

SERVANT-LEADER BOARDS: A QUANTITATIVE STUDY OF FOR-PROFIT
FIRMS IN THE UNITED STATES

By

R. Brian Denning

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This Dissertation was written by:

R. Brian Denning

Under the guidance of a Faculty Committee approved by its members, has been submitted to and accepted by the Graduate Faculty in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

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Faculty Committee



Dr. Craig D. Lawrence, Sr., Ph.D., M.Acc.
Committee Chairperson
Piedmont International University



Dr. Nicole Lowes, Ph.D.
Committee Member
Piedmont International University



Dr. Randy Carman, Ed.D.
Committee Member
Piedmont International University

BOARD AND SERVANT LEADERSHIP

ABSTRACT

Limited research exists exploring board leadership, and to date, no quantifiable relationship between board leadership practices and operational servant leadership in for-profit organizations in the United States has been published. A literature review identified a gap in the current body of research. The purpose of the quantitative study was to quantify the level of servant leadership at the board level in for-profit companies that publicly support servant leadership at lower operational levels and quantify the level of organizational leadership health. The relationship between servant leadership at the board of directors' level and organizational leadership health was established.

Two survey instruments (the SLA and the SOLA) were combined to create a survey instrument, which had a high reliability factor, and was administered remotely to board members (N=131). The data was analyzed to produce descriptive statistics and a correlation and regression analysis.

The results from the analysis indicated that the board members in the sample group exhibited a high level of servant leadership and the organizations exhibited above average organizational leadership health. A statistically significant positive relationship was established between servant leadership and organizational health.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to God, to my family, and to the individuals who gave me a gentle nudge to keep the faith and finish strong. I want to thank the Lord my God for answering my prayers. When I prayed for the next step, He provided guidance, and when I prayed for respondents, He listened and opened the hearts of board members to respond. Although Christ was referring to Salvation when He said, "The things that are impossible with people are possible with God," I believe that His words also applied to my PhD journey (Luke 18:27, NASB).

To my wife, Jeannie, and my two amazing daughters (Abby and Rylie), I thank them for their love, understanding, patience, and forbearance as I burned the candle at both ends, rose early, worked late, and continued working during vacations. Without their support, I could not have finished the race—they mean the world to me, and I thank them from the bottom of my heart.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

The board director position is one of the least researched leadership roles in business due to the time constraints and the daily business demands on directors (Carver, 2007). Strong leadership is essential at all levels in an organization to ensure success (Charan, 2014). Additionally, "Servant leadership principles can increase the health of an organization" (Johnson, 2008, p. iv). When the governance function is not aligned with the operational leadership at lower levels in an organization, miscommunication can take place, thus resulting in a reduction of the overall leadership health in an organization (Carver, 2007; Laub, 2015). Reduced organizational leadership health stifles the growth of an organization, so the governance leadership should be aligned with the organization's operational leadership to enable an organization to continually pursue its goals and advance its mission (Laub, 2015).

Research was conducted to better understand whether the leadership values and beliefs of board members at for-profit corporations were aligned with the organizations they govern. The survey instrument measured each board members' level of servant leadership, and the same board members used an instrument to rank the organizational health of their servant-led organization. Limited research exists exploring board leadership styles and values, and to date, no quantifiable connection between board leadership practices and operational servant leadership in for-profit organizations had been published. The population group for the study consisted of for-profit firms who support servant leadership. The firms were identified by three primary servant leadership sources: The Robert K. Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership, the Conscious Capitalism® group, and ModernServantLeader.com. Additional for-profit firms supporting servant leadership in the marketplace were added to compile a total sample group of 200 operationally-led servant leader firms.

