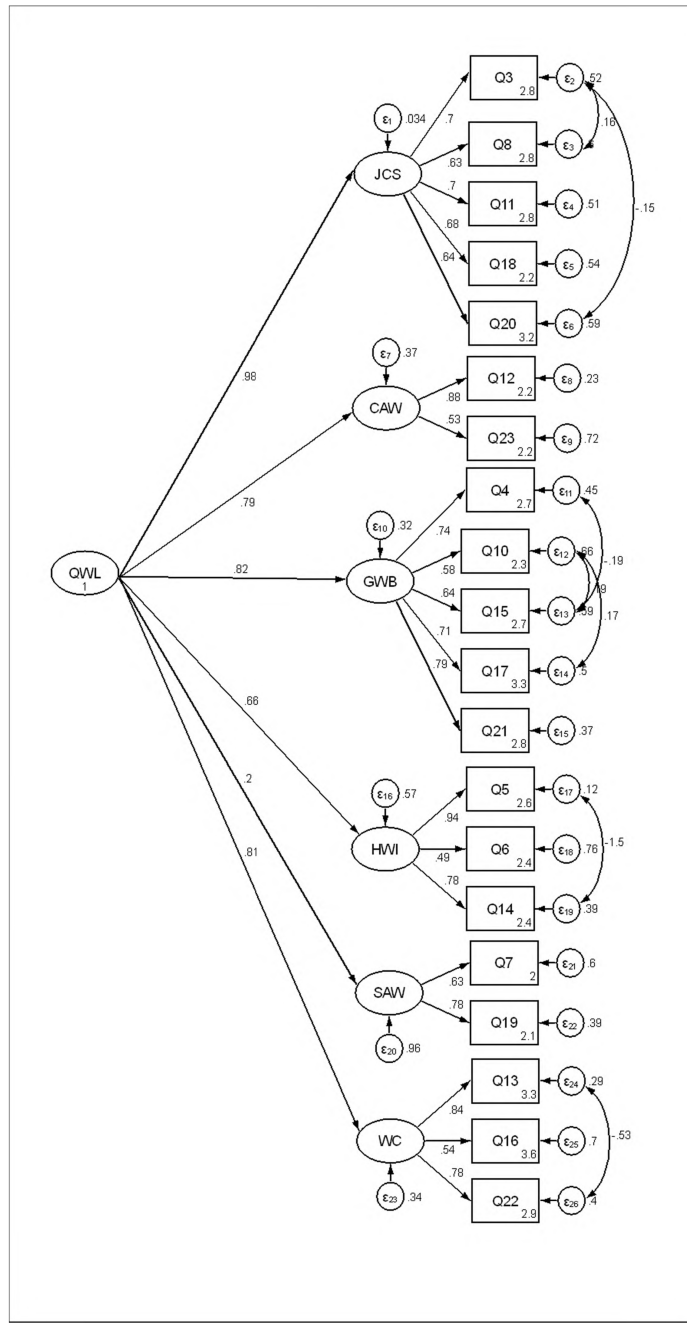
Item 13 and 22

The modification Indices for the item 13 (i.e. "My employer provides me with what I need to do my job effectively") and item 22 (i.e. "The working conditions are

satisfactory”) computed to 17.725. As descriptions of working conditions in a Contact Centre environment, where employees typically receive industry-standard equipment, scripted responses to queries and are well-trained prior to engaging with clients, it is plausible that these two items were considered by employees to be not too dissimilar from each other. Therefore, an argument could be made that they be co-correlated in this context.

The modified model was then re-run in Stata as illustrated in Figure 5.13.

Figure 5.13 Amended CFA QWL Model



Source: Stata (v.15.0)

The modified QWL CFA model produced the following fit results: The significant chi squared (Chi-square = 469.292, df = 157, $p = < .0001$) suggested concerns of a flawed model. The p-value should read greater than or equal to 0.05 (Schermele-

Engel and Moosbrugger, 2003). The literature suggests that the p-value might not be statistically significant for larger samples, such as those greater than 200, provided that there is an overall good model fit. However the model produced a χ^2/df of 2.98, which suggested a good fitting model fit. The Root Mean Squared Error of Approximation computation produced a RMSEA result of 0.06, suggesting a good fitting model fit (Kline, 2016). The Comparative Fit Index (CFI) was computed to be 0.92, which is above the generally accepted threshold (Hu and Bentler, 1999). The Standardized Root Mean Squared Residual (RMSR) produced a result of 0.044, depicting an excellent fit.

Table 5.15 illustrates the unstandardized factor loadings of the modified model.

Table 5.15: QWL Model Un-Standardized path estimates

Unstandardized	Coef.	Std. Err.	z	P>z	[95% Conf.	Interval]
JCS -> QWL	Constr. 1					
CAW -> QWL	1.081523	0.074185	14.58	0.000	0.936124	1.226923
GWB -> QWL	0.916116	0.068578	13.36	0.000	0.781705	1.050527
HWI -> QWL	0.916187	0.070141	13.06	0.000	0.778715	1.05366
SAW -> QWL	0.182605	0.065909	2.77	0.006	0.053426	0.311784
WC -> QWL	0.859569	0.060527	14.2	0.000	0.740938	0.9782

Source: Stata (v.15.0)

On analysis of the unstandardized estimates, as illustrated in Table 5.16, all of the paths were determined significant, as all the z scores were > 1.96 ($p < 0.05$), the lowest z score of the paths, $SAW \leftarrow QWL$, computed to 2.77 ($p < 0.0006$). It can therefore be deduced from the unstandardized factor loadings in the QWL CFA model that the relationship of the higher order factor Quality of Worklife with all of the lower order factors is significant.

Table 5.16 illustrates the standardized factor loadings.

Table 5.16: QWL Model Standardized path estimates

Standardized	Coef.	Std. Err.	z	P>z	[95%	
					Conf.	Interval]
JCS -> QWL	0.98	0.016608	59.19	0.000	0.95041	1.015513
CAW -> QWL	0.79	0.035365	22.4	0.000	0.722825	0.861452
GWB -> QWL	0.82	0.022228	37.05	0.000	0.780056	0.867186
HWI -> QWL	0.66	0.042127	15.6	0.000	0.574725	0.739862
SAW -> QWL	0.20	0.054421	3.64	0.000	0.091574	0.304901
WC -> QWL	0.81	0.031537	25.78	0.000	0.751092	0.874715

Source: Stata (v.15.0)

The researcher can deduce from the standardized factor loadings in the QWL CFA Model, as illustrated Table 5.16 and Figure 5.13, that the higher order factor Quality of Worklife's relationship with all the lower order factors was significant. The standardized factor loadings of the Quality of Worklife life factors were also all significant and deemed satisfactory: Job Career satisfaction (0.98, $p < .0001$), General Well-Being (0.82, $p < .0001$), Stress at Work (0.20, $p < .0001$), Home Work Interface (0.66, $p < .0001$), Working Conditions (0.81, $p < .0001$) and Control at Work (0.79, $p < .0001$).

5.4.3 Model Validation

As previously mentioned in the Research Methodology chapter, to ensure alignment of what is measured is precisely what is intended to be measured; the researcher needs to pay particular attention to the validity of the instrument. The results of face and construct validity are discussed below.

5.4.3.1 Face Validity

As discussed in the previous literature sections, and as described in the Research Methodology chapter, face validity is the subjective conformation that the instrument is measuring what it is intended to be measuring, and is defined as "the extent to which the indicator set is subjectively viewed as covering the concept it purports to measure" (Leemans *et al.*, 2015:75). It is argued in the literature chapters both the SLS and QWL sections of the instrument have been robustly tested both

methodologically and from a face value perspective. It is therefore plausible to suggest that the criteria for face validity have already being argued to have been met for both the SLS and QWL sections of the instrument.

5.4.3.2 Convergent Validity

Convergent validity measures the share or portion of variance that each item shares in a particular factor.

Each of the Servant Leader factors, as well as each of the Quality of Worklife factors were tested using this technique to ensure that convergent validity was achieved.

As depicted earlier, the Servant Leadership higher order factor consists of eight lower order factors, Humility, Authenticity, Empowerment, Accountability, Forgiveness, Standing Back, Courage and Stewardship.

Table 5.17: AVE of SLS Factors

Humility Factor	FL Standardised	Error Estimate	P> z	AVE
S10 <-Hum	0.7818092	0.0185672	0.000	
S18 <-Hum	0.8011434	0.0173244	0.000	
S25 <-Hum	0.7676665	0.0193794	0.000	
S29 <-Hum	0.8414255	0.0146998	0.000	
S30 <-Hum	0.851895	0.0141069	0.000	0.808788
Empowerment Factor	FL Standardised	Error Estimate	P> z	AVE
S1 <-Emp	0.8106574	0.0160872	0.000	
S2 <-Emp	0.8627583	0.0125819	0.000	
S3 <-Emp	0.8822385	0.0112613	0.000	
S4 <-Emp	0.8505889	0.0133266	0.000	
S12 <-Emp	0.7183938	0.0221369	0.000	
S27 <-Emp	0.7549085	0.0197838	0.000	0.813258
Standing Back Factor	FL Standardised	Error Estimate	P> z	AVE
S5 <-Std	0.6577759	0.0270547	0.000	
S13 <-Std	0.6997397	0.0252252	0.000	
S21 <-Std	0.7058515	0.0250673	0.000	0.687789
Accountability Factor	FL Standardised	Error Estimate	P> z	AVE
S6 <-Acc	0.6966737	0.0329514	0.000	
S14 <-Acc	0.6508717	0.0343365	0.000	
S22 <-Acc	0.6313045	0.0350005	0.000	0.659617
Forgiveness Factor	FL Standardised	Error Estimate	P> z	AVE
S7 <-For	0.7270874	0.0338332	0.000	
S15 <-For	0.6533338	0.0349231	0.000	
S23 <-For	0.6507272	0.0357903	0.000	0.677049
Stewardship Factor	FL Standardised	Error Estimate	P> z	AVE
S11 <-Ste	0.8209028	0.0167259	0.000	
S19 <-Ste	0.8297937	0.0158649	0.000	
S26 <-Ste	0.7273057	0.0222311	0.000	0.792667
Authenticity Factor	FL Standardised	Error Estimate	P> z	AVE
S9 <-Auth	0.7602279	0.0276604	0.000	
S17 <-Auth	0.6143247	0.0313567	0.000	
S28 <-Auth	0.6076939	0.030598	0.000	0.660749
Courage Factor	FL Standardised	Error Estimate	P> z	AVE
S8 <-Cour	0.7290963	0.0387467	0.000	
S16 <-Cour	0.702226	0.0386022	0.000	0.715661

Source: Researchers Calculations

And also as depicted earlier, the Quality of Worklife higher order factor consists of six lower order factors, General Well Being, Job Career Satisfaction, Home Work Interface, Stress at Work, Control at Work and Working Conditions.

Table 5.18: AVE of QWL Factors

Job Career Satisfaction Factor	FL Standardised	Error Estimate	P> z	AVE
Q3 <-Jcs	0.7616056	0.0218195	0.000	
Q8 <-Jcs	0.6397642	0.0286831	0.000	
Q11 <-Jcs	0.6986451	0.0250444	0.000	
Q18 <-Jcs	0.6723254	0.0264153	0.000	
Q20 <-Jcs	0.642715	0.0285427	0.000	0.683011
General Well Being Factor	FL Standardised	Error Estimate	P> z	AVE
Q4 <-Gwb	0.7372854	0.0238875	0.000	
Q10 <-Gwb	0.5994195	0.031101	0.000	
Q15 <-Gwb	0.6285735	0.0306955	0.000	
Q17 <-Gwb	0.7187163	0.0244952	0.000	
Q21 <-Gwb	0.7980049	0.0199862	0.000	0.6964
Home Work Interface Factor	FL Standardised	Error Estimate	P> z	AVE
Q5 <-Hwi	0.9391332	0.0491236	0.000	
Q6 <-Hwi	0.4851106	0.0399164	0.000	
Q14 <-Hwi	0.7830464	0.0500079	0.000	0.735763
Working Conditions Factor	FL Standardised	Error Estimate	P> z	AVE
Q13 <-Wcs	0.8455975	0.0316729	0.000	
Q16 <-Wcs	0.5440943	0.0343537	0.000	
Q22 <-Wcs	0.7749245	0.0355777	0.000	0.721539
Control at Work Factor	FL Standardised	Error Estimate	P> z	AVE
Q12 <-Caw	0.8802757	0.0346905	0.000	
Q22 <-Caw	0.5273344	0.0365806	0.000	0.703805
Stress at Work Factor	FL Standardised	Error Estimate	P> z	AVE
Q19 <-Saw	0.6274178	0.1035648	0.000	
Q26 <-Saw	0.7817971	0.1260848	0.000	0.704607

Source: Researchers Calculations

It can therefore be concluded that both the Servant Leadership and Quality of models meet convergent validity requirements, since in all cases, as illustrated in Table 5.17 and Table 5.18, the average variance extracted is greater than 0.5 (Fornell and Larcker, 1981).

5.4.3.3 Discriminant Validity

The use of the multivariate technique of confirmatory factor analysis has been used in many studies to establish discriminant validity. This study used both confirmatory factor analysis, as well as Hair *et al.*'s (2006) technique, to perform discriminant validity. Discriminant validity is the test to whether factors which are supposed to be unrelated and independent are in fact shown to be so. In other words, Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife which have eight and six factors between them, calculations of discriminant validity aim to show that each of these factors are independent from one another.

Hair *et al.* (2006: 778) posit that to determine discriminant validity, it needs to be evident that "the variance extracted estimates should be greater than the squared correlation estimate". Using the average variance extraction method (Fornell and

Larcker, 1981), to illustrate that discriminant validity has been achieved means that the AVE estimates for any two of the factors have to be greater than the squared correlation between any two of the second order factors. The discriminant validity for both SLS and QWL are now discussed

Table 5.19 below illustrates the squared correlation estimates.

Table 5.19: Squared correlation estimates and AVE

SLS	Ave	Empowerment	Standing Back	Accountability	Forgiveness	Courage	Authenticity	Humility	Stewardship
Empowerment	0.81	1							
Standing Back	0.69	0.61	1						
Accountability	0.66	0.29	0.24	1					
Forgiveness	0.68	0.15	0.14	0.01	1				
Courage	0.72	0.22	0.16	0.05	0.01	1			
Authenticity	0.66	0.43	0.37	0.19	0.04	0.25	1		
Humility	0.81	0.60	0.54	0.19	0.18	0.21	0.50	1	
Stewardship	0.79	0.70	0.58	0.27	0.18	0.20	0.49	0.85	1
QWL	Ave	JCS	CAW	GWB	HWI	SAW	WCS		
Job Career Satisfaction	0.68	1							
Control at Work	0.704	0.466	1						
General Well Being	0.70	0.44	0.27	1					
Home Work Interface	0.74	0.25	0.21	0.19	1				
Stress at Work	0.70	0.02	0.02	0.04	0.02	1			
Working Conditions	0.72	0.39	0.24	0.31	0.32	0.01	1		

Source: Researchers Calculations

Using Hair *et al.*'s (2006) method of determining discriminant validity between Empowerment and Standing Back, the average variance extracted of Empowerment, as illustrated in Table 5.19 calculates to 0.81, the average variance extracted is therefore greater than the squared correlation matrix value between the two constructs, Empowerment and Standing Back, which is 0.61, see Table 5.19. This confirms the discriminant validity between them. It is to be noted in Table 5.19, that in fact all of the average variance extracted calculated, were greater than the squared correlation matrix value between any two constructs in the squared correlation matrix. The researcher can therefore report that there is adequate discriminant validity between factors.

After validity has been confirmed, the researcher moved on to measuring whether Servant Leadership can be considered as a causal variable to Quality of Worklife and whether Trust mediates that relationship. A Structural Equation Modelling analysis process was used to determine causality, which was then followed by mediation analysis.

5.4.4 Structural Equation Modelling

As described in the Research Methodology chapter, Kline, (2016) argues that the process of Structural Equation Modelling includes the process of specifying the model, evaluating model identification, screening the data, model estimation and evaluating the model fit, and then either re-specifying, modifying or reporting the model results.

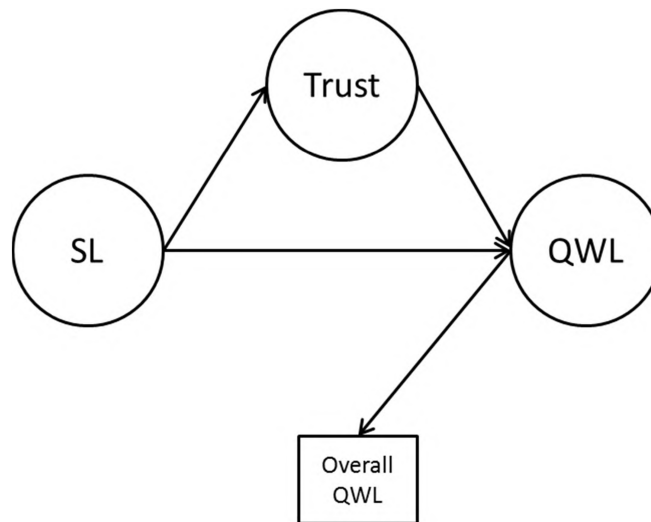
Using this methodology, the analysis that follows attempted to assess whether there is a causal path between Servant Leadership, Trust and Quality of Worklife in a customer service context. This was tested using Structural Equation Modelling methodology.

5.4.4.1 Model Specification and Identification:

5.4.4.1.1 Model Specification

At a very high level, the schematic hypothesised model for this research is illustrated below. Figure 5.14 shows in a path diagram format, the suggested causal relationship between the variables Servant Leadership, Trust and Quality of Worklife in a customer service context.

Figure 5.14: Model Specification Path Diagram



Source: Authors Central Hypothesis

The key theoretical framework for this hypothesised causal relationship was developed in Chapters Two and Three of this thesis. In the context of this research, model specification, the exogenous variable, Servant Leadership, has a significant causal relationship with Quality of Worklife, both higher order variables which were validated in the previous section of this chapter; and that Trust plays a mediating role between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife positively affecting Overall Quality of Worklife.

5.4.4.1.2 Model Identification

The researcher used the same methodology used to calculate whether the model is identified as what was explained earlier in this chapter. According to this criterion, the model is classified as over identified due to there being 1830 distinct number of sample moments ($60(61)/2$) and 115 parameters to be estimated, thereby leaving 1715 degrees of freedom.