To test whether a significant relationship existed between servant leadership and

organizational health, two previously validated servant leadership survey instruments were utilized: Barbuto and Wheeler's version of the Servant Leadership Questionnaire (SLQ), and Laub's Servant Organizational Leadership Assessment (SOLA) (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006; Laub, 1999). Both instruments were combined and provided to the board members that govern for-profit firms that publicly support servant leadership. Board participants were informed that the survey was a board director leadership assessment, but were not informed that the survey assessed servant leadership values and beliefs until the end of the assessment. The data from the SLQ instrument served as the independent variable to quantify the level of servant leadership values and beliefs that exist at the board of directors' level. The data from the SOLA assessed the level of organizational health as defined by operational servant leadership, and served as the dependent variable to test whether a relationship existed between servant leadership on for-profit boards and organizational leadership effectiveness. Instrument scores were collected to assess the null hypotheses, and the servant leadership subscales from the SLQ and the SOLA dimensions were evaluated to determine the statistical significance of the respondents' scores. Finally, a correlation and regression analysis was used to determine whether a significant relationship existed between servant leadership at the board level and above average organizational leadership. Demographic respondent data was analyzed to contextualize the findings. The research methodology, the data analysis, and a discussion of the research findings will be presented with proposed trajectories for future research.

Background

Uncertainty abounds in the business world regarding the practice of servant leadership in trusteeship positions in organizations, and some researchers have proposed a redesign of corporate, for-profit board director governance functions (Carver, 2010; Charan, 2014; Greenleaf,

1977; Subramanian, 2015; Vandewaerde et al., 2011). Recent servant leadership research has established that servant leadership positively impacts followers; however, board members typically have relatively few interactions with operational individuals in for-profit businesses (Carver, 2010; Liden et al., 2014). Board governance, and board leadership research "is a relatively new field of study," and limited metrics exist to link board leadership styles with operational organizational leadership (Subramanian, 2015, p. 97). Board members are commonly selected to serve on a board because of personal successes, advanced skills, share ownership, and relationships; however, many board leaders are only familiar with practicing leadership on a transactional basis in their own organization(s), rather than as a team on a board (Vandewaerde et al., 2011). In fact, "the job of the board of directors is the least developed element in enterprise" with "meager theory development and discomfoting pragmatics" despite the "massive burden of accountability" that rests on the board members' shoulders (Carver, 2001, p. 53-54). Conversely, chief executive officer (CEO) leadership has been well studied, and elements of servant leadership (e.g. humility) have been quantified and correlated with operational "work engagement, affective commitment, and job performance" (Ou, 2014, p. 34). Servant leadership has been shown to improve team effectiveness, so if a board effectively utilized servant leadership, it could provide a competitive advantage for the firm (Irving, 2008). The intersection of board leadership research and operational servant leadership research is notably silent regarding an answer to the question—"Do board leadership practices and the board's intent translate into effective organizational servant leadership in for-profit companies at the operational level?" (Carver, 2010; Greenleaf, 1977; Vandewaerde et al., 2011).

Board governance is one of the least researched topics in business leadership literature due to the time constraints and business demands on directors (Carver, 2007). John Carver and

Ram Charan have written separate seminal works exploring and asserting how a director can dutifully serve on a company's board and 'make a difference' (Carver, 2007; Charan, 2014).

Carver wrote that "the governing board is as high in the formal structure as one can go," so it is important that board members practice servant leadership if they expect their organizations to lead in a similar manner (Carver, 2007, p.8). Charan asserted that boards should be involved in "large impact decisions" that "will change the future" of the firm (Charan, 2014, p. 200).

Research on board leadership substantiated a proposed method of team leadership, so that the board of directors would work together as a "team of true peers" and lead as a single entity (Vandewaerde et al., 2011, p. 416). Carver, Charan, and Vandewaerde et al.'s work with both non-profit and for-profit boards has provided organizations with a solid basis to understand the leadership and organizational interactions possible among CEOs, their staffs, board directors, and the chairman of the board (Carver, 2007; Charan, 2014; Vandewaerde et al., 2011).