5.4.4.2 Data Screening

As in most statistical analyses procedures, the adequacy of sample size for Structural Equation Modelling is of significant importance. As previously stated in Confirmatory Factor Analysis, sample size plays an extremely important role in the determination of whether the sample data that the researcher is working with is sufficiently sized in order to conduct Structural Equation Modelling. Both Garver and Mentzer's (1999) and Weston and Gore (2006) posit that any sample over 200 is sufficient to conduct Structural Equation Modelling. However, there are several "rules of thumb" portrayed in the literature for determining the minimum sample size for SEM. Bentler and Chou (1987) suggest a sample size that is five times the number of variables. This is corroborated by Furr (2011), reporting adequate sample sizes that are calculated through the ratios of respondents and number of items/variables; ratios of five respondents-to-one variable to twenty respondents-to-one variable are suggested.

Using these indicators as a guide, the sample size for Structural Equation Modelling for this research is deemed adequate in that the respondents totalled 555 and the final set of data used contained 52 items.

Due to a setting on the electronic questionnaire, which omitted respondents from submitting their questionnaires without every item being answered, there was no missing data for the researcher to contend with.

The researcher must also test for normality of the data prior to conducting Structural Equation Modelling, as data that is non-normally distributed could supply incorrect model fit and interpretation results (Weston and Gore, 2006). Kline (2011) explains that in order to test for normality, the reader needs to investigate the skewness and kurtosis of the sample data.

Table 5.20: Kurtosis and Skewness SLS

SLS	<i>Empowerment</i>	<i>Standing Back</i>	<i>Accountability</i>	<i>Forgiveness</i>	<i>Courage</i>	<i>Authenticity</i>	<i>Humility</i>	<i>Stewardship</i>
Kurtosis	-0.403103252	-0.376608074	1.414784558	-0.604956837	-0.710357379	0.174286882	-0.28027688	0.069480127
Skewness	-0.693371054	-0.48614246	-1.150635801	-0.338711403	-0.206311289	-0.456636002	-0.519642795	-0.729373338

Source: Excel v 2010

Table 5.21: Kurtosis and Skewness QWL

QWL	<i>JCS</i>	<i>CAW</i>	<i>GWB</i>	<i>HWI</i>	<i>SAW</i>	<i>WCS</i>
Kurtosis	-0.15321322	-0.536892649	-0.212356647	-0.222799122	-0.667176158	0.228375792
Skewness	-0.632672021	-0.333258215	-0.471835706	-0.668516228	0.162421935	-0.787851993

Source: Excel v 2010

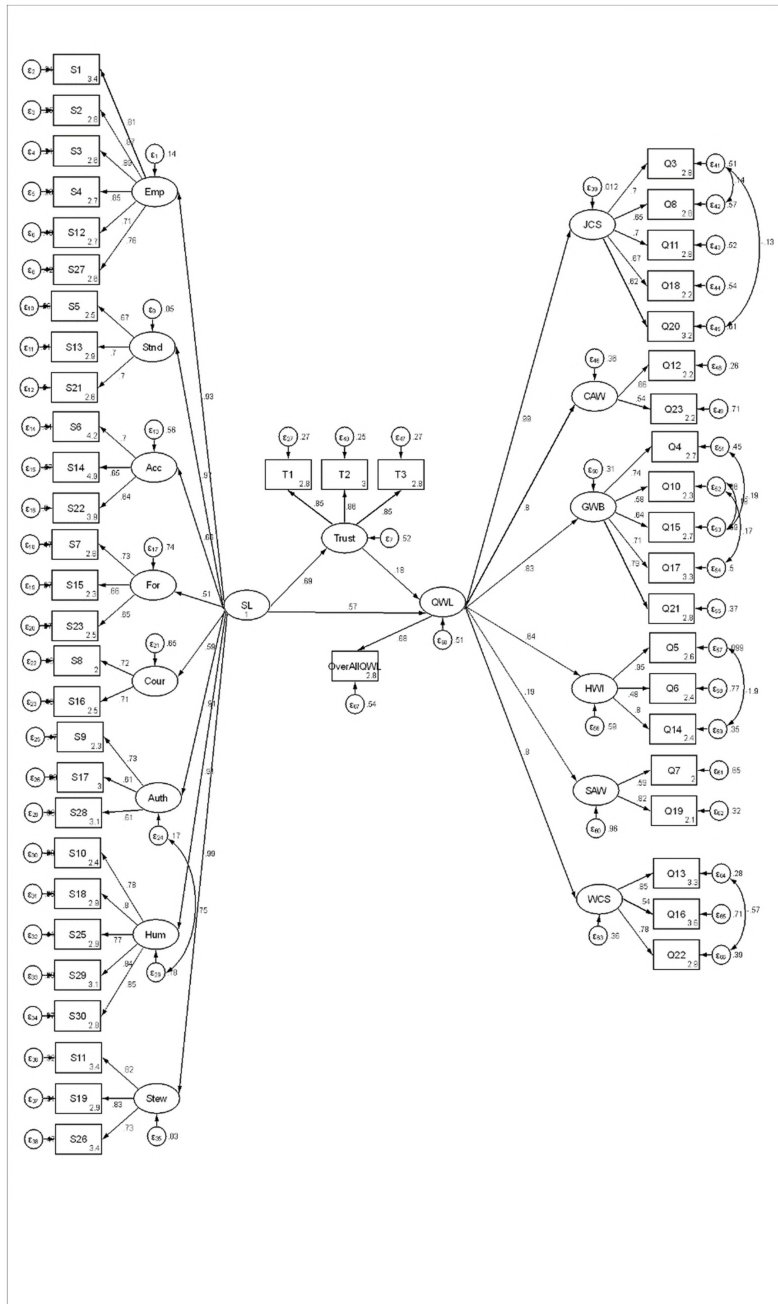
A Skewness indicator greater than three will indicate concerns about normality (i.e. that the sample data is not normally distributed) (Chou and Bentler, 1995 *cited in* Weston and Gore, 2006:735). As illustrated in Tables 5.20 and 5.21 although somewhat negatively skewed, all variables had a skewness indicator of less than three. According to Kline (2011), kurtosis indicators should not read greater than 10. Tables 5.20 and 5.21 indicate that the kurtosis thresholds were also met (Kline, 2011), which leads to the conclusion that the sample population is normally distributed.

5.4.4.3 Model Estimation and Fit

Kline (2016) explains that the estimation step involves the transference of data to the Structural Equation Modelling software to determine whether the model converges and fits the data set. This researcher used Stata (v15.0) to conduct the analysis. The structural model converged after 17 iterations, and the initial model produced a fairly good fitting model ($\chi^2/df = 2.32$; CFI = 0.897; RMSEA = 0.049; RMSR = 0.054). However, after an investigation of the modification indices, it was found that the modification parameter indices for the factors Authenticity and Humility computed to 39.360. Authentic leaders are leaders that are perceived by others, as having high morals and values and are confidently aware of their attributes (Avolio, Gardner, Walumbwa, and May, 2004). They do not mould their personalities, values or morals to fit differing contexts (Van Dierendonck and Dijkstra, 2012). On the other hand, humble leaders are characterised as leaders who know their capabilities, and understand what they excel at, and what they need help with (Van Dierendonck and Dijkstra, 2012). Therefore it can be argued that having a humble demeanour could be considered as not to dissimilar to displaying leadership behaviour that is deemed to be authentic, and therefore be co-correlated in this context. A new model was then run that included this co-correlation. Figure 5.15 shows the standardized results of the structural model. The SEM model produced the following fit indices: The significant Chi-squared statistic of the SEM model still suggested concerns of a flawed model (Chi-square = 2866.802, $df = 1249$ $p < 0.0001$), however, the SEM model produced a χ^2/df result of 2.29, very much within the accepted threshold. The SEM model produced a RMSEA of 0.048, depicting an excellent fit (Hu and Bentler, 1999) and the model's CFI index recorded a 0.9 result, which is deemed acceptable (Bollen, 1989; Hu and Bentler, 1999). The Standardized Root Mean Squared Residual was computed to be 0.054, indicating an excellent fit (Hu and Bentler, 1999; Kline 2016).

The model was deemed by the researcher to have an acceptable fit for the data set.

Figure 5.15: SL_TRUST_QWL SEM Model



Source: Stata V 15.0

The next section tests the hypotheses that were itemised earlier in this chapter. On analysis of the unstandardized estimates, all of the paths were determined significant, as all were > 1.96 ($p < 0.05$), the lowest z score of the paths, $SAW \leftarrow QWL$, computed to 2.5 ($p < 0.05$).

The standardized paths illustrate to the researcher which of the paths make the greatest impact (Weston and Gore, 2006). Table 5.22 illustrates the hypothesised standardized paths of the SEM Model.

Table 5.22: Path Estimates of the SEM Model

	Coef.	Std. Err.	z	P>z	[95% Conf.	Interval]
Emp <- SL	0.925431	0.010309	89.77	0.000	0.905227	0.945636
Stn <- SL	0.974553	0.016617	58.65	0.000	0.941984	1.007122
Acc <- SL	0.664648	0.034789	19.11	0.000	0.596464	0.732832
For <- SL	0.508917	0.041157	12.37	0.000	0.428251	0.589584
Cour <- SL	0.589001	0.039985	14.73	0.000	0.510632	0.66737
Auth <- SL	0.911318	0.022326	40.82	0.000	0.86756	0.955076
Hum <- SL	0.906521	0.012224	74.16	0.000	0.882562	0.930479
Ste <- SL	0.985128	0.009982	98.69	0.000	0.965563	1.004692
JCS <- QWL	0.994028	0.014124	70.38	0.000	0.966346	1.021709
CAW <- QWL	0.800246	0.033963	23.56	0.000	0.733679	0.866813
GWB <- QWL	0.828525	0.021045	39.37	0.000	0.787277	0.869773
HWI <- QWL	0.643136	0.041815	15.38	0.000	0.56118	0.725092
SAW <- QWL	0.187683	0.054461	3.45	0.001	0.080941	0.294425
WC <- QWL	0.798691	0.030935	25.82	0.000	0.73806	0.859322
SL -> QWL	0.568954	0.048666	11.69	0.000	0.47357	0.664338
SL -> Trust	0.6909	0.026427	26.14	0.000	0.639104	0.742695
Trust -> QWL	0.17751	0.053105	3.34	0.001	0.073426	0.281595

Source: Stata V 15.0

It can therefore be concluded that due to the path coefficients of the hypothesised model being statistically significant, and the goodness of fit indices falling within acceptable threshold values, that this SEM model may therefore be classified as a satisfactory model for this data set.

5.4.4.3.1 Possible Alternate models

After a good fitting model was identified, possible alternative models were investigated. The following models were tested:

1. As hypothesised, a structural model in which Servant Leadership had a direct effect on Quality of Worklife, and an indirect effect on Quality of Worklife via Trust (partially mediated model),
2. A structural model in which Servant Leadership had a direct effect on only Quality of Worklife, with the Trust variable omitted.
3. A structural model in which Servant Leadership had a direct effect on Quality of Worklife via Trust (fully mediated model).

Table 5.23 illustrates various model options and their corresponding fit indices:

Table 5.23: Results of Model Comparisons

Model	χ^2/df	RMSEA	CFI	SRMR
1 Partially Mediated model (as Hypothesised)	2.29	0.048	0.9	0.054
2 SL to QWL	2.37	0.05	0.897	0.055
3 Direct straight line path from SL to Trust to QWL (Fully Mediated Model)	2.38	0.05	0.893	0.08

Source: Stata V 15.0

The results of the tests of the different models indicate that the hypothesised model, the partially mediated model, with one mediator variable (Trust) between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife, and a direct path from Servant Leadership to Quality of Worklife revealed an acceptable fit to the data ($\chi^2/df = 2.29$, RMSEA = 0.048, CFI = 0.9, SRMR = 0.054). The standardized direct effect between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife ($\beta = 0.57$, $p < 0.001$) and between Servant Leadership and Trust ($\beta = 0.69$, $p < 0.001$) was significant. The relationship between Trust and Quality of Worklife was also significant ($\beta = 0.18$, $p < 0.001$).

By evaluating the fit indices of all of the models tested, the partially mediated model clearly performs best, as its fit indices are all superior to those of any of the alternate models. The findings and results of the partially mediated model suggest and support the hypothesis that there is positive relationship between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife and Trust.

5.4.4.4 Principle Hypothesis Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife

What follows is the testing of the principle hypotheses, as described earlier in the chapters, which relate to Servant Leadership, Trust and Quality of Worklife, and their relationship with each other. This principle hypothesis is that there is a relationship between Servant leadership, Trust and Quality of Worklife in customer service context. The results of the Servant Leadership, Trust and Quality of Worklife partially mediated model, illustrated that the higher order factor of Servant Leadership showed a significant relationship with the higher order factor of Quality of Worklife (β 0.57, $p < 0.001$); and that Servant Leadership has a significant relationship with Trust (β 0.69, $p < 0.001$). Trust in turn has a significant relationship with Quality of Worklife (β 0.18, $p < 0.001$). A summary of the hypotheses results are described as follows:

Hypothesis 1:

Null Hypothesis (H1): There is no statistically significant causal relationship between Servant Leadership behaviour and Quality of Worklife in the frontline customer service context.

Alternative Hypothesis (H1): Servant leadership behaviour has a statistically significant causal relationship with Quality of Worklife in the frontline customer service context.

Result:

Reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is statistically significant causal relationship between Servant leadership and Quality of Worklife in the frontline customer service context.

Hypothesis 2

Null Hypothesis (H2): There is no statistically significant causal relationship between Servant Leadership behaviour and Trust in the frontline customer service context.

Alternative Hypothesis (H2): Servant leadership behaviour has a significant and positive causal relationship with Trust in the frontline customer service context.

Result:

Reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is statistically significant causal relationship between Servant leadership and Trust in the frontline customer service context.

Hypothesis 3

Null Hypothesis (H3): There is no statistically significant causal relationship between Trust and Quality of Worklife in the frontline customer service context.

Alternative Hypothesis (H3): Trust has a significant and positive causal relationship with Quality of Worklife in the frontline customer service context.

Result:

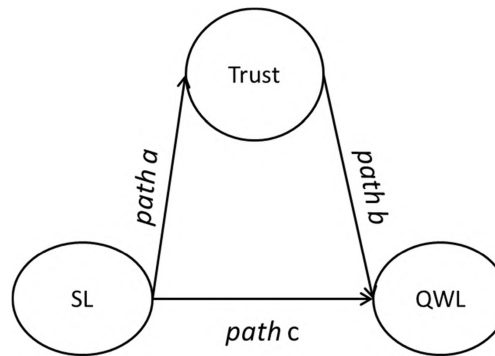
Reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is statistically significant causal relationship between Trust and Quality of Worklife in the frontline customer service context.

5.4.5 Mediation

Baron and Kenny (1986) initially proposed a three step process to ascertaining the mediation of variables. This process included testing that predictor variable was significantly related to the mediating variable; then testing whether the mediating variable was significantly related to outcome variable, and lastly whether the relationship of the predicting variable to the outcome variable diminished when a mediating variable was added to the model. To ascertain whether the full or partial mediation exists, they suggested a similar four step process. The four steps are summarised as follows:

- 1) Prove that the predictor variable has a statistically significant relationship with the outcome variable (as illustrated in Figure 5.16 *path c*);
- 2) Prove that the predictor has a statistically significant relationship with the mediator (as illustrated in Figure 5.16 *path a*);
- 3) Prove that the mediator has a statistically significant relationship with the outcome variable (as illustrated in Figure 5.16 *path b*);
- 4) Prove that the predictor variable no longer has any effect on the outcome variable when the mediator has been controlled.

Figure 5.16: Mediation Analysis

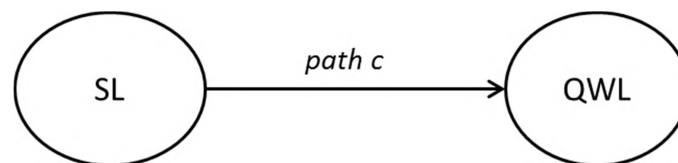


Source: Authors Hypothesis

5.4.5.1 Mediation Analysis

As mentioned above, the first step of mediation analysis in the research would be to establishing whether Servant Leadership, has a statistically significant relationship to Quality of Worklife, as represented in Figure 5.17. This step will ascertain whether there is a significant relationship to be mediated.

Figure 5.17: Step 1 of Mediation Analysis



Source: Authors Hypothesis

A structural equation model testing the relationship only between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife without the mediator, *path c*, was tested. The results, as illustrated in Table 5.24, show that a significant positive relationship exists between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife (0.69, $p < .0001$), confirming that there is a relationship to be mediated.

Table 5.24: Mediation Step 1: SL_QWL Structural Model

	Coef.	Std. Err.	z	P>z	[95% Conf. Interval]	
SL --> QWL	0.690741	0.026494	26.07	0.0000	0.638813	0.742669

Source: Stata V15.0

Next, another structural equation model as tested, this time the relationship between Servant Leadership and the mediator Trust only, *path a*, was tested. The results of this model, Table 5.25, show that a significant positive relationship exists between Servant Leadership and Trust (0.69, $p < .0001$), confirming step two of Baron and Kenny's (1986) process, which is that the predictor has a statistically significant relationship with the mediator.

Table 5.25: Mediation Step 2: SL_Trust Structural Model

	Coef.	Std. Err.	z	P>z	Conf.	Interval]
SL --> Trust	0.690778	0.026442	26.12	0.000	0.638953	0.742603

Source: Stata V15.0

Path b was then tested with the aid of another structural equation model, this time testing whether Trust to Quality of Worklife was a significant path in the model. The results of this model show that a significant positive relationship exists between Trust and Quality of Worklife (0.56, $p < .0001$), as illustrated in Table 5.26 confirming step three of Baron and Kenny's (1986) process, which is that the mediator has a statistically significant relationship with the outcome variable.

Table 5.26: Mediation Step 3: Trust_QWL Structural Model

	Coef.	Std. Err.	z	P>z	[95% Conf.	Interval]
Trust --> QWL	0.564685	0.034203	16.51	0.000	0.497648	0.631722

Source: Stata V15.0

Given that the three initial steps of Baron and Kenny's (1986) process proved positive, the researcher then proceeded to determine whether the relationship of Servant Leadership to Quality of Worklife diminished when the Trust variable was added to the model. The structural models previously tested, as illustrated in Table 5.27, show that *path c's* value (0.69, $p < .0001$) diminished when the Trust variable was added to the model (0.57, $p < .0001$), confirming that Trust, to some extent, mediates the relationship between Servant Leadership to Quality of Worklife.

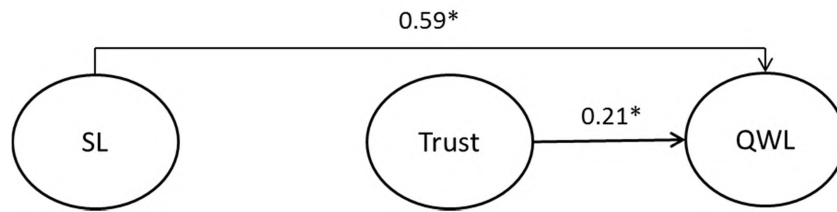
Table 5.27: Results of Model Comparisons

Model	Relationship between					[95%	
	SL and QWL	Coef.	Std. Err.	z	P>z	Conf.	Interval]
Model excluding the mediator variable	SL-->QWL	0.690741	0.026494	26.07	0.0000	0.638813	0.742669
Model including the mediator variable	SL-->QWL	0.568954	0.048666	11.69	0.000	0.47357	0.664338

Source: Stata V 15.0

Step four of the Baron and Kenny (1986) model, as illustrated in Figure 5.18, proposes that some form of mediation is supported if the effect of *path b* remains significant after controlling for Servant Leadership. If *path c'* is no longer significant when Trust is controlled, the finding supports full mediation, however if *path c'* is still significant, the finding supports partial mediation. The results of the structural model illustrated below show that the relationship between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife and the relationship between Trust and Quality of Worklife are both significant, thereby confirming partial mediation.

Figure 5.18: Mediation Step 4: SL_Trust_QWL Structural Model



Source: Stata V15.0 (* denotes significant paths)

From the evidence presented above, the researcher is now able to present the results of Hypothesis 4.

Hypothesis 4

Null Hypothesis (H4₀): Trust does not mediate the relationship between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife in the frontline customer service context.

Alternative Hypothesis (H4_a): Trust is a statistically significant mediator of the relationship between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife in the frontline customer service context.

Result:

Reject the null hypothesis and conclude that Trust plays a statistically significant partially mediating relationship between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife in the frontline customer service context.

5.5 Descriptive Statistics

Below is a summary of the descriptive statistics of the amended SLS and QWL instruments as well as the Trust scale.

5.5.1 Servant Leadership

This section describes the current level of Servant Leadership experienced by the Contact Centre agents for the total sample on each SLS, QWL and Trust factors. For Servant Leadership, Table 5.28 indicates a mean of 5.10 for Empowerment, 4.88 for Standing Back, 5.79 for Accountability, 4.75 for Forgiveness, 4.18 for Courage, 4.77 for Authenticity, 4.73 for Humility and 5.03 for Stewardship. The mean of the combined amended SLS factors is 4.9 for the total sample (n = 555).

The standard deviation is relatively low for the total SLS sample as well as the separate SLS factors, ranging between 1.07 for Accountability to 1.62 for the Courage factor. This implies that there are relatively uniform responses, indicating that there are relatively small variances from the mean (Johnson and Wichern, 1998).

5.5.2 Quality of Work-life

The level of Quality of Worklife (QWL) experienced by the Contact Centre agents for the total sample on each Quality of Worklife factor. Table 5.28 indicates a mean of 4.99 for Job Career Satisfaction, 4.15 for Control at Work, 4.66 for General Well Being, 4.71 for Home-Work Interface, 3.69 for Stress at Work, and 5.16 for Working Conditions. The mean of the combined QWL factors is 4.56 for the total sample (n = 555).

The standard deviation is relatively low for the total Quality of Work-life sample, as well as the Quality of Work-life factors ranging between 1.28 for Working Conditions to 1.62 for the Control at Work Factor. As with the SLS, this implies that there are relatively uniform responses, indicating that there are relatively small variances from the mean (Johnson and Wichern, 1998).

5.5.3 Trust

The level of Trust experienced by the Contact Centre agents for the total, as illustrated in Table 5.28 indicates a mean of 5.04 and a standard deviation of 1.59 for the total sample (n = 555).

Table 5.28: Descriptive Statistics

Servant Leadership	Mean	Std. Dev	Min	Max
Empowerment	5.10	1.551	1	7
StandingBack	4.88	1.479	1	7
Accountability	5.79	1.065	1	7
Forgiveness	4.75	1.511	1	7
Courage	4.18	1.619	1	7
Authenticity	4.77	1.350	1	7
Humility	4.73	1.445	1	7
Stewardship	5.03	1.360	1	7
Servant Leadership	4.90	1.083	1	7
QWL	Mean	Std. Dev	Min	Max
JCS	4.99	1.352	1	7
CAW	4.15	1.619	1	7
GWB	4.66	1.315	1	7
HWI	4.71	1.506	1	7
SAW	3.69	1.552	1	7
WCS	5.16	1.275	1	7
Quality of Worklife	4.56	0.995	1	7
Trust	Mean	Std. Dev	Min	Max
Trust	5.043243	1.598777	1	7

Source SLS assessment: Stata (Version 15.0)

5.6 Analyses of Variance Testing

With the aid of ANOVA, this section presents the results of testing whether there are any statistically significant differences in mean scores.

5.6.1 Testing for Pertinent, Statistically Significant Differences

With the aid of ANOVA tests, results are reported in particular reference to the following:

- Whether there are statistically significant differences in mean scores per organisation;
- Whether there are statistically significant differences in mean scores in age of respondents;
- Whether there are statistically significant differences in mean scores in gender of respondents;
- Whether there are statistically significant differences in mean scores in age of supervisors;
- Whether there are statistically significant differences in mean scores in gender of supervisor;
- Whether there are statistically significant differences in mean scores of type of job.

5.6.2 ANOVA Tests

This section will deal with the ANOVA test results of the Servant leadership, Quality of Worklife and Trust instruments according to the previously stated hypotheses. The alternative hypotheses for each test, as previously stated, are that there is a significant difference in mean scores (i.e. not all μ are the same) for each of the tests, as mentioned in 5.6.1. The level of significance used for each of the test was 5% ($\alpha = 0.05$) and the test used was the One Way Anova. The decision rule to be used was to reject the null hypothesis if the p-value < 0.05 . Tables 5.29 and 5.30 illustrate a summary of these test results.

Table 5.29: P Values (Anova Test)

One-way ANOVA results	P Value SL	P Value QWL	P Value Trust
Organisations	0.0000	0.0019	0.0000
Age of Respondents	0.0896	0.1237	0.0867
Gender of Respondents	0.2095	0.0329	0.0922
Age of Supervisor	0.1323	0.5963	0.3118
Gender of Supervisor	0.4707	0.4913	0.9629
Type of Job	0.0019	0.0000	0.0005

Source SLS assessment: Stata (Version 15.0)

Table 5.30: Hypotheses test results (summary)

Hypothesis Testing Results	SL	QWL	Trust
Organisations	H 5.1: Reject the null hypothesis	H 5.2: Reject the null hypothesis	H 5.3: Reject the null hypothesis
Age of Respondents	H 5.4: Fail to reject	H 5.5: Fail to reject	H 5.6: Fail to reject
Gender of Respondents	H 5.7: Fail to reject	H 5.8: Reject the null hypothesis	H 5.9: Fail to reject
Age of Supervisor	H 5.10: Fail to reject	H 5.11: Fail to reject	H 5.12: Fail to reject
Gender of Supervisor	H 5.13: Fail to reject	H 5.14: Fail to reject	H 5.15: Fail to reject
Type of Job	H 5.16: Reject the null hypothesis	H 5.17: Reject the null hypothesis	H 5.18: Reject the null hypothesis

Source SLS assessment: Stata (Version 15.0)

5.6.2.1 Differences in mean scores per organisation (H5.1; H5.2; H5.3)

It is noted that for Servant leadership, Quality of Worklife and Trust the null hypothesis was rejected as the p -value were less than 0.05 as seen in Table 5.29 (SL $p < 0.0001$; QWL: $p = 0.0019$; Trust $p < 0.0001$). At the 5% level of significance, there is a **significant difference** in mean scores, as illustrated in Table 5.31, across the eight organisations for Servant leadership, Quality of Worklife and Trust. Organisation number seven (5.65, 0.915) scored the highest in Servant Leadership, Quality of Worklife (4.96, 0.994) and Trust (5.73, 1.403) while Organisation 6 scored lowest for Servant Leadership (4.46, 1.322), Quality of Worklife (4.19, 0.926). Organisation 5 scored the lowest on Trust (4.50, 1.525).

Table 5.31: Means and Standard Deviation per organisation

Org Means and Std.Dev.	SL		QWL		Trust	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Org 1	4.93	1.043	4.80	0.883	5.01	1.272
Org 2	4.93	0.869	4.77	0.692	4.83	1.050
Org 3	4.66	1.108	4.53	1.148	4.73	1.508
Org 4	4.62	1.059	4.59	0.941	4.76	1.350
Org 5	4.71	1.137	4.43	1.142	4.50	1.525
Org 6	4.46	1.322	4.19	0.926	4.53	1.656
Org 7	5.65	0.915	4.96	0.994	5.73	1.403
Org 8	5.09	1.086	4.90	1.040	5.09	1.484

Source: Stata (Version 15.0)

5.6.2.2 Differences in mean scores per age of respondents (H5.4; H5.5; H5.6)

The test of difference in mean score for age of respondents failed to reject the null hypothesis as the p -values were more than 0.05 as seen in Table 5.29 (SL $p = 0.0896$; QWL: $p = 0.1237$; Trust $p = 0.0867$). At the 5% level of significance, there is **no significant difference** in mean scores in age of respondents.

5.6.2.3 Differences in mean scores per gender of respondents (H5.7; H5.8; H5.9)

The test of difference in differences of gender of respondents mean scores failed to reject the null hypothesis Servant leadership and Trust for as the p -values were more than 0.05, as seen in Table 5.29 (SL $p = 0.2095$; Trust $p = 0.0922$). At the 5% level of significance, there is **no significant difference** in mean scores in gender of respondents for Servant leadership and Trust. However, the results of the Anova test note that for Quality of Worklife, the null hypothesis was rejected as the p -value was less than 0.05 as seen in Table 5.31 (QWL: $p = 0.0329$). At the 5% level of significance, there is **a significant difference** in mean Quality of Worklife scores of gender of respondents. As illustrated in Table 5.32, male respondents (4.85, 1.061) scored higher than females for Quality of Worklife.

Table 5.32: Means per Gender

Gender Means	SL		QWL		Trust	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Female	4.76	1.082	4.65	0.997	4.93	1.468
Male	4.88	1.054	4.85	1.061	5.15	1.386

Source: Stata (Version 15.0)

5.6.2.4 Differences in age of supervisor (H5.10; H5.11; H5.12)

The test of difference in mean score for age of supervisor failed to reject the null hypothesis as the p -values were more than 0.05 as seen in Table 5.29 (SL $p = 0.1323$; QWL: $p = 0.5963$; Trust $p = 0.3118$). At the 5% level of significance, there is **no significant difference** in mean scores in age of supervisors.

5.6.2.5 Differences in gender of supervisor (H5.13; H5.14; H5.15)

The test of difference in mean score for gender of supervisor failed to reject the null hypothesis as the p -values were more than 0.05 as seen in Table 5.29 (SL $p = 0.4707$; QWL: $p = 0.4913$; Trust $p = 0.9629$). At the 5% level of significance, there is **no significant difference** in mean scores in gender of supervisors.

5.6.2.6 Differences in type of job (H5.16; H5.17; H5.18)

The results of the Anova test for differences in type of job for Servant leadership, Quality of Worklife and Trust, note that the null hypothesis was rejected as the p -value was less than 0.05 as seen in the above Table 5.29 (SL $p = 0.0019$; QWL $p < 0.0001$ Trust $p = 0.0005$). At the 5% level of significance, there is **a significant difference** in mean Servant Leadership, Quality of Worklife and Trust scores with respect to type of job. Agents who worked in Outbound jobs scored highest in Servant Leadership (4.96, 1.003), Quality of Worklife (4.86, 0.903), as well as Trust (5.23, 1.367).

5.7 Summary of Principle Results

This section of the chapter is a summary of the main results of the hypotheses, which were postulated in earlier chapters. Previous results in this chapter have formulated sufficient evidence in order for the researcher to test and empirically report on each hypothesis, a summary of which is presented below.

Hypotheses 1:

Hypothesis 1 rejected the null hypothesis and concluded that for this data set and SEM model configuration, that there is statistical evidence of a causal relationship between Servant leadership and Quality of Worklife in the frontline customer service context.

Hypotheses 2:

Hypothesis 2 rejected the null hypothesis and concluded that for this data set and SEM model configuration, that there is statistical evidence of a causal relationship between Servant leadership and Trust in the frontline customer service context.

Hypotheses 3:

Hypothesis 3 rejected the null hypothesis and concluded that for this data set and SEM model configuration, that there is statistical evidence of a causal relationship between Trust and Quality of Worklife in the frontline customer service context.

Hypotheses 4:

Hypothesis 4 rejected the null hypothesis and concluded that for this data set that there is statistical evidence that Trust plays a partially mediating role in the relationship between Servant leadership and Quality of Worklife in the frontline customer service context.

Hypotheses 5:

There is a statistically difference in the level of Servant leadership, Quality of Worklife and Trust experienced by the frontline employees with respect to the following criteria: Organisations; Age of Respondents; Gender of Respondents; Age of Supervisor; Gender of Supervisor and Type of Job.

Table 5.33 illustrates a summary of the results for this set of Hypotheses:

Table 5.33: Means per SLS Factors

Hypothesis Testing Results	SL	QWL	Trust
Organisations	H 5.1: Reject the null hypothesis	H 5.2:Reject the null hypothesis	H 5.3:Reject the null hypothesis
Age of Respondents	H 5.4: Fail to reject	H 5.5: Fail to reject	H 5.6: Fail to reject
Gender of Respondents	H 5.7: Fail to reject	H 5.8: Reject the null hypothesis	H5.9: Fail to reject
Age of Supervisor	H 5. 10: Fail to reject	H 5.11: Fail to reject	H 5.12: Fail to reject
Gender of Supervisor	H 5. 13: Fail to reject	H 5.14: Fail to reject	H 5 .15: Fail to reject
Type of Job	H 5.16: Reject the null hypothesis	H 5.17: Reject the null hypothesis	H5.18: Reject the null hypothesis

Source: Stata (Version 15.0)

5.8 Conclusion

This research's main goal was to develop, test and validate a model that described the relationship between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife, as well as the mediating effect of Trust on this relationship.

The research has shown that Servant Leadership has a positive and causal relationship with Quality of Work Life, and that this relationship is partially mediated by Trust. The research has produced a SEM model of Servant Leadership, Quality of Worklife and Trust that was adequately tested for its factor structure, reliability and validity.

Because Servant Leadership has demonstrated a causal relationship to Quality of Worklife and Trust in the SEM model, the result of this research leads the researcher to conclude that the causal hypothesis is supported; and that synergies between Servant Leadership, Quality of Worklife and Trust do exist. It is therefore likely that an increase in Servant Leadership behaviour by the manager or supervisor of frontline staff has a positive association, with increases of the Quality of Worklife experienced by employees in the frontline context, and that this is partially mediated by Trust of the supervisor.

The next chapter will consider the literature of the chapters previously reviewed and discusses whether the findings of this research confirm the existing literature or pose possible plausible differences. Where any differences exist, reasons are to be proposed. In particular, it is also plausible that other theoretical constructs, presently excluded from the current study may have an impact on the model. This is discussed in detail in the Discussion Chapter. The following chapter will also discuss the

implications of the findings in relation to their contribution to both management practice and theory.

Chapter 6 – Discussion

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter, a brief summary of the study is presented along with discussions of the more significant findings of the Results Chapter. The chapter discusses the research problem in relation to the research results, which were presented in Chapter Five and discusses them in context of the literature previously reviewed, considering whether the results of this research confirm the existing literature, or present differences. Where these differences exist, reasons are offered.

6.1.1 Brief summary of the Study

As described in Chapter One, the work of Contact Centre service agents consists of solving service requests or assisting customers with information on products or services, and involves a great deal of emotional labour and stress. It is not surprising then, that the working environment of Contact Centre is reported to have a negative impact on the Quality of Worklife of Contact Centre agents.

Research has shown that leadership has a relationship with Quality of Worklife. The review of the literature on Servant Leadership reveals that satisfaction, general well-being, and commitment to their jobs increases when employees are exposed to leadership behaviours associated with Servant Leadership. There is however, no evidence in the literature investigating the relationship between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife. There is also no evidence in the literature of previous studies that investigate the mediating relationship of Trust between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife.

The central hypothesis and *primary* objectives of the study was to test whether Servant Leadership behaviour has a significant and positive relationship with Quality of Worklife in the Contact Centre frontline context, as well as to test whether Trust mediated this relationship, and so this research project included the following six goals that it wished to achieve:

- i) *To validate the SLS and QWL instruments that measures both Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife in the South African Contact Centre frontline context.*
- ii) *To use Structural Equation Modelling to measure the relationships between Servant Leadership, Trust and Quality of Worklife.*
- iii) *To assess whether Trust played a mediating role in the relationship between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife.*
- iv) *To measure if there were any differences in Servant Leadership, Trust and Quality of Worklife.*
- v) *To identify potential problems that could result due to deficiencies found in Servant Leadership behaviour that may lead to a lower Quality of Worklife.*
- vi) *To make recommendations to the organisations to assist frontline leaders to improve the working lives of Contact Centre agents.*

A survey questionnaire, consisting of three sections was completed by Contact Centre employees, one section measuring Servant Leadership behaviour (Van Dierendonck and Nuijten, 2011), another section measuring Quality of Worklife (Van *et al.*, 2007) and the last measuring Trust in the leader (Cook and Wall (1980) adapted by Bartram and Casimir (2006)). The questionnaire was collected from 555 Contact Centre employees in eight organisations. Confirmatory factor analysis was conducted to test and validate the factor structure of the higher order factors Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife. Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) was then used to produce a SEM model to confirm a positive relationship between Servant Leadership, Quality of Worklife and Trust. The SEM results showed an acceptable model fit of the fit indices. Servant Leadership behaviour showed a positive relationship with Quality of Worklife and Trust, and Trust showed a positive relationship with Quality of Worklife. Trust was then tested and confirmed as a mediating variable between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife. The implications of these results are now discussed, and recommendations made for management practice and further research are discussed in the next chapter.

6.2 The Reliability, Validation and Mean Score Results of the SLS

The following section deals with the reliability, validation as well as the results of the mean scores of the dimensions of the Van Dierendonck and Nuijten (2011) Servant Leadership Survey section of the instrument.