Governing boards and companies practicing servant leadership should be regularly reviewed to make sure that they are practicing what they preach, lest their actions become ineffective in the organization which they govern. "Trustees (or directors) are legally and ultimately responsible for the institution and everything that goes on in it," so board morality and governance actions can have a positive or a negative effect on a CEO and an entire organization (Greenleaf, 1977, loc. 2170). In the last ten years, shareholders have begun demanding that boards "actively fulfill their legal and ethical responsibility of safeguarding the interests of the shareholders" (Vandewaerde et al., 2011, p. 403). Greenleaf asserted that he had observed boards that were not performing their roles to their fullest, and wrote "large numbers of persons serve as trustees and directors—too often in a nominal way. Could their sights be raised, and could their concept of trust be clarified and enlarged?" (Greenleaf, 1977, loc. 232). Subramanian

noted that in for-profit firms, "the needs of the company" might not be met by the leadership "skill set" and "composition" of its board, thus resulting in a leadership deficiency (Subramanian, 2015, p. 101). Based on Greenleaf's question, and Subramanian's assertion, the researcher explored whether boards governing for-profit organizations (which externally support servant leadership) were practicing the central tenets of servant leadership and utilizing the servant leader's "natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve *first*" (Sipe, 2009, loc. 218).

For-profit organizations employing and promoting servant leadership practices are diverse, and range from Christian, conservative organizations, such as ServiceMaster, Hobby Lobby, and Chick-Fil-A to more progressive and inspirational organizations, such as Starbucks and REI. The Robert K. Greenleaf Center for Servant-Leadership publicly acknowledges the notable efforts of Fortune 500 companies that prescribe to servant leadership, and who are successful in the marketplace. While the types of servant-led, for-profit firms can vary widely by size, values, and level of success in their market, each servant-led firm believes that it is faithfully practicing its own version of servant leadership in the workplace. It could be argued that Greenleaf first conceptualized the theory of servant leadership for the for-profit world, since he "spent much of his organizational life in the field of management research, development, and education at AT&T," and his theories reflected his work influences (Spears, 1995, p. 2). Sipe and Frick (2009) built upon the for-profit foundations that Greenleaf and Spears laid, and asserted that "servant-led companies are even *better than great*" when referring to Jim Collins' (2001) book *Good to Great* (Collins, 2001; Sipe, 2009, loc. 241). By expanding the reach of the universal concepts contained in servant leadership, Greenleaf sought to help organizations evolve, rather than revolutionize, while "communicating a basis for hope" by serving others and showing leaders how to experience a "rewarding life" (Spears, 1995, p. 21). Additionally, research during

a 10-year study on servant-led firms determined that "servant-led companies produced *far superior* financial results," and provided a better work-life balance when compared to the top Fortune 500 companies (Sipe, 2009, loc. 241).

Theory of Servant Leadership. The genesis of servant leadership dates back to a biblical teaching that Jesus Christ gave to his followers when He instructed His apostles that "whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave—just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many" (Matt. 20:25-28, NIV). Despite its biblical origin, servant leadership was only recently introduced (within the last 40 years) as a theoretical leadership style by Robert Greenleaf (Northouse, 2012). The relatively new and initially counter-intuitive leadership theory was intriguing to many, since it "puts followers first," and is driven by "the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve *first*" (Northouse, 2012, loc. 4193). After retiring from his business career at AT&T, Greenleaf pursued his passion for servant leadership by educating and consulting with various for-profit and non-profit organizations (Spears, 1995). Following in Greenleaf's footsteps, Larry Spears served as the President and CEO of Greenleaf's Center for Servant Leadership, and distilled Greenleaf's servant leadership construct into a list of ten servant leader characteristics to describe how servant leaders differentiated themselves from their counterparts and were perceived by those that they led (Sipe, 2009). After Spears' research and translation of servant leadership into tangible characteristics and leadership practices, researchers continued to build upon Spears' work by creating personal survey tools to measure servant leadership in organizations (Barbuto & Hayden, 2011; Sendjaya, 2008).

Servant leaders are unique because they take a holistic view toward their business and seek to proactively serve others. Rooted in integrity and keeping an eye on the environment,

servant leaders believe in a "Triple Bottom Line (sustaining people, profits, and the planet)" to help others "heal, grow, and thrive through mutual caring and trust" (Kimball, 2014, p. 40). Greenleaf wrote frequently about "trustees acting as servants," because "*trusteeship* is the holding of a charter of public trust for an organization," and his definition succinctly defined the role of board directors in a for-profit corporation (Greenleaf, 1977, loc. 1262). Greenleaf stressed the weight and importance of the governance role when he wrote that "trustees (or directors) are legally and ultimately responsible for the institution and everything that goes on in it" (loc. 1270). Servant leadership that is practiced and demonstrated at the highest levels in the organization could have a high probability of permeating through the organization, so this research study quantified the relationship between the board's leadership and the organization that they serve.

Board Governance. When owners and shareholders of organizations require skilled, wise leadership, they appoint directors to serve on their board and to represent the interests of the owners as trustees (Khan, 2011). We find a similar practice recounted in Deuteronomy 1:9-18, when Moses admitted to God that he needed help leading Israel. To assist Moses with his daunting task, God allowed Moses to appoint one of the first governing trustee councils to watch over and govern the burgeoning nation of Israel. For-profit organizations must also appoint directors who are able to rise above an organization's operational affairs to govern and make ethically wise choices, while not becoming mired in the daily transactional and operational affairs of the business (Carver, 2007; Subramanian, 2015; Vandewaerde et al., 2011). When powerful and wise individuals come together on a board, their values, intentions, leadership practices, and beliefs could potentially be transferred to the organization that they serve through emotional resonance (Charan, 2014; Goleman, 2004; Johnson, 2008). While business

practitioners might casually and intuitively postulate that a cause and effect relationship exists between the leadership beliefs of the board of directors and the leadership methods employed in an organization, no research has been conducted to date to establish a quantifiable relationship between servant leadership at the board governance level and the operational level in a for-profit firm (Vandewaerde et al., 2011).

Every board determines which mechanisms and processes that it should use to effectively serve the organization that it governs (Charan, 2014). John Carver's Policy Governance Model[®] translated governance theory into practical, tactical leadership actions, to help new board members clarify their role as a board member, understand peer expectations, and properly provide governance (Carver, 2007). Carver asserted that a governing board must use a process that "explores, expresses, and achieves its intentions about that which it governs" (Carver, 2002, p. 30). In *Boards That Make A Difference*, Carver defined the separation of board and staff roles as the "ends" and the "means" (Carver, 2007, p. 50). The "ends," or the operational goals, were to be determined and facilitated by the board's governance, whereas the "means," which the CEO's staff would lead, detailed how the business would accomplish its goals through its transactional and operational efforts (Carver, 2007). Although Carver's research pertained primarily to non-profit organizations, his research and findings have resonated a universal chord among all types of boards.

Boards should be primarily concerned with governing the organizations that they serve, so the board's engagement level is critical in helping the organization succeed. Rather than resting in an ivory tower, Charan et al. wrote that board members should become more intimately involved with management staff to evolve from a simple "ceremonial monitor to a leader" in the organization (Charan, 2014, loc. 59). Additionally, board director performance

should be regularly assessed to remove any complacent directors (Subramanian, 2015). A more accountable and engaged board could shorten the distance between the board members and the operational members beneath the CEO in an organization, and could also assist in transferring leadership practices from the board members to other individuals in the organization. Based on the proximity of the board members to the operational leaders in the organization, it is possible that leadership values could be transferred both up and down the organization based on the intent of the board and the founders of the organization (Goleman, 2004; Ou et al., 2014; Petrey, 2011).