6.2.1 Reliability and Validation

As presented in the results chapter, it is evident that for this research's data set, that after conducting confirmatory factor analysis of Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's Servant Leadership Survey (2011), the eight factor construct converged and was deemed valid for the data set used in this research. The eight factors of the Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's Servant Leadership Survey (2011) included Humility, Empowerment, Accountability, Forgiveness, Authenticity, Stewardship, Courage and Standing Back. Barring two excluded items, all were validated, consistent with the theoretical predictions. The goodness of fit of a higher order factor model of the Servant Leadership Survey (SLS) produced a good fitting model ($\chi^2/df = 2.95$; CFI = 0.93; RMSEA = 0.059; RMSR = 0.045). Interestingly, Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's (2011) initial study, which was made up of predominately Dutch respondents, produced slightly better goodness-of-fit indices ($\chi^2/df = 1.51$; CFI = 0.94; RMSEA = 0.05; RMSR = 0.06). The English version of the SLS however compared slightly worse, as it produced lower fit indices than this research did, the South African Contact Centre version ($\chi^2/df = 3.3$; CFI = 0.92; RMSEA = 0.08; RMSR = 0.06).

With regard to the reliability analysis, the SLS produced an excellent overall reliability score ($\alpha = 0.95$). The reliability analysis of the internal dimensions also produced mostly good internal consistency scores. Empowerment ($\alpha = 0.91$), Humility ($\alpha = 0.9$) and Stewardship ($\alpha = 0.83$) were described as excellent reliability results, while Standing Back ($\alpha = 0.73$), Accountability ($\alpha = 0.7$) and Forgiveness ($\alpha = 0.72$) were described as adequate results (Kline 2016). Courage ($\alpha = 0.69$) and Authenticity ($\alpha = 0.67$) was described as lower scores, but still satisfactory in terms of their Cronbach's Alpha scores, as they did not measure significantly lower than 0.7. (Kline 2016). An investigation into the initial development of the Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's Servant Leadership Survey (2011) showed that the Cronbach's Alpha

results of Courage and Authenticity were slightly lower than what has previously been presented in previous research articles. A study conducted by Van Dierendonck and Nuijten (2011) using the SLS, produced Cronbach's alpha's of 0.76 for Authenticity and 0.91 for Courage (Van Dierendonck and Nuijten, 2011). Another study by Bobbio, Van Dierendonck and Manganelli (2012) using the SLS, showed Cronbach's Alphas of 0.72 for both Authenticity and Courage. In another study, which was a cross cultural validation of Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's (2011) SLS (Rodríguez-Carvajal, de Rivas, Herrero, Moreno-Jiménez and van Dierendonck, 2014), both Authenticity and Courage showed higher consistency scores in studies which were conducted in Spain, Argentina and Mexico. None of these studies however, were specifically sampled from the Contact Centre environment such as this study does. It is therefore possible that the reasons for the lower reliability scores for Courage and Authenticity may be contextual and it is also possible that the context of the study may explain some of the reasons why the factors of Courage and Authenticity were lower in score.

Courageous leaders are those that trust their moral and value orientation enough to make decisions that may not always be considered within the norms of conventional operations or the organisation's practice (Van Dierendonck and Dijkstra, 2012). However, given the very controlled and somewhat scripted environment of the Contact Centre, it is possible that respondents feel that the frontline supervisor's latitude to make decisions that are contrary to the very controlled process and procedures may be restricted.

Authenticity also showed poorer reliability results. Authentic leaders are those who do not mould their personalities, values or morals to fit differing contexts (Van Dierendonck and Dijkstra, 2012), and the leader is as much the same person in his personal capacity as he is in his private life. Authentic leaders are leaders that are perceived by others as having high morals and values and are confidently aware of their attributes (Avolio *et al.*, 2004). Emotional labour in the frontline Contact Centre context requires agents on occasion to "surface act" (Ashford and Humphrey, 1993:92). In other words, agents and supervisors may have to display emotions to customers that they are not genuinely feeling at that present moment in time, but are expected to do so in the service environment. The finding of this study suggests that due to the nature of the job, certain elements displayed by supervisors when dealing

with customers could be considered as inauthentic behaviour, so it would seem that the factor of Authenticity may be a dimension of Servant Leadership that could be at odds within the minds of some Contact Centre agents. However, this is not saying that inauthentic supervisor behaviour is acceptable in the Contact Centre context. As argued in earlier literature chapters, relationship building and caring for agents require supervisors to be genuine at all times. The finding merely suggests that due to the strains of emotional labour in the Contact Centre context, Authenticity is possibly more multidimensional than what the current instrument factor structure allows for, and this could contribute to the lower Cronbach's Alpha results.

However, given that the goodness of fit figures, reliability and validity results were acceptable, this finding could suggest that Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's (2011) Servant Leadership Servant Leadership Survey may be a universal instrument. It is proposed that this finding makes a significant contribution through the extension of the study of Servant Leadership to the South African and Contact Centre context.

6.2.2 SLS Mean Score Results

An analysis of the mean scores indicate that Humility's mean score computed to $\mu = 4.73$; Empowerment $\mu = 5.10$; Accountability $\mu = 5.79$; Forgiveness $\mu = 4.75$; Courage $\mu = 4.18$ Authenticity $\mu = 4.77$, Stewardship $\mu = 5.03$ and Standing Back $\mu = 4.88$ and Stewardship $\mu = 5.03$ ($n = 555$). The Accountability's factor mean was deemed significantly higher than the rest of the other factors.

There are no percentile benchmarks for the Servant Leadership Survey (Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's, 2011). Consequently, information was collected from several international studies (Van Dierendonck and Nuijten, 2011; Bobbio, Van Dierendonck, Manganelli, 2012) that have been conducted in a variety of contexts, and compared with the results produced by this research, in the Contact Centre context in South Africa, to see if they were on face-value, very different from other studies, or not. These, along with other relevant and pertinent issues are discussed below.

Table: 6.1 Dimension means

Mean Scores in Various studies using Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's (2011) SLS	Italy	Nether lands	United Kingdom)	South Africa (This research
Empowerment	5.56	6.15	5.68	5.10
Accountability	6.93	6.80	6.78	5.79
Standing Back	4.09	5.14	5.05	4.88
Humility	4.62	5.78	4.98	4.73
Forgiveness	4.66	5.42	3.93	4.75
Stewardship	5.81	6.20	5.46	5.03
Authenticity	4.55	5.07	4.90	4.77
Courage	5	5.4	5.05	4.18

Source: Van Dierendonck and Nuijten (2011) Bobbio, Van Dierendonck, Manganelli, (2012) and Researcher's study. Results converted to out of 7.

The results were converted by the researcher to reflect scores out of 7 rather than 5. As depicted in Table 6.1, the results for Accountability are consistent with the other studies conducted (Van Dierendonck and Nuijten, 2011; Bobbio, Van Dierendonck, Manganelli, 2012). As illustrated in Table 6.1 above, the Accountability factor scored higher than the other SLS factors, consistent with other studies conducted where the factor consistently outscored other factors in each country (Italy $\mu = 6.93$, Netherlands $\mu = 6.80$, United Kingdom $\mu = 6.78$, and this research $\mu = 5.79$). The results corroborate Van Dierendonck and Dijkstra's (2012) views that Accountability is an extremely critical factor with respect to Servant Leadership, and it demonstrates that it is critically important that Contact Centre service agents are completely aware, and have a clear understanding, of what is expected of them. There should be no ambiguity of what is expected from the Contact Centre service agent with respect to the Contact Centre frontline job, and this must include a clear understanding of what is within, and out, of their locus of control (Van Dierendonck and Dijkstra, 2012).

Given the highly monitored environment of the Contact Centre context, it is understandable that items which deal with whether supervisors hold frontline agents accountable for the work they do score highly. Whether the Contact Centre environment is as harsh an environment as an “electronic panopticon” (Taylor and Bain, 2000:4) or not, constant monitoring, as well as relentless real-time and historical performance feedback is argued to translate into feelings of being held accountable. Given Van Dierendonck and Dijkstra’s (2012) views on the importance of the accountability factor as stated above, the ability to obtain quick feedback on the level of performance that the service the agent is delivering, both statistically and from a work qualitative viewpoint, may add to, and support Taylor and Bain’s (2000) view that monitoring and feedback are not always synonymous with prison-like surveillance. It is also argued that comfort is taken in the idea that interactions with customers are transparent and little is left to subjectivity when complaints are received, and so agents may find solace in this transparent environment.

The Empowerment factor showed a lower rating than that of the other studies as illustrated in Table 6.1 above (Italy $\mu = 5.56$, Netherlands $\mu = 6.15$, United Kingdom $\mu = 5.68$, and this research $\mu = 5.10$). This result is possibly explained given the context of the study. As previously discussed, Contact Centre service agents experience less empowerment than most other office jobs (Holdsworth and Cartwright (2003). This is largely due to the considerably scripted nature of the job, and so the finding that Contact Centre service agents in the frontline customer service context rate their satisfaction in relation to how empowered they feel, lower than other studies, is an unsurprising finding, and one which confirms the literature.

Forgiveness compared well with the other studies as illustrated in Table 6.1 (Italy $\mu = 4.67$, Netherlands $\mu = 5.42$, United Kingdom $\mu = 3.93$, and this research $\mu = 4.75$), as it scored the second highest. As described earlier, this study confirmed the importance that a forgiving leadership style is paramount to Servant Leadership behaviour in the Contact Centre frontline context. Agents are exposed to a multitude of opportunities where they could make mistakes, as they deal with multiple different customer interactions and queries every day. It is the ability of the supervisor, within reason, truly to forgive when mistakes are made, that differentiates them as servant leaders. Given that the reported mean scores do not seem, on face value, to be lower than the other international studies conducted, this could possibly suggest that

supervisors in the Contact Centre are understanding of their context and recognise that forgiving is critical to their environment. However, it is argued that supervisors in the Contact Centre context should probably be more forgiving than other traditional jobs, and so should show even higher Forgiveness results than what this study has produced.

Humility was rated the lowest in relation to the other international studies illustrated in Table 6.1 above (Italy $\mu = 4.62$, Netherlands $\mu = 5.78$, United Kingdom $\mu = 4.98$, and this research $\mu = 4.73$). As previously suggested, this study has confirmed that servant leaders in the Contact Centre context need to be humble and open to involvement, contributions and feedback from their staff. This study also confirmed that especially in the very controlled environment of the Contact Centre, leaders that are receptive to suggestions and feedback from staff resonate with Contact Centre frontline employees. The finding that humility is the lowest in comparison to the other studies conducted is significant and recommendations of improvements of this are suggested in the next chapter.

As discussed earlier, Standing Back refers to the leader moving away from the spotlight after achievements have been accomplished, and all credit is directed towards the team (Van Dierendonck and Dijkstra, 2012). Standing Back was rated third, on face value, out of the four international studies illustrated in Table 6.1 above (Italy $\mu = 4.09$, Netherlands $\mu = 5.14$, United Kingdom $\mu = 5.05$, and this research $\mu = 4.88$).

Authentic leaders are those that are perceived by others as having high morals and values and are confidently aware of their attributes (Avolio et al., 2004). They are not those who mould their personalities, values or morals to fit differing contexts (Van Dierendonck and Dijkstra, 2012). Authenticity was rated third, on face value, out of the four international studies illustrated in Table 6.1 above (Italy $\mu = 4.55$, Netherlands $\mu = 5.07$, United Kingdom $\mu = 4.90$, and this research $\mu = 4.77$).

Courage in a leader is typified by leaders trust their moral and value orientation enough to make decisions that may not always be considered within the norms of conventional operations of the organisation's practice are those that are perceived by others (Van Dierendonck and Dijkstra, 2012). Courage was rated the lowest, out of the four international studies illustrated in Table 6.1 above (Italy $\mu = 5.00$,

Netherlands $\mu = 5.40$, United Kingdom $\mu = 5.05$, and this research $\mu = 4.18$). As mentioned previously, this could be due to the very controlled and scripted environment of the Contact Centre. It is possible that respondents feel that the frontline supervisor's latitude to make decisions which are contrary to the very controlled process and procedures, may be restricted, hence the mean scores for courage are lower.

Stewardship refers to the leader acting as a steward by taking responsibility for the resources of the organisation, and is an important dimension of Servant Leadership (Spears, 1995; Van Dierendonck and Dijkstra, 2012). Stewardship was rated the lowest of the four international studies illustrated in Table 6.1 above (Italy $\mu = 5.81$, Netherlands $\mu = 6.20$, United Kingdom $\mu = 5.46$, and this research $\mu = 5.03$). Of all the factor results presented above, the low Stewardship rating is somewhat of a concern in the Contact Centre environment. However, after analysing the individual item's ratings of the Stewardship factor, a probable explanation is suggested. Item 19, (i.e. "my supervisor has a long-term vision") was noted to produce a significantly lower mean score of $\mu = 4.92$ ($p < 0.05$) in relation to the other items of the same factor. It is argued that given the level of management that this data set was evaluating, creating long term visions was probably not seen as an output which supervisors were responsible for, and this low score affected the score for the overall factor.

6.3 The Reliability, Validation of and Mean Score Results of the QWL Model

The following section deals with the reliability, validation as well as the mean scores of the dimensions of the Van Laar, Edwards and Easton (2007) Work Related Quality of Worklife section of the instrument.

6.3.1 Reliability and Validation

The Van Laar, Edwards and Easton's Work Related Quality of Worklife (QWL) (2007) section of the instrument proposed that there are six factors associated with the Quality of Worklife construct, which included General Well-being, Home Work Interface, Job Career Satisfaction, Control at Work, Working Conditions and Stress at Work. When conducting confirmatory factor analysis of the Van Laar *et al.*'s, (2007) Work Related Quality of Worklife (QWL) section of the instrument, the six factor construct converged, and after slight modification, produced an acceptable model fit ($\chi^2/df = 2.98$; CFI = 0.92; RMSEA = 0.06; RMSR = 0.044) and was deemed valid for this research's data set. These results also compare well with the first order factor model, as originally published; comparable indices included CFI = 0.94, and RMSEA of 0.05 (Van Laar, *et al.*, 2007), as well as a second order model which was later published ($\chi^2/df = 2.15$; CFI = 0.93; RMSEA = 0.063; RMSR = 0.058) (Duyan, *et al.*, 2014). The instrument in the South African Contact Centre context produced acceptable indices, suggesting it to be a reliable and valid instrument for this context.

Overall, the reliability analysis of the QWL was acceptable and produced an overall excellent reliability score ($\alpha = 0.91$). On inspection of the reliability analysis of the dimensions, Stress at Work showed lower reliability ($\alpha = 0.65$) than the other internal dimensions of the Quality of Worklife section of the model. In other studies published, the reliability scores of Stress at Work factors did not present quite as low a reliability result as was the case in this study. A study of health workers by Van Laar *et al.* (2007) produced good reliability results for Stress at Work ($\alpha = 0.81$). In a study conducted in Turkey with the same number of respondents as to the number in this study ($n = 555$), but in a different work context, the reliability result of Stress at Work computed to $\alpha = 0.69$, marginally higher than this study (Duyan, Aytac, Akyildiz and Van Laar, 2014). A Malaysian study of educators and office worker respondents

produced higher reliability result of $\alpha = 0.78$ (Chen, Haniff, Siau, Seet, Loh, Jamil, Sa'at and Baharum, 2014). A large study ($n = 7530$) of educators resulted in Cronbach's alpha scores of $\alpha = 0.72$ for Stress at Work. Barring the slightly lower score of Stress at Work in the Turkish study, generally, other studies reported fairly higher Cronbach's alpha's for the dimension. Reasons for this finding could possibly be contextual in nature.

It must be acknowledged that it is somewhat surprising that Stress at Work's reliability results produced lower scores given the nature of the Contact Centre work. In the Contact Centre, customers can affect or put pressure on Contact Centre agents through their interaction with them (Dollard *et al.*, 2003). Contact Centre agents in particular, are principally vulnerable to stress at work (Ruyter *et al.*, 2001; Holdsworth and Cartwright, 2003), as stress increases when exposed to, or dealing with customers who display anger, frustration or impatience (Wegge *et al.*, 2007). The reliability results of this model's analysis therefore question whether Stress at Work, as constructed by Van Laar *et al.* (2007) is a reliable dimension of Quality of Worklife in the Contact Centre environment. According to Ashill *et al.* (2009) stress in Contact Centre environments is determined or managed by how resourceful the frontline service employee is, and that problem solving abilities determine the frontline service employee's level of resourcefulness. The more employees are able to trust in their ability to solve customer problems, the less stress they experience. With the constant increase of technology in Contact Centre, instant information is readily available to the Contact Centre service agents. It is argued that the increase of problem solving ability of the service agent is positively related to an increase in the amount of knowledge available to them through IT system knowledge repositories and online customer relationship management systems. Moreover, while it is argued that Stress at Work is still an important factor in determining Quality of Worklife, the two item factor structure of the Van Laar *et al.* (2007) model however, may not be multidimensional enough to completely articulate the complexity of the factor within the Contact Centre context and this explains the lower reliability scores.

However, as with the SLS, given that the goodness of fit figures, reliability and validity results were deemed acceptable overall, it is therefore argued that the Work Related Quality of Worklife (QWL) instrument (Van Laar, Edwards and Easton, 2007)

is appropriate for the South African and Contact Centre context, and this finding makes a fairly significant contribution to the literature.

6.3.2 QWL Mean Scores Results

The mean scores across the factors of the QWL calculated to General Wellbeing mean score calculated to $\mu = 4.66$, Job Career Satisfaction $\mu = 4.99$, Control at Work $\mu = 4.15$, Stress at Work $\mu = 3.69$, Home-Work-Interface $\mu = 4.71$, and Working Conditions $\mu = 5.16$ (n=555).

Unsurprisingly General Wellbeing scored within the lower 40th percentile (Easton and Van Laar, 2012). General Wellbeing is associated with both the physical and psychological well-being of an employee (Danna and Griffin, 1999). The finding corroborates the findings of Grebner *et al.* (2003) that employee wellbeing in the Contact Centre context is generally scored at lower levels, and can be described as poor, given the nature of the job and the context of the working environment. Control at Work scored within the lower 30th percentile (Easton and Van Laar, 2012), which is also an unsurprising result, given the context.

With respect to Job Career Satisfaction, Van Laar *et al.* (2007) explain that if employees are understanding of the job content, feel significantly competent, are able to use their individual skills as required by the job, feel content with opportunities that arise within the organisation and receive recognition when deserved, then these employees will be satisfied. A particularly significant finding of this research is that although the literature denotes that the Contact Centre working environment is a work setting, which is generally associated with lower levels of job satisfaction (Rose and Wright, 2005), the mean scores of this study reveal that Job Career Satisfaction was in the average 50th percentile. This result may be explained through the understanding of factors associated with intrinsic job satisfaction (Rose and Wright, 2005). Rose and Wright (2005) argue that lower skilled employees may experience intrinsic job satisfaction from doing contextually higher skilled work than for what they are qualified to undertake. For example, while having little understanding of engineering of electricity, Contact Centre agents may direct customers through fairly complicated electricity fault restoration procedures; or without being formally trained in finance they may give advice on complicated

financial processes. The ability to serve these customers adequately without the formal skills training is made possible by the scripting of calls, so that with little training, agents can quickly appear to be knowledgeable on complicated processes. It is argued therefore that contrary to earlier suggestions that scripting may erode feelings of control and empowerment, knowledge based assistance through electronic prompts, or the ability to quickly retrieve knowledge from repositories, aids in Job Career Satisfaction.

Van Laar *et al.* (2007) argue that balancing work commitments with commitments at home, so that the one domain does not completely overshadow or dominate the other domain, is what constitutes good Home-Work-Interface. The mean scores of this study's results were pre-assumed to be on the in the lower percentiles, but this research revealed that the Home-Work-Interface results were in the average 50th percentile (Easton and Van Laar, 2012), which is noteworthy given the context. Contact Centre frontline service agents are scheduled to work according to the workload based on customer contacts and often on rotating shift cycles (Reynolds, 2003). Organisations are increasingly wanting to be more flexible to their customers with respect to their operating times (Connell and Hannif, 2008), and this does not always coincide with traditional office hours. Work commitments spill-over into time that is traditionally spent as family time. Normally, Contact Centre frontline service agents have very little, to no control, over when they can work and this contributes to non-desirable work-life balance consequences (Bohle *et al.*, 2010). Given that the results of the Contact Centre frontline employee did not show scores to be in the lower percentiles, it is argued that agent's concerns of unconventional work hours and shifts may be offset by the nature of the Contact Centre frontline job itself. The nature of the Contact Centre frontline job entails numerous interactions from several different customers each shift. Customer interactions are scripted and are either satisfied through one contact resolution, or if further work is needed, then this would be directed to the necessary resource through a work flow process. It can therefore be argued that when the agent finishes their shift, there should very rarely be the need to carry any work forward to the next shift. It would make sense that in this context, no work would need to be deferred to be done later. Therefore, when the Contact Centre frontline agent finishes a shift; it is possible to be completely divorced from the job mentally. This mental disengagement is arguably higher than the typical

office employee, who has reports or deadlines to address, which can mount in pressure and workload, and therefore spill over into working in private time. The typical frontline agent has an eight-hour shift, and although this shift may be very intensely occupied, once the shift is over, there is a finality to the work, and very little should be carried over to the next day when the new shift starts with new and different customer interactions. This distinct separation of work commitments and home time is argued to possibly influence the Home-Work-Interface results of this study.

The mean scores of this study's results revealed the Working Conditions result to be in the average 50th percentile (Easton and Van Laar, 2012). The Working Condition factor in the Van Laar *et al.* (2007) model deals with the "level of satisfaction with the physical working environment and conditions" of the job, and whether or not employee's "have the right tools and equipment to get the job done" (Easton *et al.*, 2013:138). Surprisingly however, this average score result does not reflect how the literature portrays the working conditions of the Contact Centre. As previously mentioned some scholars argue that the Contact Centre design closely resembles a panopticon design (Ferne and Metcalf, 1998), where agents are constantly under the scrutiny of their supervisory staff and suffer from high stress. The Contact Centre agents are also often the subjects of customer abuse, which combined with constant supervisor scrutiny and little task variety, leads to emotional exhaustion. In a study on the "nature of work organisation in call centres", Frenkel *et al.* (1998:957) found a work organisation where management's preoccupation with "standardising processes and customising products" enhanced the very bureaucratic nature of the Contact Centre work environment, which had adverse effects on the way staff perceived their satisfaction with the working conditions.

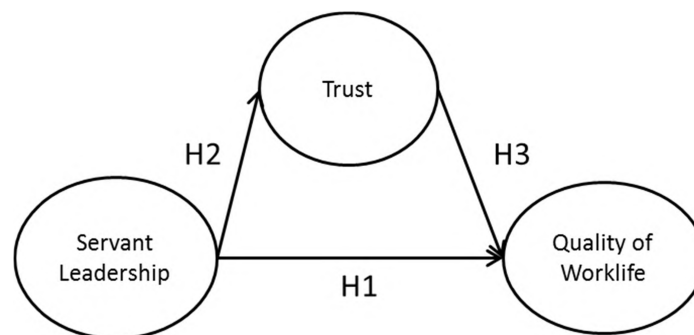
Van Laar *et al.* (2007) argue that safety is a key dimension of working conditions, and the items of the Working Conditions factor reflect this. Given that frontline contact centre environment includes a work environment that is usually situated in a fairly large open office block, in front of a personal computer, it is plausible that this may not seem to the average respondent as a dangerous environment, and this could explain the fairly moderate response ratings.

6.4 Structural Equation Modelling

One of the aims of the study was to use Structural Equation Modelling methodology to measure the relationships between Servant Leadership, Trust and Quality of Worklife in the Contact Centre context. In the previous section of the chapter, confirmatory factor analyses validated both the SLS and the QWL higher order factor measurement models, which measured the constructs of Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife respectively, and this section discusses the relationship that exists between them.

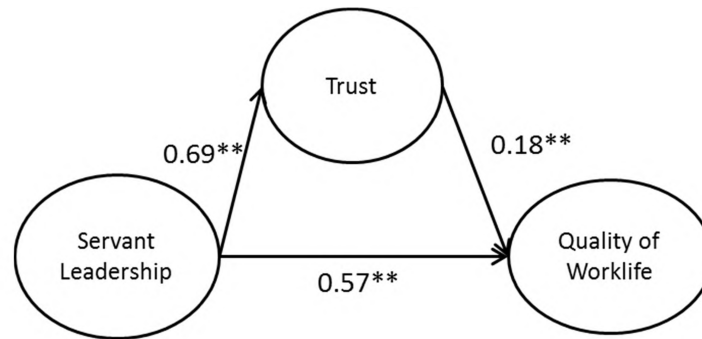
As illustrated in Figure 6.1 below, the primary purpose of this research was to develop and test a model that denotes the relationship between Servant Leadership, Trust and Quality of Worklife in a Contact Centre frontline operational environment.

Figure 6.1 Summarised Path Diagram of Servant Leadership, Trust and QWL Constructs and Hypotheses



Source: Research hypothesis

Figure 6.2 SLS, Trust and QWL SEM Model



Source: STATA_ Researcher's study_**Denotes significance $p < 0.001$

As denoted in the results chapter and as illustrated in Figure 6.2 above, the null hypotheses were all rejected and Servant Leadership showed a significant relationship with Quality of Worklife (β 0.57, $p < 0.001$). Servant Leadership has a significant relationship with Trust (β 0.69, $p < 0.001$), which in turn has a significant relationship with Quality of Worklife (β 0.18, $p < 0.001$). The fit indices of the model showed an acceptable fit ($\chi^2/df = 2.29$, RMSEA = 0.048, CFI = 0.9, SRMR = 0.054). This result supports the purpose and primary goal of this study. The next section in this chapter aims to interpret the findings of the sub models of Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife and their relationship with Trust, which was analysed.

6.4.1 Servant Leadership

Some factors, or sub-dimensions, of Servant Leadership were able to explain a larger portion of the variance and had very strong relationships, or said differently, in the Contact Centre context, make stronger contributions to Servant Leadership as a construct. The sub model of Servant Leadership, within the broader model analysed, showed that Servant Leadership had significant positive relationships with Empowerment (estimate 0.93; $p < 0.001$), Standing Back (estimate 0.97; $p < 0.001$), Accountability (estimate 0.66; $p < 0.001$), Forgiveness (estimate 0.51; $p < 0.001$), Humility (estimate 0.91; $p < 0.001$) and Stewardship (estimate 0.99; $p < 0.001$), Courage (estimate 0.59; $p < 0.001$) and Authenticity (estimate 0.91; $p < 0.001$). What follows is an interpretation and discussion of these relationships.

6.4.1.1 Empowerment and Servant Leadership

A very strong relationship was evident between Empowerment and Servant Leadership (estimate 0.92; $p < 0.001$) in the SEM model. This finding is unsurprising in that it confirms the literature that leadership, in the Servant Leadership context, focuses on growing people (Greenleaf, 1996) and appreciates that the worth of the employee can be associated with empowering leadership (Van Dierendonck and Nuijten, 2011). In the Contact Centre context, organisations tend to script the answers that Contact Centre service agents supply to customers, with very little variation in answers allowed (Rose and Wright, 2005). Conger (1989) argues that creating the right positive atmosphere within the work environment, as well as continuously recognising and rewarding, are key to creating a culture of empowerment. It would seem that the highly controlled context of the Contact Centre service agent's job environment, and the agent's requirement of empowerment, seem incongruent. However it is clear from this study that organisations need to be mindful that while it is necessary for the Contact Centre environment to be a controlled one, empowering employees is also critical.

6.4.1.2 Accountability and Servant Leadership

Accountability showed a moderately high relationship with the Servant Leadership construct in the two factor measurement model (estimate 0.66; $p < 0.001$). According to Van Dierendonck and Dijkstra (2012), accountability involves a rich understanding of what is expected of the employee with respect to what is within, and what is out of his/her locus of control. Clear boundaries of operations need to be understood by the employee so there should be no ambiguity in knowing what was needed to succeed and fulfil the job mission. It is unsurprising that the factor Accountability showed a significant relationship with Servant Leadership in the Contact Centre context. The Contact Centre job is a highly controlled one, and one that is particularly monitored. This study confirms that service agents receive comfort in servant leaders who submit very clear instructions and ensure understanding of individual accountability with their staff. The amount of similar customer interactions necessitates clear process and service instructions in order for agents to feel comfortable that their operations are within acceptable boundaries. Agents therefore will expect the servant leader to take appropriate action towards those who stray from these boundaries, and therefore are held accountable for their actions.

6.4.1.3 Standing Back and Servant Leadership

Standing Back refers to the leader moving away from the spotlight after successful achievements have been accomplished by the team (Van Dierendonck and Dijkstra, 2012). Standing Back showed a high relationship with the Servant Leadership construct in the two factor measurement model (estimate 0.97; $p < 0.001$). In the Contact Centre context, Standing Back points to leaders who are able to ensure that they give their agents every possible chance to succeed and achieve goals, and when these goals are achieved, are able to step back and let the Contact Centre employees take the credit. A key performance indicator (KPI) of many Contact Centres is customer satisfaction ratings, which are generally dependent on the way Contact Centre agent's interact and engage with customers. This research confirms that employees recognise leadership behaviour that aims to ensure that their employees have the knowledge, resources and motivation to adequately deal with customers appropriately. These employees are therefore able to meet and possibly exceed KPI expectations. The servant leader ensures this in order for employees to succeed while forgoing any credit unto themselves, and letting their employees take all of the credit for this. These leaders are recognised as Servant Leaders in the Contact Centre context.

6.4.1.4 Forgiveness and Servant Leadership

Forgiveness showed a moderate relationship with the Servant Leadership construct in the two factor measurement model (estimate 0.51; $p < 0.001$). Servant leaders are those leaders who forgive their employees (Van Dierendonck and Nuijten, 2011). Resentment and hostility, due to previous indiscretions, cloud the leader-follower relationship and reduce the relational synergies needed for creative work (Stone, 2002). This study confirms therefore that truly forgiving is paramount to Servant Leadership behaviour in the Contact Centre frontline context. Agents are exposed to many opportunities where they could make mistakes, as they deal with multiple and diverse customer interactions and queries every day. It is very plausible that the probability of supplying customer's misinformation, either knowingly or unknowingly is high. Frontline Contact Centre service agents are therefore expecting their supervisors to acknowledge that, due to the vast number of individual customer dealings a service agent handles, it is inevitable that they will err in policy or process

from time to time, and so they recognise those leaders who forgive, as being Servant Leaders.

6.4.1.5 Stewardship and Servant Leadership

Acting as a steward, by taking responsibility of the resources of the organisation, is an important dimension of Servant Leadership (Spears, 1995; Van Dierendonck and Dijkstra, 2012). Contact Centre frontline supervisors are somewhat limited in what resources they are responsible for. This is mainly due to the job itself, as well as their level of seniority. However, the Stewardship factor was able to explain a large portion of the variance of its relationship with Servant Leadership and therefore constitutes a very strong relationship with the construct (estimate 0.99; $p < 0.001$). Stewardship is a collectivist or social responsibility ideal (Van Dierendonck and Dijkstra, 2012), and one which leaders, who subscribe to the notion of values-based leadership (Karns, 2011), hold important. It is also an ideal, which is intrinsic to leaders who believe their purpose as a leader supersedes those managerial line responsibilities that are primarily focused toward organisational goals exclusively; instead these leaders adopt a people centric position. Servant Leadership behaviour displayed by leaders is the antecedent to trust between leaders and followers in organisations (Sendjaya and Pekerti, 2010) and the element of stewardship “is closely related to loyalty and team work” (Van Dierendonck, 2012:1234). This is particularly pertinent in the Contact Centre context because work load is usually forecasted well in advance and a specified number of resources are allocated to deal with the workload (Reynolds, 2003). So if the entire team is not working towards meeting workload commitments, or have not been given the tools and knowledge to meet these commitments, workload pressures increase for everyone. This research confirms that Contact Centre agents look to leaders who act as stewards of the organisation by galvanising their employees to work as a team to meet workload and organisational commitments. This research confirms that Contact Centre agents appreciate stewardship behaviour of their leaders. Another contextual example of this is that agents who are looking to meet customer expectations often need the support of supervisors to follow up on outstanding work or supply agents with information to adequately deal with customers’ expectations (Nangu, 2013). This research confirms that stewardship behaviour displayed by Contact Centre leaders is strongly associated with Servant Leadership in the Contact Centre frontline context.

6.4.1.6 Courage and Servant Leadership

The relationship between Courage and Servant Leadership in the SEM model analysed, was a significant albeit moderate one (estimate 0.59; $p < 0.001$). Courage suggests that leaders trust their moral and value orientation enough to make decisions that may not always be considered to be within the norms of conventional operations of the organisation's practice. By extension, courage in leadership is displayed by those leaders who have the conviction and confidence in their own ability to make decisions, which may be against the norm or prevailing viewpoint (Van Dierendonck and Dijkstra, 2012). As eluded to previously, in the Contact Centre context, with its rigid and strict process driven environment, supervisors will probably not have the latitude to make unconventional decisions. This could be a reason that leadership that is courageous, does not completely resonate as Servant Leadership behaviour in the Contact Centre. An argument could be made however that courage in the face of adversity, such as facing many irate customers on a daily basis, and being able to handle these interactions with confidence will be recognised as good leadership. Moreover, given that strict adherence to Contact Centre metrics is central to the nature of the work environment (Reynolds, 2003), albeit to a lesser degree in the servant leader, courageous leaders will address performance related issues directly, and not avoid or put off confrontations.

6.4.1.7 Authenticity and Servant Leadership

The Authenticity factor was able to explain a large portion of the variance of its relationship with Servant Leadership (estimate 0.91; $p < 0.001$) and therefore can be argued to constitute a very strong relationship with the construct. Authentic leaders are leaders that are perceived by others, as having high morals and values and are confidently aware of their attributes (Avolio *et al.*, 2004), and they do not mould their personalities, values or morals to fit differing contexts (Van Dierendonck and Dijkstra, 2012). This research supports the premise that this dimension is highly valued in the Servant Leadership context (Van Dierendonck and Dijkstra, 2012). A leader in the Contact Centre who is aware of his strengths and weaknesses, and how these affect the people around him, is a sought after trait in a supervisor. Supervisors also need to also possess high moral standing, and demonstrate that these morals and values never waiver.

6.4.1.8 Humility and Servant Leadership

The relationship between Humility and Servant Leadership in the SEM model analysed, was a significant and strong one (estimate 0.91; $p < 0.001$). Humility in Servant Leadership is characterised by leaders intuitively knowing their capabilities, and understanding what they excel at, and what they need help with (Van Dierendonck and Dijkstra, 2012). Humble leaders also have little ego barriers preventing them from valuing input from their subordinates, input is encouraged and used. This study confirms that Servant leaders in the Contact Centre context are humble, and are open to involvement, contributions and feedback from their staff. This study confirms that the very controlled environment of the Contact Centre requires leaders who are open and receptive to suggestions and feedback from staff. It is this humble behaviour which resonates with Contact Centre frontline agents.

6.4.2 Quality of Worklife

The sub model of Quality of Worklife, within the broader SEM model analysed, showed that Job Career Satisfaction (estimate 0.99; $p < 0.001$), General Well Being (estimate 0.83; $p < 0.001$), Home-Work Interface (estimate 0.64; $p < 0.001$), Control at Work (estimate 0.8; $p < 0.001$), Stress at Work (estimate 0.19; $p < 0.001$) and Working Conditions (estimate 0.80; $p < 0.001$) had significant positive relationships with Quality of Worklife. What follows is an interpretation and discussion of these relationships.

6.4.2.1 Quality of Worklife and Job Career Satisfaction

A very strong and significant relationship was found between Job Career Satisfaction and Quality of Worklife in the SEM model analysed (estimate 0.99; $p < 0.001$). This study confirms that Job Career Satisfaction is paramount to Quality of Worklife of a Contact Centre service agent. In fact, of all the factors, Job Career Satisfaction explains most of the variance with respect to its relationship with the Quality of Worklife construct. According to Robbins (2003), Job Satisfaction is an attitudinal construct that is determined by an employee's attitude towards his work. Job satisfaction takes aspects of the entire job and how it's perceived in its totality (Judge *et al.*, 2005). Job dimensions such as how Contact Centre service agents relate to their peers and supervisors, whether they are fairly remunerated, whether they are

happy with their job content as well as if they are satisfied with their promotional opportunities, are all vitally significant to Contact Centre service agent's perceived Quality of Worklife.

6.4.2.2 Quality of Worklife and General Well Being

A strong, significant relationship exists between General Well Being and Quality of Worklife in the SEM model (estimate 0.83; $p < 0.001$). Van Laar *et al.* (2007) argue the General Well Being refers to the general, physical and psychological wellness of the employee which is influenced by other domains within the work context. Easton and Van Laar (2012) posit that any illness, be they physical or mental, will affect the employee and their Quality of Worklife. This study confirms that in the Contact Centre service agent's context, Quality of Worklife is affected by the general physical and psychological wellness of the employee. Easton and Van Laar (2012) argue that disorders such as depression and anxiety are prevalent illnesses in the workplace. It is argued that in higher pressured environments such as Contact Centres, wellness and general well-being issues are pertinent to the determination of Quality of Worklife of Contact Centre service agents.