Problem Statement

The problem statement for the dissertation stemmed from a logical extension of John Carver's words regarding board leadership: "In boards worldwide, there is a great gap between intention and board performance," (Carver, 2010, p. 4). Additionally, "there appears to be a lack of information strategies used by boards of directors" (Byrne, 2012, p. 21). Unfortunately, few leadership values are effectively transfused into the organizations that directors serve due to the limited time that the board has to spend governing (Carver, 2010). The gap between intent and performance could have many causes, such as the limited number of board meetings, unclear objectives, informal processes, or inexperienced board members. Additionally, in Vandewaerde et al.'s study on board leadership, the researchers noted, "academic knowledge concerning how this important governance mechanism actually operates and functions remains relatively limited" (Vandewaerde et al., 2011, p. 403). Regardless of the root cause for this gap in academic research, talented board members can experience challenges transferring their values and leadership principals to the organization that they serve.

Boards that are able to identify successful leadership practices and employ servant leadership can unlock the "foresight and conceptualization" skill sets to create a "high

performing board" (Byrne, 2012, p. 241). Additionally, recent servant leadership research has established that servant leadership positively impacts followers (Carver, 2010; Liden et al., 2014). Although servant leadership exists at successful for-profit organizations (Charan, 2014; Sipe, 2009), a comprehensive literature review was unable to produce a study that quantified a correlation between servant leadership values in for-profit boards and the leadership values of an organization that publicly embraces and utilizes servant leadership. In effect, very little research has been conducted that identified servant leadership practices in both the "ends" and the "means" of a for-profit organization.

Purpose of Study

The study's purpose was threefold: to quantify servant leadership at the board level in for-profit operationally servant-led firms; to quantify board members' perceptions of organizational health in the organizations that they govern; and to quantify any relationship between board servant leadership values and the presence of effective organizational servant leadership in for-profit firms. The research effectively viewed servant leadership through the lens of board governance to quantify a relationship in for-profit organizations that publicly align themselves with the theory of servant leadership. Research was conducted, and the data produced was statistically analyzed with the assistance of a statistician to identify a relationship between the board of directors' governing leadership style and the operational leadership style of the organization. Additionally, demographic information collected from survey participants helped add depth and context to frame the statistics gathered from the two quantitative survey instruments (SLQ and SOLA). The research sample group for this study included firms who are members of the Robert K. Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership, firms endorsing Conscious Capitalism®, firms listed on ModernServantLeader.com, firms where servant leadership is

written into the company's operational bylaws or 10-K statements, and firms where servant leadership is publicly marketed as a core component of the organization's go-to-market strategy. Given the predisposition of the sample group's heightened familiarity with servant leadership, the question arose whether a simple or complex connection existed between the board of directors' leadership values and the organization's operational leadership actions.

Data was collected and analyzed regarding board directors' servant leadership practices and beliefs, but a complete, 360-degree organizational health assessment was outside of the scope of this study. Therefore, managerial and operational individuals did not complete the SOLA instrument to evaluate the effectiveness of the organization's board. The research was designed to focus on the leadership style of the directors, and obtain the board's assessment of the health of their for-profit organization that practices servant leadership. Additionally, a relationship between the level of servant leadership present at the board of directors' level and the perceived organizational health was obtained to determine the strength and type of relationship between the SLQ (predictive, independent variable), and the SOLA (criterion, dependent variable). Based on a comprehensive literature review, to date, no quantitative research establishing a relationship between these two variables (board level servant leadership and organizational health) has been performed.

Significance of Research

A review of servant leadership literature in the context of for-profit board governance identified a gap in the current body of research. More specifically, research regarding for-profit enterprises practicing servant leadership at the lower, operational levels of the organization intuitively assumed that the board of directors of the organization was in alignment with the operational leadership practices of the organization which they governed, although no

quantifiable link has been identified (Laub, 1999; Ou et al., 2014; Spears, 1995; van Dierendonck, 2011). After conducting a literature review, no statistically validated study quantified the relationship between servant leadership at the board level, and the practice of servant leadership at the organizational level. Based on the statistically valid results, the findings could serve as a justification for training boards to cultivate servant leadership in an organization and increase their organizational leadership effectiveness.

Research Questions

The primary question of the research was: "To what extent do board members practice servant leadership at for-profit companies that publicly support servant leadership at lower operational levels in the organization?" The SLQ survey data was statistically analyzed to determine whether servant leadership existed at the board of directors' level. The secondary question of the research was: "In for-profit firms that operationally and publicly support servant leadership, what is the level of organizational leadership health?" A statistical analysis of the data collected from the SOLA instrument measured the health of the operational servant leadership firms. Finally, the tertiary question of the research was: "What is the relationship between servant leadership at the board of directors' level and the level of organizational leadership health?" A correlation and regression analysis was performed to quantify the strength of the relationship between the board's servant leadership and the organization's servant leadership level.

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested to answer the three research questions and quantify the relationship between servant leadership and the organizational health (based on servant leadership) of the organization:

H1₀: There is no servant leadership present at the board of directors' level in for-profit firms that operationally and publicly promote servant leadership.

H2₀: For-profit firms operationally and publicly promoting servant leadership do not have above average operational health.

H3₀: There is no relationship between servant leadership at the board of directors' level in for-profit firms, and the operational health of the organization.

A statistical analysis was performed on the respondent data to evaluate each of the null hypotheses. Each hypothesis was evaluated individually to determine whether to accept the null as true, or to reject the null hypotheses as false.

Conceptual/Theoretical Framework

The conceptual framework provides context for the problem statement and hypotheses. Organizations practicing servant leadership could potentially have servant leadership present at multiple levels, flowing up and down the organization via the acts of both leading and serving (Johnson, 2008; Laub, 1999; van Dierendonck, 2011). The genesis of each for-profit firm's servant leadership could be different. Boards and organizations interact in varying configurations (Berle & Means, 1932; Carver, 2010; Charan, 2014; Subramanian, 2015), but it is possible to illustrate the general relationships and interactions between the board of directors, the CEO, and an organization that practices operational servant leadership.

The interactions between the roles and organizational levels previously presented are summarized below in Exhibit 1.1. Additionally, the locations of hypotheses (H1, H2, and H3) to be tested are indicated on the exhibit, and are circled for reference.