6.4.2.3 Quality of Worklife and Home-Work Interface

The relationship between Quality of Worklife and Home-Work Interface was measured as a significant and strong one (estimate 0.64; $p < 0.001$). To balance work commitments with commitments at home enough so that one domain does not completely overshadow or dominate the other domain is what is referred to as Home-Work Interface (Van Laar *et al.*, 2007). This too is an unsurprising finding, as the work of Contact Centre agents is scheduled in relation to when customers call into the organisation, and does not always match the traditional 9am to 5pm time period (Reynolds, 2003). Workload requirements in the Contact Centres have to be met by schedules that fulfil this requirement or customer expectation, so that when customer's call the Contact Centre, agents are scheduled and available to take these calls. This necessitates that Contact Centre service agents have to work schedules that are not usually associated with traditional office hours. Contact Centre service agents need to feel that being available for both their family's needs, as well as the needs of the employer, are somewhat congruent, or at very least, the employer must be aware of the employees' basic home needs. This study confirms that initiatives

such as the development of work schedules, or providing child support during unorthodox scheduled hours, takes Contact Centre service agents' home needs into consideration, and impacts their Quality of Worklife.

6.4.2.4 Quality of Worklife and Control at Work

Control at Work and its relationship with the Quality of Worklife proved a strong and significant one in the SEM model (estimate 0.80; $p < 0.001$). The ability to control large aspects of your work is an important factor in the consideration of good Quality of Worklife (Easton and Van Laar, 2012). Contact Centre agents work is extremely closely controlled and most of the interactions of callers are similar in nature, or request similar things from the organisation. Organisations therefore tend to script the answers that Contact Centre agents need to supply to customers (Nangu, 2013) with very little variation in answers allowed (Rose and Wright, 2005). This result also points to issues of working context, in that Contact Centre agents are given work schedules that they have to adhere to, and the adherence of this is very strictly controlled through software monitoring devices. Any unplanned deviations are recorded negatively against the agent. Reasons for deviations of Contact Centre agents' schedules being frowned upon by the organisation is easily understandable, due to the continuous attempts by the Work Force Management team to accurately meet customer requirement, or workload, with scheduled Contact Centre agents (Reynolds, 2003). It is argued that organisations need to take into cognisance that it is necessary for the Contact Centre environment to be a controlled one and the level of perceived Control at Work of its employees will impact Quality of Worklife.

6.4.2.5 Quality of Worklife and Stress at Work

The relationship between Quality of Worklife and Stress at Work analysed showed a significant but fairly weak relationship (estimate 0.19; $p < 0.001$). As mentioned before, it is somewhat surprising finding as Contact Centre agents in particular, are principally vulnerable to stress at work (Ruyter *et al.*, 2001; Holdsworth and Cartwright, 2003). It is, nevertheless still conceded that Stress at Work is still an important factor in determining Quality of Worklife. The two item factor structure of the Van Laar *et al.*, (2007) model however, may not be multidimensional enough to completely articulate the complexity of the factor within the Contact Centre context.

6.4.2.6 Quality of Worklife and Working Conditions

There exists a very strong and significant relationship between Working Conditions and Quality of Worklife in the SEM model (estimate 0.80; $p < 0.001$). Working conditions in the Van Laar *et al.* (2007) model, deals with the “level of satisfaction with the physical working environment and conditions” of the job, and whether or not employee’s “have the right tools and equipment to get the job done” (Easton *et al.*, 2013:138). Ergonomics, the physical look and feel of the workplace as well as accessibility of the correct tools for the job are essential in the Contact Centre context. As discussed earlier, the nature of Contact Centre work includes a service agent spending most of the day engaging either telephonically or through some other inbound or outbound channel with customers, and so the reliance on the technology working for them is extremely important.

This research confirms that Quality of Worklife will be negatively affected in environments where the tools of the job constantly let the workers down. In other words, should the information technology not meet the jobs needs adequately, this will adversely affect the Contact Centre agent’s Quality of Worklife. On a similar note, the physical surroundings and ergonomics are also vital elements of Contact Centre frontline Quality of Worklife. Dreary looking office buildings, with bad lighting and little attention to appropriate furniture to meet Contact Centre requirements, are argued to be a major contributing factor to Contact Centre agents’ Quality of Worklife. Moreover, Van Laar *et al.* (2007) argue that safety is a key dimension of Working Conditions. Given that the frontline Contact Centre environment includes a work environment that is usually situated in a fairly large open office block, in front of a personal computer, it is plausible that this may not seem to the average Contact Centre Service agent respondent as a quintessentially dangerous environment, other safety elements manifest. Sieberhagen *et al.* (2009) note that a lot of the health issues, particularly pertaining to psychological problems which are derived from stress are sometimes overlooked. It is likely that psychological problems that may arise from the work place are pertinent to the Contact Centre environment. Mirvis and Lawler (1984) suggest that a safe working environment to be a very basic need, that must be satisfied because without it, Quality of Worklife is unlikely.

6.4.3 The relationship between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife (H1)

The next section in this chapter deals with the principal hypothesis of this thesis by discussing the relationship of Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife.

The testing of Hypothesis 1 rejected the null hypothesis and concluded that a causal path between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife was found for this data set ($\beta = 0.57$, $p < 0.001$). For this data set, Servant Leadership therefore showed a direct causal path to Quality of Worklife, as per the systems model of Quality of Worklife presented and as argued in the literature chapters. It is argued that Servant Leadership has a casual effect, and is antecedent to Quality of Worklife in the South African Contact Centre context. The SEM model signified a strong relationship between the two constructs, which suggests important synergies between Servant Leadership behaviour and the perceived Quality of Worklife of frontline Contact Centre employees. This is an important finding in that it supports the primary hypothesis of this research thesis, in that it ratifies that Servant Leadership behaviour is an important determinant, is positively related, and antecedent to the Quality of Worklife of Contact Centre service agents.

All of the sub-factors of the SEM model showed significant relationships with the main constructs, only two of the twelve relationships tested were considered to be moderate relationships and the rest were considered to be very strong. The findings support the argument that in the Contact Centre context, Servant Leadership behaviour consists of leaders that empower their employees, display forgiveness, hold their staff accountable, are humble, are authentic, courageous and let staff take the credit for the successes of the team. It is also argued that it is this type of leadership approach which influences the level of Quality of Worklife that Contact Centre service agent's experience. The servant leader will influence the Contact Centre service agent's Quality of Worklife in the Contact Centre context, by increasing the agent's perceptions of general wellbeing, job career satisfaction, home-work interface, stress at work, control at work and working conditions.

As previously discussed in Chapter two, research of Servant Leadership and its relationships with other behavioural constructs, albeit fairly sparse, has started to

emerge. Mayer *et al.* (2008) found that a relationship between Servant Leadership and the satisfaction of follower's needs existed, and other previous research positively associated other employee wellness factors, such as staff satisfaction (Barbuto and Wheeler, 2006; Bartram and Casimir, 2006; Stander and Rothman, 2008), job satisfaction (Ehrhart, 2004) and general well-being, (Barbuto and Wheeler, 2006; Ehrhart, 2004; Laub, 1999) increases when exposed to leadership behaviours associated with Servant Leadership. Prior research also concluded that Transformational Leadership (Bradley *et al.*, 2010) and Spiritual Leadership (Bardmili *et al.*, 2013) have relationships with Quality of Worklife, but until now, no empirical evidence has confirmed a relationship between the Servant Leadership construct and the Quality of Worklife construct.

6.4.4 The relationship between Servant Leadership and Trust (H2)

This research confirms Bass's (2002) posit that leadership plays a significant role in the enhancement of trust of employees. Contact Centre employees are argued to associate the leadership and follower relations that have developed through social transactions emanating from Servant Leadership behaviour with an increase in Trust. Service agents in the Contact Centre thus associate positive social exchanges, brought about by Servant Leadership behaviour, with a trusting relationship with the leader. Cook and Wall (1980) attribute an increase in subordinate trust in the leader to the leader's intentions. This research adds to this viewpoint by suggesting that in addition, if the intentions are servant related, such as Servant Leadership does, trust will manifest (Cook and Wall, 1980). This research supports the view that a leadership approach that is caring and relationship based such as Servant Leadership (Greenleaf, 1977), is an approach which also influences, and is antecedent to attitudes of trust of the leader (Chan and Mak, 2014, Joseph and Winston, 2005). This research also aims to add to the works of Chan and Mak (2014) and Joseph and Winston (2005) but arguing that in the South African Contact Centre, that Servant Leadership is a predictor, and is positively associated with trust.

6.4.5 Trust and Quality of Worklife (H3)

This research is also further evidence that there exists a positive relationship with Trust and Quality of Worklife. Albeit fairly sparse, previous literature has suggested that trust in the leader is a vitally important ingredient to ensuring the well-being of its employees and that trust is critical variable when researching the Quality of Worklife of employees (Cook and Wall, 1980; Van der Berg and Martins, 2013). The evidence of this proposes that an increase in trust of leaders within the Contact Centre context can produce an increase in perceived feelings of Quality of Worklife. Trustworthiness becomes a crucial character trait in leaders should they want to improve the Quality of Worklife of their staff and benefit from those personal and organisational consequences.

6.4.6 Trust as mediator between Servant leadership Quality of Worklife (H4)

The results support the argument that in the Contact Centre context, service agents are more likely to trust leaders who empower their employees, display forgiveness, hold their staff accountable, are humble, are authentic, courageous and let staff take the credit for the successes of the team. Furthermore, this leadership behaviour positively influences the general wellbeing, job career satisfaction, home-work interface, stress at work, control at work and working conditions of Contact Centre service agents. The research argues that trust plays an intermediary or mediating variable role between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife in the Contact Centre context. The hypothesis is supported, that when adding trust to the SEM model, the model strengthened. As illustrated in Chapter Five's results, the preferred model, which suggested a partially mediated model, with an indirect path from Servant Leadership to Quality of Worklife through trust, and a direct path from Servant Leadership to Quality of Worklife revealed the better fit to the data ($\chi^2/df = 2.29$, RMSEA = 0.048, CFI = 0.9, SRMR = 0.054), in comparison to the model without the trust variable included ($\chi^2/df = 2.37$, RMSEA = 0.05, CFI = 0.897, SRMR = 0.055).

As predicted, Servant Leadership behaviour within the Contact Centre context leads to a climate of trust in the leader and this in turn this leads to an improved Quality of Worklife of service agents. Said differently, Servant Leadership behaviour has an

indirect effect on Quality of Worklife through Trust. When the mediator variable, which in this case is Trust, is added to the relationship between the independent variable, Servant Leadership and the dependent variable, Quality of Worklife, this changes the relationship. The mediation effect was computed to be only partial, as the results show that the relationship between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife diminished from 0.69 ($p < .0001$) to 0.57 ($p < .0001$) when the Trust variable was added as a mediator. The mediation model suggests therefore that the perceived Quality of Worklife of service agents in the Contact Centres is enhanced by trust in the supervisor.

It is argued that a reason for this finding is that leadership plays a significant role in the enhancement of trust of employees (Bass, 2002). Moreover, through the development of social relationships, trust bonds develop (Lee, 2016). The Servant leader is a leader who is typified as one which builds relationships with their subordinates and enjoys their trust (Greenleaf, 1977) and that trust in the leader improves perceived well-being and Quality of Worklife of employees (Cook and Wall, 1980). This research posits that Servant Leadership in the Contact Centre context produces a better Quality of Worklife for Contact Centre service agents, and that the relationship between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife is mediated by Trust is a significant finding. The research finding also supports, as well as adds to other studies within the literature such as Bartram and Casimir's (2006) study of the linkage between Transformational Leadership, trust and satisfaction; as well as Sendjya and Pekerti (2010) and Joseph and Winston's (2005) works that argue for Servant Leadership as an antecedent variable to Trust.

6.5 The Differences in Mean Scores

Another of the aims of the study was to measure if there were any differences in Servant Leadership, Trust and Quality of Worklife with respect to statistically significant differences in mean scores per organisation, in age of respondents, in gender of respondents, in age of supervisors; in gender of supervisor and type of job. These analyses involved assessing and comparing Servant Leadership, trustworthy behaviour of the frontline supervisors and the consequential Quality of

Worklife levels experienced by service agents of the eight organisations which were researched.

6.5.1 Differences in mean scores per organisation

The research results chapter of this study illustrated that for this particular data set that for Servant leadership, Quality of Worklife and Trust the null hypothesis was rejected. Organisation number seven (mean = 5.65) scored the highest in Servant Leadership, Quality of Worklife (mean = 4.96) and Trust (mean = 5.73) while Organisation 6 scored lowest for Servant Leadership (mean = 4.46), Quality of Worklife (mean = 4.19). Organisation five scored the lowest on Trust (mean = 4.50).

This finding corroborates other studies pertaining to Quality of Worklife of Contact Centres, which has found that there are differences based on organisation context. For example, the findings of research that was conducted by Connell and Hannif (2008), found significant differences between in-house and outsourced Contact Centres. Service agents at outsourced Contact Centres had a higher Quality of Worklife than those who worked in in-house Contact Centres. Interestingly, organisation number seven was also an outsourcer, and this organisation measured higher in Quality of Worklife, Trust and Servant Leadership. Since outsourcers are independent business entities specialising in providing Contact Centre services (Connell and Hannif, 2008) exclusively, they may be better prepared and trained to cope with the Contact Centre context, due to it being the primary function of the organisation. The other organisations have Contact Centres as a department of a broader company, and these possibly have their core business focus elsewhere, and not exclusively on the Contact Centre. It is argued that supervisor efficacy and training may be enhanced due to the Contact Centre business being the outsourcer's key business output. This may lead to a more socially orientated leadership approach, due to increased experience in the management of service agents in a context that is described as one which is traditionally a deficit Quality of Worklife context. This in-turn is argued to consequently lead to higher Trust and better perceived Quality of Worklife.

Organisation Five is State Owned business which has a smaller in house Contact Centre in its structure. The core focus of the State Owned business is not Contact Centre services, but utility services. The Contact Centre is merely just another

customer contact channel within a broader organisation. It is possible that the knowledge of managing people in a Contact Centre, in an organisation with a Contact Centre as a department, and not one which is solely focussed on Contact Centre services, may impact on the leadership approach.

Having noted that there are differences in respondent scores at the different organisations, it is interesting to note which other biographical data would reveal any key differences found. Age and gender of respondents, age and gender of supervisor; as well as type of job was then investigated.

6.5.2 Differences in mean scores age of respondents and age of supervisors

The test of differences in mean scores for age of respondents failed to reject the null hypothesis as concluded there is no significant difference in the mean scores of agents of different age groups. This means that service agents who were of the same age groups did not rate their supervisors differently with respect to their Servant Leadership behaviour, trustworthiness as well as their perceived Quality of Worklife. Older, as well as younger agents' responses were not significantly different. Moreover, with respect to the supervisors specific age groups, the test of differences in mean scores of agents who have rated their supervisors' Servant Leadership behaviour, trustworthiness and perceived Quality of Worklife, also failed to reject the null hypothesis. It was therefore concluded that there is no significant difference in mean scores in Servant Leadership behaviour, Trust and Quality of Worklife as a consequence of supervisor age group either.

Lai *et al.*'s (2012) found that the different generations experience different levels of Quality of Worklife. Baby boomers, those employees born between years 1946-1964, and the Generation Y's, employees born between years 1975-1994, had lower perceptions of their Quality of Worklife in busy contexts. This was in contrast to the Generation X employees, those born between the years of 1965 and 1974, who generally experienced higher levels Quality of Worklife in the same busy contexts (Lai *et al.*, 2012).

The largest majority of the respondents in this research (60%, n = 332) were in the 25 to 35 age category. Second most frequent were the less than 25's (19%, n =

104). Most of the sample for this research therefore falls in the Generation Y category. This finding thus confirms previous literature (Lai *et al.*, 2012), as it is an expected result that there would not be significant Quality of Worklife differences between them.

6.5.3 Differences in mean scores in gender of respondents and gender of supervisors

The test of differences of gender of respondents mean scores failed to reject the null hypothesis for Servant leadership and Trust. There was deemed to be no significant difference in mean scores in gender of respondents for Servant Leadership behaviour and leaders trustworthiness. However, for Quality of Worklife, the null hypothesis was rejected and it was concluded that there is a significant difference in mean Quality of Worklife scores based on the gender of respondents. Male respondents scored higher than females with respect to perceived Quality of Worklife. The test of difference in mean scores for Servant Leadership behaviour, Trust and Quality of Worklife for supervisor gender however failed to reject the null hypothesis and concluded that there is no significant difference in mean scores in gender of supervisors. Male and female supervisors displayed similar amounts of Servant Leadership behaviour, were equally trusted and this led to similar levels of Quality of Worklife experienced by their subordinates.

This finding is somewhat different to what is currently published in the literature. In Ganesh and Ganesh's (2014) study in the banking customer service sector, gender was also found to have a significant role in the perceived Quality of Worklife employees (Ganesh and Ganesh, 2014). The results of the study confirmed that females in frontline customer service positions, generally perceived to experience a significantly better Quality of Worklife to that of their male counterparts. Ganesh and Ganesh (2014) posited that due to the females being more relationship orientated, or putting more value on the importance of relationship building between them and supervisors, these relationships turn into good experiences within the work environments and therefore affect Quality of Worklife more positively.

6.5.4 Differences in mean scores in type of job

The results of the Anova test for differences in type of job for Servant leadership, Quality of Worklife and Trust, note that the null hypothesis was rejected and it was concluded there is a significant difference in mean scores of Servant Leadership behaviour, perceived Quality of Worklife and Trust scores when analysing respective types of jobs. Agents who worked in outbound jobs scored highest in their perception of the supervisors Servant Leadership behaviour. Outbound supervisors were deemed more trustworthy and service agents consequently had higher perceptions of their Quality of Worklife. Agents who worked in the inbound section of the Contact Centre scored the lowest in all three categories.

The inbound subdivision of Contact Centres is the section of the Contact Centre in which inbound contacts are managed through a particular medium or channel by agents in a Contact Centre. Telephony is the primary inbound channel that is used, and agents are scheduled to work in relation to the call workload that is forecasted through the use of strict work force management principles (Reynolds, 2003). Because call volumes or work load is forecasted well in advance, in the planning process of the work force management process, agents are scheduled to match the incoming workload (Reynolds, 2003). If there is poor adherence to the schedules, service levels to customers are adversely affected. It makes sense then that agent management metrics, particularly adherence to schedule, are managed much more stringently in the inbound environment. This would possibly mean that the inbound environment leans more to the electronic panopticon environment (Ferne and Metcalf, 1998) than what the outbound does. This possibly has an effect on how agents perceived they are managed, and how this affects their Quality of Worklife.

The Outbound subdivision of Contact Centres have the primary function of making calls to customers for whatever business purpose is needed (Reynolds, 2003). It is argued that outbound pressures would be less than the pressures that are exerted on the inbound section of the Contact Centre, due to the nature of each job. Inbound customers in queues are generally more pressing a priority than customers that need to be called. Each may be equally important as an organisational performance metric, but the inbound pressure of customers waiting to be answered in a queue is argued to be a higher priority, and possibly needs tighter management. With this increased inbound pressure comes the inevitable reliance on a stricter management

approach and with possibly less focus on the relational or caring elements of the leader follower relationship. Inbound leaders may tend to be stricter, pay less emphasis on the relational elements of the job and consequently display less Servant Leadership behaviours than their outbound counterparts. Leadership in the different sections will therefore need to be cognisant of this; however this will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

6.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, a brief summary of the study was presented along with discussions of the more significant findings of the study. The chapter discussed the research problem in relation to the research findings which were presented in Chapter Five, and discussed them in context of the literature previously reviewed.

The chapter considered the literature of the previous chapters and discussed whether the findings of this research confirm the existing literature or pose possible differences, and where these differences existed, reasons were suggested.

The discussion included the reliability and validation of the Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's Servant Leadership Survey (2011) within the South African Contact Centre context. All of the original factors were validated and a slightly altered model produced good model fit. The reliability, Validation of the Van Laar, Edwards and Easton's Work Related Quality of Worklife (2007) section of the instrument was also discussed. After modification, this model also produced good model fit and was therefore validated for the South African Contact Centre context. The mean scores for the internal factors of both the Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife sections of the instrument, and how these related to other international benchmarks was then discussed.

The implications of the SEM model results in relation to the relationships hypothesised was discussed, as well as the findings with respect to the primary purpose of the study, which was to investigate the relationship between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife and the mediating effect of Trust in a Contact Centre context. Implication of a causal path between Servant Leadership, Trust and Quality of Worklife was established; with Trust mediating the relationship between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife was discussed.

All of the sub factors of the SEM model of this study showed significant relationships with the main constructs, and only four relationships tested were considered to be moderate relationships, while the rest of the relationships were considered to be very strong. The findings support the argument that in the Contact Centre context, Servant Leadership behaviour is recognised in leaders who empower their

employees, display forgiveness, hold their staff accountable, are humble and authentic, are courageous and let staff take the credit for the successes of the team. In addition, this type of leadership is positively associated with the level to which Quality of Worklife is experienced by Contact Centre service agents, and this relationship is positively mediated by Trust.

The differences in results of Servant Leadership, Trust and Quality of Worklife, with respect to differences in organisations scores, gender scores, age scores and type of job scores were discussed and reasons for these results were proposed.

The next chapter will discuss recommendations made to both the academic and management fraternity on the theoretical and applied implications of the study.

Chapter 7 – Recommendations and Conclusion

7.1 Introduction

In this chapter, a conclusion of the study's purpose, results and significant findings are presented along with recommendations to both the academic and management fraternity on the theoretical and applied implications of the study. The chapter also acknowledges that this study is of limited scope, as well as has various other limitations which are also discussed in this chapter. The chapter also suggests areas of related future research which aim to make advances to the understanding of Servant Leadership, Trust in the leader and Quality of Worklife theory.

However, before recommendations are presented, and support of the conclusion of this research study, a short summary of each of the thesis's chapters is presented below.

7.1.1 Chapter 1 – Contact Centre Context and Problems Statement

Chapter One presented an introduction to the study and clearly defined the context within which this research was conducted, recognising the Contact Centre industry in South Africa as a growing industry that currently employs several thousand Contact Centre frontline workers. The research problem statement was proposed as follows: Given that the Contact Centre frontline working context is an environment where lower levels of Quality of Worklife are expected, methods to improve Quality of Worklife in the Contact Centre context are therefore of both scholarly and applied interest. Leadership was positioned as the antecedent of interest of this study and Trust was positioned as a possible mediating variable between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife. Hypotheses were proposed and the methodological process to test these hypotheses were summarised.

7.1.2 Chapter 2 – Quality of Worklife Literature

Chapter Two presented a review of the Quality of Worklife literature. The chapter began with the origins of Quality of Worklife and clarified its association with Quality of Life. The chapter then defined Quality of Worklife and differentiated it from similar theoretical concepts such as Job Satisfaction, Employee Wellbeing and Wellness. The chapter proposed a contribution to knowledge by developing a system's model of Quality of Worklife, which was derived from the readings of various authors in the literature. Antecedents, moderators, mediators and consequences of Quality of Worklife were discussed and leadership was argued to be the antecedent of interest in this study. Various Quality of Worklife models were discussed and the justification of the Van Laar *et al.* (2007) model was substantiated as being appropriate for the context of this study due to the strength of the instrument and the appropriateness of the model.

7.1.3 Chapter 3 – Servant Leadership Literature

Chapter Three contained a literature review of Servant Leadership. The chapter started with a discussion on leadership as a construct, and this was followed by various conceptions of leadership theory. The chapter argued that the type of leadership that was appropriate for the Contact Centre context was one that was focused on relationships and caring. Contemporary models of leadership are presented and Servant Leadership was argued as appropriate for the context due to its relational and caring focus. The Van Dierendonck and Nuijten (2001) Servant Leadership model was differentiated from other similar Servant Leadership theories and its suitability for this particular research was argued on the strength of the instrument and the appropriateness of the model. Trust in the leader was introduced and the relationship between Trust and Servant Leadership, as well as its possible role as a mediating variable was discussed.

7.1.4 Chapter 4 – Research Methodology

Chapter Four described the research methodology that was followed. The chapter began with the declaration of the researcher's philosophical standpoint, after which the description of the research process was outlined. The sample size, data collection and statistical analysis procedures and research ethics were explained.

7.1.5 Chapter 5 – Results and Key Findings

Chapter Five presented the results of the analysis. Reliability and Validity results of the instruments used were presented with the aid of Cronbach's Alpha and Confirmatory Factor Analysis. In this chapter, the hypotheses were tested and their results presented. The Structural Equation Model illustrated a direct casual path between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife, and this relationship was shown to be mediated by Trust. Significant differences in mean scores were discussed.

7.1.6 Chapter 6 - Discussion

Chapter Six discussed the research problem in relation to the research findings that had been presented in Chapter Five, and discussed them in context of the literature previously reviewed. The chapter considered all the literature of the previous chapters previously reviewed and discussed whether the findings of this research confirm the existing literature or pose possible differences, and where these differences exist, reasons were proposed. The results of the multivariate analysis of the validated Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife models were discussed. The implications of the SEM model results in relation to the relationships hypothesised were discussed, as well as the findings with respect to the primary purpose of the study, which was to investigate the relationship between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife, and the mediating role of Trust in a Contact Centre context. All of the sub factors of the model showed significant relationships with the main constructs, and most were considered to have very strong relationships. The findings support the argument that in the Contact Centre context, Servant Leadership behaviour consists of leaders that empower their employees, display forgiveness, hold their staff accountable, are humble and let staff take the credit for the successes of the team and that this type of leader is positively

associated with the level to which Quality of Worklife is experienced by Contact Centre service agents.

The following section deals with the recommendations that have arisen from the findings of the research, it includes management recommendations with respect to Servant Leadership enhancements, Quality of Worklife enhancements, selection and recruitment of leaders and the intermittent testing of Contact Centre Servant Leadership behaviour and Quality of Worklife perceptions.

7.2 Management Recommendations

As previously discussed, using SEM, a significant relationship between Servant Leadership behaviour and Quality of Worklife (0.57; $p < 0.001$) was found in this study of frontline Contact Centre employees. So this study confirms that Servant Leadership is antecedent to Quality of Worklife in the frontline Contact Centre context. Given this finding, the study therefore argues that it is important for Contact Centre organisations to firstly, and at the very least, be cognisant of Servant Leadership levels within their environment, and secondly, to adopt a Servant Leadership approach due its positive associations with Quality of Worklife. As mentioned previously, this recommendation is on the strength that it has been demonstrated in this research that Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife are positively associated with one another. Said differently, this research illustrates that higher levels of Servant Leadership are associated with higher levels of employee Quality of Worklife levels.

As illustrated in the systems model of Quality of Worklife in Chapter Two, the positive consequences of Quality of Worklife are of major benefit to the organisation (Fields and Thacker, 1992; Huang *et al.*, 2007; Igbaria *et al.*, 1994; Lau, 2000; Lee *et al.*, 2013; Sirgy *et al.*, 2008; Zin, 2004; Zhao *et al.*, 2013;). Consequently, it would seem counterintuitive for organisations not to be vigilant of the Servant Leadership behaviour of their supervisors within the frontline operational environment. Organisational benefits aside, the previous chapters have gone to some lengths to argue that the leadership approach needed for the Contact Centre environment is one that is contemporary, but more importantly, has emerged from a values based

premise (Copeland, 2014). This research has argued that due to the nature of the work, a particular type of leadership is required. The type of leadership that is argued to be appropriate for the Contact Centre is one that is caring and relationally focussed. It has been suggested in this research that Servant Leadership is such a leadership approach (Greenleaf, 1977; Spears, 1995). Therefore, besides the documented organisational benefits that the Servant Leadership approach is credited to bring, and besides its positive associations with Quality of Worklife, at the very least, Servant Leadership serves to benefit the employees working in the Contact Centre context by virtue of it being relational and caring. Notwithstanding the caring and relational benefits of Servant Leadership, Quality of Worklife consists of people-centric dimensions, examples of which are general well-being and job satisfaction, pleasant working conditions and favourable work-life balance (Van Laar *et al.*, 2007). It is therefore argued that, due to positive associations with both Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife, increases in Servant Leadership will therefore be associated with increases in the dimensions of Quality of Worklife as well. Management practitioners are recommended to concentrate the development of the sub-dimensions of Servant Leadership of their front office leaders so that they enable the enhancement of their employees Quality of Worklife.

On the strength of this research's findings, it is therefore argued that it is important for organisations to incorporate, clarify, champion and instil a leadership approach that is of a caring nature, as it has been illustrated to be appropriate for the frontline Contact Centre environment. It is recommended that the organisation's leadership philosophy should be focussed on building relationships with employees, as well as caring for employees, so that supervisors display behaviours that put the needs of team members first in order to create a climate for them to be the best they can be (Greenleaf, 1977; Spears, 1995; Van Dierendonck, 2011). It is recommended that leaders trust employees by giving them the capacity and room to grow in order to let them prosper while keeping in mind that the good of the members must supersede any self-related interests of the leader (Melchar and Bosco, 2010). The leader must be motivated to serve others first, and through such service, achieve organisational goals (Greenleaf, 1977). It is also recommended that a Servant Leadership approach should be practiced through all of the levels leadership within the organisation as it is cautioned that middle or junior managers may feel trapped if their leadership styles

are not congruent with senior leaders. It is therefore recommended that Contact Centre frontline service leadership approach should not necessarily be isolated to only the Contact Centre within the organisation. This recommendation is made on the strength that if Servant Leadership is found to have a positive causal relationship with Quality of Worklife in the Contact Centre context that this is a leadership approach which could possibly be relevant for elsewhere in the organisation.

It was also found that Trust mediated the relationship between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife in the structural equation model tested. A partially mediated model, with an indirect path from Servant Leadership to Quality of Worklife through Trust, and a direct path from Servant Leadership to Quality of Worklife revealed the better fit to the data ($\chi^2/df = 2.29$, RMSEA = 0.048, CFI = 0.9, SRMR = 0.054) over the model without Trust. It is suggested that Servant Leadership behaviour within the Contact Centre context leads to a climate of trust in the leader and this in turn this leads to an improved Quality of Worklife of service agents. This finding also supports the argument that it is important for organisations to instil a leadership approach that is of a caring nature, as this leads to trust in the leaders, which in turn mediates the relationship between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife in the Contact Centre context. The Servant leader is a leader who is typified as one which builds relationships with their subordinates and enjoys their trust (Greenleaf, 1977), and this will positively affect the Quality of Worklife of frontline employees.

The next section of the chapter deals with the recommendations with respect to each of the dimensions of Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife.

7.2.1 Recommendations associated with the dimensions of Servant Leadership

When it comes to the development of leaders within the organisation or to changing the behaviour of leaders, concentrating on the sub-dimensions or factors of Servant Leadership is a logical and important consideration. As presented in the Results and Discussion Chapter's, some factors hold a stronger relationship with the Servant Leadership construct than others. In other words, at the Contact Centre frontline level, this research has illustrated that some factors describe a larger component of the Servant Leadership construct than others.

As previously presented, Servant Leadership has a positive relationship with Quality of Worklife and some factors or sub-dimensions of Servant Leadership had stronger relationships to Servant Leadership as a construct. It is therefore suggested that organisations can leverage these factors to accentuate the leadership behaviour of their supervisors and middle managers, by firstly concentrating on developing the abilities of the dimensions that have the strongest relationships with the construct. Using this logic, this research has illustrated that leaders should aim to equip their leaders with the ability to appear stewardly (estimate 0.99; $p < 0.001$) and authentic (estimate 0.91; $p < 0.001$) in front of their staff; to give their leaders the ability to instil in their staff, feelings of empowerment (estimate 0.93; $p < 0.001$), to equip leaders with the skills to be able to act with humility (estimate 0.91; $p < 0.001$) and let all credit that is due, fall on the staff (estimate 0.97; $p < 0.001$) (Van Dierendonck, 2011). It is suggested that organisations concentrate on the development of these dimensions of leaders as these factors ultimately make up the biggest contribution to the measure of Servant Leadership in this context. Notwithstanding management's concentration on the development of factors that explain Servant Leadership the most, the other dimensions such as Forgiveness (estimate 0.51; $p < 0.001$), Courage (estimate 0.59; $p < 0.001$) and Accountability (estimate 0.66; $p < 0.001$) are also important considerations (Van Dierendonck, 2011), as they also make up vital components of what Servant Leadership is construed of in the Contact Centre frontline supervisory context.

As the Stewardship factor explains almost all of the variance with its association of Servant Leadership, it is recommended that Contact Centre management develop the supervisor to accentuate that loyalty and team work is appreciated with the Contact Centre environment. Supervisors must show that they have learnt that leadership, particularly in the Contact Centre context, goes beyond the mere monitoring of task compliance. Supervisors need to reflect that they are responsible stewards who believe that the wellbeing of their staff is of paramount importance. A stewardship approach to leadership aligns with "the use of behavioural incentives" (Karns 2011:341), and so it is recommended in the Contact Centre that leadership use incentives to extract positive employee conduct over the panoptican approach of monitoring and instantly addressing issues after they have become visible.

In relation to Accountability development, it is evident from this research that very clear boundaries of operation for the fulfilment of job requirements need to be understood by the subordinate employees. Employees need a rich understanding of what is precisely expected of them, both from what is within, and out of their locus of control (Van Dierendonck and Dijkstra, 2012). Given that Accountability has a significant relationship with Servant Leadership in the Contact Centre environment, and given that this is such a controlled and monitored environment, it is assumed that frontline service agents recognise the importance of holding employees to account for their performances. This is understandable, given that inbound workload in the Contact Centre environment is forecasted and agents are scheduled according to the forecast requirements (Reynolds, 2003). Should some agents not be working at the levels that they are required to, and as a result are being unavailable to take calls at times when they are scheduled to be available to take calls; this workload will have to be spread over a smaller group of agents, meaning that they will have to work harder, or take more calls. It has been argued earlier that agents expect and appreciate supervisors holding themselves and their peers to account, as this benefits the whole in spreading the workload as forecasted. The results of this study suggest that organisations equip their supervisory staff with the ability, either through technology or otherwise, to be able to easily view service agent performance in a format that depicts whether key performance indicators are being met in order for them to quickly respond, and hold agents accountable for performance. While this viewpoint may sound paradoxical, given issues of the context resembling an electronic panopticon (Ferne and Metcalf, 1998), within reason, close monitoring and constant feedback is a necessary management function within the Contact Centre context.

Empowering staff in the context of the strictly scripted Contact Centre environment may be fairly challenging. It is recommended therefore that the interpretation of how to engage with customers in a manner that is deemed as good customer service, be, as far as possible, left for the agent to decide on. As explained in Chapter One, in the scripted Contact Centre environment, agent engagements with customers are often extremely scripted (Nangu, 2013; Rose and Wright, 2005) so much so that agents are expected to use certain words during the conversation only because it is company policy to do so. While this research is not suggesting the abolishment of

soft skills training of the Contact Centre agents on how to address customers, agents should be at least empowered to interpret this engagement themselves, based on the flow of the conversation with the customer, and not on a script that they need to follow as a rule.

Avolio and Gardner (2005) argue that much of the literature on leadership speaks of self-awareness as a cornerstone trait of good leadership and the organisation must find ways to firstly assess to what degree frontline leaders have an opinion of themselves, and if they are self-aware. Being constantly aware of your attributes in the context of others may come naturally to some but others may have to have some elements of their behaviour changed in order to align their leadership behaviour with that of Humble leadership behaviour.

Given the highly controlled and monitored environment of the Contact Centre, mistakes are picked up quite quickly and given the amount of customer engagements each customer service agent deals with, the probability of making a mistake has been argued to be high. It is also assumed that more mistakes are picked up more often than not due to the vigilant scrutiny of measurement devices at the disposal of the supervisors. While leniency to mistakes is not necessarily advised, managers should be wary of very strict policies regarding process, or procedure non-compliance, in the understanding that mistakes will be made. Forgiveness therefore, when mistakes are ultimately made, must be evident in the supervisor-agent relationship. Holding grudges or negatively labelling services agents will not be perceived as Servant Leadership behaviour, and so it is highly recommended that supervisors understand what it means to truly forgive and, within reason, forget process or procedure transgressions, which fall within an acceptable tolerance range. The type of forgiveness that is recommended however goes beyond the behaviour displayed by the supervisor; it suggests that the supervisors must be given mechanisms for forgiveness that are procedurally defined. In other words, organisations must have policies specifically related to the Contact Centres that deal with mistakes. It is recommended that draconian rules should also be carefully thought through. There are so many rules the Contact Centre agents have to adhere to, such as scheduled adherence, process adherence and customer satisfaction rules, that other house rules should possibly be as minimal as possible. For

example, rules that pertain to dress code or the use of company technology to engage on social media should be thoroughly reviewed, given the context.

7.2.2 Recommendations associated with ancillary programmes to address the individual dimensions of Quality of Worklife

Using a similar logic to the logic used when dealing with the recommendations pertaining to Servant Leadership, it would make sense to concentrate on the sub-dimensions or factors of Quality of Worklife which hold a stronger relationship, or explain the most of the Quality of Worklife construct in order to benefit from the positive consequences of Quality of Worklife that were described in Chapter Two. In other words, at the Contact Centre frontline level, this research has illustrated that some factors describe a larger component of the Quality of Worklife construct than others, and so it is suggested that emphasis should be given to these dimensions in order to accentuate perceptions of Quality of Worklife.

Job Career Satisfaction (estimate 0.99; $p < 0.001$), Working Conditions (estimate 0.80; $p < 0.001$), General Well Being (estimate 0.83; $p < 0.001$) and Control at Work (estimate 0.80; $p < 0.001$), in the Contact Centre seem to explain Quality of Worklife followed by Home-Work Interface (estimate 0.64; $p < 0.001$) and Stress at Work (estimate 0.19; $p < 0.001$).

Programmes that are intended to ensure adequate training and skills development are essential elements of job satisfaction (Van Laar *et al.*, 2007), so employers are advised to ensure constant employee development is a high priority in the Contact Centre. As previously mentioned in Chapter One, Contact Centre agents are exposed to the possibility of burnout within a few years of employment into the Contact Centre. Skills development that improves their personal marketability for advancement is highly recommended, particularly if these new skills can be utilised within the current organisation, albeit in a different department. As counterintuitive as it may sound, it is recommended that Contact Centre managers should be as concerned with their frontline staff's exit strategy as they are with their current satisfaction.

It is recommended that managers pay particular attention to the working conditions of the Contact Centre agent due to its strong relationship with Quality of Worklife.

Besides ensuring a safe environment, programmes focused at brightening or making the physical work environment more attractive to the employee will improve working conditions and therefore impact Quality of Worklife. It is also recommended that management include the employee's when deciding on, or that they ensure that the employee's influence the physical makeup of their workspace as much as possible, as this inclusive approach to improving the work environment could yield better benefits than those that are agreed to in isolation by management.

The identification of General Well Being criteria and programmes designed to improve employee wellbeing are also highly recommended. It is recommended the employees are made aware that both physical and mental wellbeing is high on the organisation's agenda, and participation in events designed to address specific wellbeing criteria needs are to be developed as well as the participation of employees themselves in these initiatives needs to be encouraged.

As describe in Chapter One, the balance of work and home commitments is taxing for the Contact Centre agent, particularly due to the fact that many Contact Centre agents work shifts which are varying in start time and duration, and on occasion are different to the traditional office hours of the normal office worker. The conflict that the trade-off of family commitments and work commitments has, can potentially impact the Home-Work-Interface dimension of Quality of Worklife. Aftercare facilities for younger mothers, or better schedules based on seniority, performance and family situation, can possibly address some of these challenges. Another possibility which could be tabled that may reduce the home-work pressures for the modern family is a work from home organisational philosophy. It is acknowledged that this approach will take significant organisational and employee maturity, however, with the advancement in technology this is not an impossible operating model. It is therefore recommended that programmes be developed to specifically address this. Where possible, it is suggested that the staff themselves be included in decisions on how this is best achieved, in order to smooth over the challenges that schedules bring to the Contact Centre agent.

7.2.3 Pay particular attention to type of Job

On the strength of the findings of this research it is suggested that leadership pay particular attention to the inbound employees and inbound supervisors of the Contact Centre. This research has found that inbound agents trust their leaders less, feel that their leaders display less Servant Leadership behaviour, and consequently perceive lower levels of Quality of Worklife. It is argued that leadership be extremely cognisant of this when dealing with the inbound section. Increased exposure of leaders with training that accentuates Servant Leadership and trustworthy behaviour within the inbound section Contact Centre is important and therefore advised.

7.2.4 Outsourcing versus in-house Contact Centres

This research has also found that Organisation number seven scored the highest in Servant Leadership, Quality of Worklife and Trust, significantly higher than the other organisations. Organisation number seven was also the only pure Contact Centre outsourcer. The benefits of outsourcing are often debated within organisations and much of the debate more especially focuses on the quantitate benefits of outsourcing. It is tentatively argued that, due to outsourcers being organisations that are independent business entities that specialise in providing Contact Centre services (Connell and Hannif, 2008) exclusively, they could potentially be better positioned and prepared to cope with the Contact Centre context, due to this being the primary function of that organisation. If this interpretation is correct, outsourced Contact Centre services may be offer a more attractive alternate service channel to their customers. This consideration could be over and above the usual cost benefit analyses that normally accompany outsourcing decisions.

7.2.5 Recruitment and Selection of Leaders

As illustrated in this study, Servant Leadership behaviour is an appropriate leadership approach in the Contact Centre context. Organisations should therefore consider how to incorporate this into their recruitment and selection processes, so that leaders who behave in Servant Leadership manner are recruited above those who do not.

7.2.6 Intermittent Testing of Servant Leadership, Trust and Quality of Worklife Testing

It is recommended that organisations periodically measure employee satisfaction levels and trust in leaders, and when measuring these levels of satisfaction and trust, organisations should consider incorporating elements of leadership, and in particular Servant Leadership. This will ensure that employees get the opportunity to measure whether their leaders are behaving as servant leaders or not. Moreover, this research recommends that employees be periodically given an opportunity to self-assess their perceived Quality of Worklife. So while surveys are recommended, the inclusion of Servant Leadership, Trust and Quality of Worklife dimensions into these surveys is important. It also is recommended that Contact Centre organisations possibly use the model as validated in this research, to periodically assess Servant Leadership behaviour, Trust and Quality of Worklife levels of the frontline staff. As discussed in previous chapters, the danger of poor Quality of Worklife could have detrimental consequences for organisations, so it is an important measure to be aware of. Should levels be lower than acceptable, focus on supervisory leadership behaviour should be an instrumental component to addressing this.

The next section of this chapter deals with the limitations and delimitations of this study.

7.3 Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

It is argued that while this research is positioned to add value to both management practitioners as well as contribute to theory, like all research, this research project had both limitations and delimitations. What follows is a description of the limitations and delimitations of this thesis.

7.3.1 Limitations of the Study

Following generally accepted guidelines from the literature, the sample size obtained from the eight organisations was adequate for the statistical analyses that were

required to test the hypotheses. However, increased sample sizes do add credence to the generalisation of the results, and so this limitation is acknowledged.

7.3.2 Delimitations of the Study

It was this research's primary goal to measure the impact of Servant Leadership on Quality of Worklife and whether this relationship was mediated by Trust in the leader. However, it must be acknowledged that although a positive causal relationship was found between Servant Leadership on Quality of Worklife and Trust, it does not necessarily mean that Servant Leadership is exclusively the only leadership approach which is positively related to Quality of Worklife, and Trust, in the Contact Centre context. It is acknowledged, therefore, that there is possibly no single leadership theory that may lay claim to this; but this study delimited the study to Servant Leadership as the preferred or appropriate endogenous variable.

It is suggested that future studies could investigate the relationship of Quality of Worklife with other relational values based leadership theories, to see whether any of these also positively affect Quality of Worklife in the Contact Centre context. Relational, values based leadership approaches include theories such as Transformational leadership (Bass and Avolio, 1994), Level 5 leadership (Collins, 2001), Empowering leadership (Martin *et al.*, 2013), Spiritual Leadership (Fry, 2003), Self-Sacrificing Leadership (Van Knippenberg and Van Knippenberg, 2005), Stewardship (Block, 1993), Connective leadership (Lipman-Blumen, 1996) or Shared leadership (Pearce and Conger, 2003). This research suggests those more aligned to caring values would be more suited to the Contact Centre context, and therefore Spiritual Leadership (Fry, 2003), Self-Sacrificing Leadership (Van Knippenberg and Van Knippenberg, 2005) and Stewardship (Block, 1993) are suggested as possible candidates.

It is acknowledged, that it is also possible that in the Contact Centre context, Servant Leadership on its own may not directly, and causally, affect Quality of Worklife. Different combinations of the antecedents of Quality of Worklife as explained in Chapter Two, such as Work Settings, Ancillary Programmes and Job Characteristics (Sirgy *et al.*, 2001), when combined with Servant Leadership and differing in

sequential causal path orders, or in a differing sequential path order, may bring about different hypotheses in relation to Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife path causality in the Contact Centre context. This study delimited its research design to only measure the relationship between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife, and the mediating relationship of Trust. Future studies could examine some of these other variables in combination with leadership, Trust and Quality of Worklife.

While acknowledging the limitations and delimitations of the study, the results of this study have indeed made a contribution to knowledge; and this contribution was as a result of the sound scientific methodology that was employed. More specifically, this study has made contributions to the body of knowledge of the Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife constructs. The following section of the chapter discusses these contributions of the study and how they can be further advanced.

7.3.3 Contributions of the Study and Future Research Contributions

As discussed in previous chapters, while a few studies have investigated leadership influences on Quality of Worklife, there is no published evidence of a study being conducted to investigate the influence of leadership on the Quality of Worklife construct in the South African context. In addition, until this research, there is no evidence of any research anywhere, exploring the relationship between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife. There is also no evidence of the mediating relationship of Trust between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife within the literature.

This research has developed and tested a model that denotes the relationship between the Servant Leadership, Trust and Quality of Worklife in a Contact Centre operational environment. In doing this, the study has not only contributed to the current body of knowledge of Servant Leadership, Trust and Quality of Worklife, but has also positioned itself to be of potential significant value to management practitioners. It is proposed that further research investigating different frontline service environments with similar emotional labour demands is proposed. Further research is also suggested to investigate similar leadership approaches, as well as different combinations of the antecedents of Quality of Worklife and their relationship with Quality of Worklife of employees is encouraged.

This research should be the catalyst for other research projects in different geographic and cultural settings in order to evaluate and contribute to the Servant Leadership, Trust and Quality of Worklife model which is proposed in this research. It is believed that this research provides the foundation for future research to investigate whether a more holistic view of Servant Leadership behaviour is of increased value. A more holistic view may consist of a combination of follower's perceptions of the leader compared with the views from the leader's managers, or feedback from a wider set of stakeholders in a 360 degree feedback view. This also opens up the exploration of any differences in "leading up" versus "leading down".

This research has argued that the theoretical model which was developed and tested in this study, and the results of which illustrate the relationship between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife, as well as the mediating role of Trust, in a Contact Centre context is a significant scholarly contribution to the body of knowledge. The body of knowledge on Servant Leadership, Trust and Quality of Worklife will therefore be enhanced by the results of this study.

Below is a summary of the main theoretical and applied contributions of the study:

7.3.3.1 Applied contributions

- Recommendations to improve levels of Servant Leadership behaviour of frontline leaders due to its positive associations with Quality of Worklife and Trust of their frontline Contact Centre customer service agents were tabled.
- Recommendations made to organisations to leverage off of Stewardship, Empowerment, Standing Back, Authenticity and Humility development of leaders as these will provide the biggest step change in Servant Leadership identification by subordinates and development of supervisory staff were tabled. However, it was recommended that organisations also further develop the Accountability, Courage and Forgiveness dimensions of leaders.
- It was recommended that organisations should leverage off of Job Career Satisfaction, Control at Work, General Well Being and Working Conditions in the Contact Centre as they seem to explain Quality of Worklife the most, followed by Home-Work Interface and Stress at Work.

- It is recommended that leadership pay particular attention to the inbound employees and supervisors of the Contact Centre, as this section was found to be the most lacking in Servant Leadership, Quality of Worklife and Trust.
- It was found that outsourced Contact Centres may offer more of an attractive alternate service channel to their customers than in-house Contact Centres.
- Recommendations were made that Servant Leadership leader assessments should be periodically completed by employees. Several ancillary programme actions, as well as proposed mitigating actions to organisations where Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife levels are low, were also proposed.

7.3.3.2 Theoretical contributions

- The development of a theoretical model denoting the relationship between Servant Leadership, Trust and Quality of Worklife was presented.
- The Servant Leadership Survey (Van Dierendonck and Nuijten, 2010) in the South African Contact Centre context was validated.
- The Work-Related Quality of Life Scale (Van Laar *et al.*, 2007) instrument in the South African Contact Centre context was validated.
- A structural model denoting the relationship between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife with Trust mediating the relationship was presented.
- The assessment of differences in Servant Leadership behaviour, Trust and Quality of Worklife as experienced between the Contact Centre sites researched was presented.
- Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife are both developing theories, Servant Leadership is arguably more so, and the results of this study will add to the literature.

7.4 Conclusion

Given the number of Contact Centre frontline employees that there are in South Africa and around the world, this research could possibly have far reaching implications. This research thesis investigated the relationship of Servant Leadership and how that leadership approach relates to the levels of Quality of Worklife in the Contact Centre context and how this relationship is mediated by Trust in the leader. This research was conducted to test the central hypothesis and primary objective of the study, which was that Servant Leadership behaviour has a positive relationship with Quality of Worklife, and this relationship is mediated by Trust.

This research project included the following goals:

- i) *To validate the SLS and WRQWL instruments that measures both Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife in the South African Contact Centre frontline context.*
- ii) *To use Structural Equation Modelling to measure the relationships between Servant Leadership, Trust and Quality of Worklife.*
- iii) *To assess whether Trust played a mediating role in the relationship between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife.*
- iv) *To measure if there were any differences in Servant Leadership, Trust and Quality of Worklife.*
- v) *To identify potential problems that could result due to deficiencies found in Servant Leadership behaviour that may lead to a lower Quality of Worklife.*
- vi) *To make recommendations to the organisations to assist frontline leaders to improve the working lives of Contact Centre agents.*

A survey questionnaire was administered and collected from 555 Contact Centre employees in eight organisations. Confirmatory factor analysis was conducted to test the factor structure of the two key higher order constructs. Structural Equation Modelling produced a model that denoted Servant Leadership behaviours and its effects on Trust and Quality of Worklife, as well as the mediating effect of Trust. The

model showed an acceptable model fit, thereby confirming that Servant Leadership behaviour is antecedent to Quality of Worklife, and that Trust mediated the relationship between Servant Leadership and Quality of Worklife in the Contact Centre context.

This research empirically investigated the improvement of Quality of Worklife and Servant Leadership behaviour in the Contact Centre, and argued that this outcome is of scholarly interest, as well as has great contemporary relevance to the applied context of this research. The results of this thesis have the potential to play a substantial role in the improvement of the working lives of a significant amount Contact Centre service agents employed in South Africa, and indeed around the world; as these employees work in a business sector that is not traditionally celebrated for its overly favourable working environment.

This thesis investigated the gap in the literature and studied the leadership requirements of a frontline Contact Centre setting, that are needed by followers when dealing with issues related to the improvement of the various dimensions of their Quality of Worklife. The research proposed that the unique demands placed on Contact Centre frontline employees has implications for the way in which they should be led and this has a positive relationship with their perceived Trust of the leader as well as their Quality of Worklife. It is hoped that other researchers will build on this contribution.

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Annexure A: (Invite to participate in research letter)



RHODES UNIVERSITY

Grahamstown • 6140 • South Africa

Rhodes Business School
Tel: [+27] 043 703 2081
E-mail: bedserm@eskom.co.za

Dear Contact Centre Service Agent

Re: Invitation to participate in research study

You are invited to participate in my PhD research study entitled “**Servant Leadership: Antecedent to Quality of Worklife of Customer Service Frontline employees**”. The aim of this research is to determine any causal relationships between servant leadership and quality of work life. Your participation and cooperation is important so that the results of the research are accurately portrayed.

The research will be undertaken by completing the attached electronic survey and the data to be collected from this research will be stored in a repository to be statically analysed by myself and later used for academic publication. Your identity and that of your institution/department/site will be treated with complete confidentiality. The collection of this data will require about 20 minutes of your time to complete.

I will provide you with all the necessary information to assist you to understand the study and explain what would be expected of you (the participant). These guidelines would include the risks, benefits, and your rights as a study subject. Furthermore, it is important that you are aware that this study has been approved by a Research Ethics Committee of the university.

Participation in this research is completely voluntary and this letter of invitation does not obligate you to take part in this research study. Please note that you have the right to withdraw at any given time during the study without penalty.

Thank you for your time and I hope that you will find this request favourable.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Bedser

Prof. N. J. Pearse

Annexure B: ((Permission to use Van Laar, Edwards and Easton's Work Related QWL (WRQoL) Model (2007)).

Dear Mark,

The surveys are free to use for non-profit researchers. For more information about the basis on which we offer the surveys, please see this page:

http://www.qowl.co.uk/researchers/qowl_download_intro.html

Hope this helps & best of luck in your research,

Darren

-----Original Message-----

From: bedserm@eskom.co.za [mailto:bedserm@eskom.co.za]

Sent: 19 September 2013 14:47

To: support@qowl.co.uk

Subject: QoWL Contact form: Thu, 19 Sep 2013 14:47:08 +0100

Originating IP Address: 147.110.251.38

Company Name: Rhodes Business School

Name: Mark Bedser

email: bedserm@eskom.co.za

Correct Security code?: Yes

Survey: on

Message:

Hi,

My name is Mark Bedser and I am a part time PhD student in the Rhodes Business School in South Africa. I am at the beginning stages of my research project and I am interested in exploring QoWL and leadership. I have read your user guide to measuring QoWL and am interested to using it in my research. How would I go about getting permission?

Mark

Submit: Send to QoWL

Annexure C: (Permission to use Servant Leadership Survey)

Van Dierendonck and Nuijten's (2011) Servant Leadership Survey

Empowerment

1. My manager gives me the information I need to do my work well. .67
2. My manager encourages me to use my talents. .69
3. My manager helps me to further develop myself. .82
4. My manager encourages his/her staff to come up with new ideas. .81
12. My manager gives me the authority to take decisions which make work easier for me. .79
20. My manager enables me to solve problems myself instead of just telling me what to do. .71
27. My manager offers me abundant opportunities to learn new skills. .72

Standing back

5. My manager keeps himself/herself in the background and gives credits to others. .65
13. My manager is not chasing recognition or rewards for the things he/she does for others. .71
21. My manager appears to enjoy his/her colleagues' success more than his/her own. .60

Accountability

6. My manager holds me responsible for the work I carry out. .57
14. I am held accountable for my performance by my manager. .85
22. My manager holds me and my colleagues responsible for the way we handle a job. .63

Forgiveness

7. My manager keeps criticizing people for the mistakes they have made in their work (r). .70
15. My manager maintains a hard attitude towards people who have offended him/her at work (r). .75
23. My manager finds it difficult to forget things that went wrong in the past (r). .43

Courage

8. My manager takes risks even when he/she is not certain of the support from his/her own manager. .50
16. My manager takes risks and does what needs to be done in his/her view. .89

Authenticity

9. My manager is open about his/her limitations and weaknesses. .69
17. My manager is often touched by the things he/she sees happening around him/her. .55
24. My manager is prepared to express his/her feelings even if this might have undesirable consequences. .67
28. My manager shows his/her true feelings to his/her staff. .83

Humility

10. My manager learns from criticism. .75
18. My manager tries to learn from the criticism he/she gets from his/her superior. .71
25. My manager admits his/her mistakes to his/her superior. .85
29. My manager learns from the different views and opinions of others. .71
30. If people express criticism, my manager tries to learn from it. .88

Stewardship

11. My manager emphasizes the importance of focusing on the good of the whole. .65
19. My manager has a long-term vision. .69
26. My manager emphasizes the societal responsibility of our work. .57

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