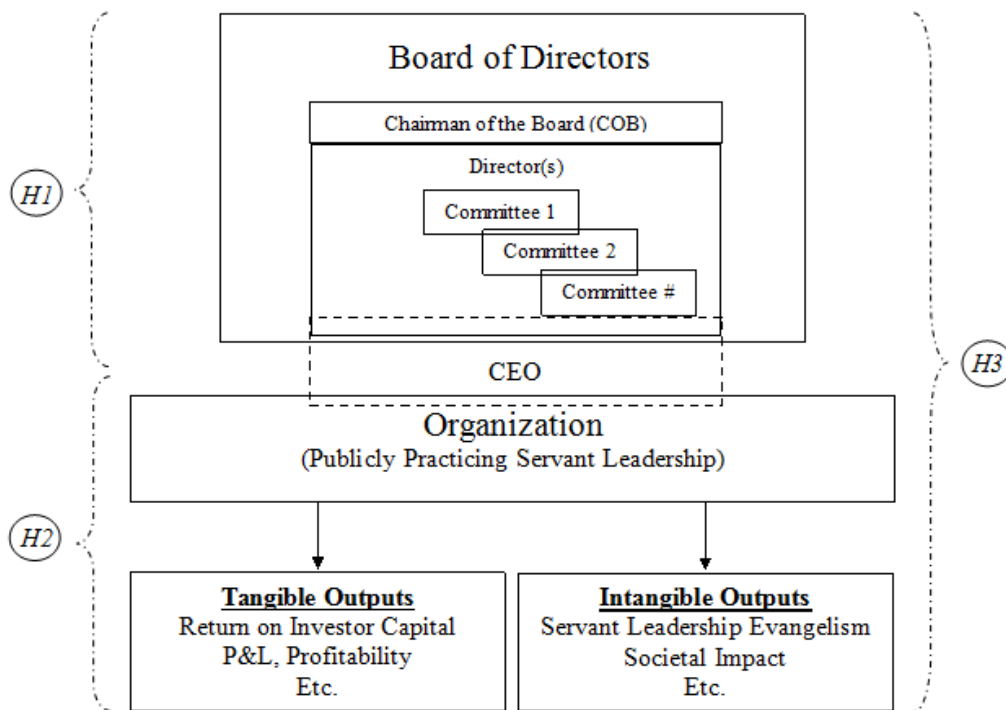


Exhibit 1.1 - Organizational Relationships, Overlaps, and Hypotheses

Exhibit 1.1 illustrates the connections between the board of directors, the CEO, and the operational portion of the organization. Many factors impact the general conceptual framework, which include the level of board involvement, the level of CEO involvement, and the organizational roles that have been established for the CEO and the COB. Many of these factors were outside the scope of this research study, but will be outlined in Chapter 2, during the literature review.

The leadership influences that were tested by hypotheses H1 through H3 are circled in Exhibit 1.1. More specifically, H1 evaluated whether the directors did or did not practice servant

leadership; and H2 tested whether the organization was operating at a high level of organizational health as defined by Laub's (2015) organizational levels of leadership health. Finally, H3 evaluated whether a relationship existed between servant leadership at the board of directors level and a high level of organizational leadership effectiveness.

Two levels of the organization were evaluated for servant leadership. The leadership style(s) of the board of directors were assessed using the Servant Leadership Questionnaire (SLQ) by Barbuto and Wheeler (2006) in a self-reporting survey format. The SLQ "combined the 10 characteristics of Spears (1995) with the dimension calling—the natural desire to serve others," and reduced Spears' characteristics into 5 subscales for analysis (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006, p. 304). Barbuto and Wheeler's SLQ instrument's five subscales of servant leadership are: "altruistic calling, emotional healing, persuasive mapping, wisdom, and organizational stewardship" (p. 300). Altruistic calling is expressed by the degree of a leader's "desire to serve, and willingness to sacrifice self-interest for the benefit of others," and this calling mirrors Greenleaf's original servant leadership tenets (p. 305). Emotional healing is defined as a leader's ability to enable his followers to rebound from failure, and build emotional strength (p. 306). Barbuto and Wheeler used the term persuasive mapping to gauge how well a leader inspires, influences, and intrinsically motivates others to achieve positive organizational and personal goals (p. 307). Wisdom has been sought for ages, and can be defined in a servant leader as "the ability to pick up cues from the environment and their implications" (p. 319). Finally, organizational stewardship is the act of leading an organization in a manner that advances the organization's goals while also making "a positive contribution to society through community development, programs, and outreach" in a quantifiable manner (p. 319).

To obtain the board of directors' opinions regarding the health of their organization, the

Servant Organizational Leadership Assessment (SOLA) survey instrument was administered to quantify the board leaders' impression of operational servant leadership (Laub, 1999). Statistical analysis was performed to evaluate each of the interactions (as defined in the methodology section of this proposal) between the variable groupings and subscales in the two survey instruments. Descriptive statistics were used to understand the "general nature of the data obtained" (Leedy, 2013, p. 10). Laub's SOLA subscales of servant leadership are: "valued people, developed people, built community, displayed authenticity, provided leadership, and shared leadership" (Laub, 1999, p. 83).

To determine whether a relationship existed between the independent servant leader variables (in the SLQ) and the dependent variables (in the SOLA), a regression analysis was performed to determine how closely the SLQ and SOLA variables were linked. A similar correlation analysis was run on the total scores for each instrument to determine any patterns in the data. Finally, demographic data was analyzed to determine if predominant psychographic attributes existed among the respondent group members.

Limitations and Scope of the Research

Due to the hectic schedule of the survey participants, the survey was conducted via email, direct mail, and via the Internet. It is important to note that factual and valid self-reporting could represent a limitation to the study. Although multiple questions were present to evaluate the servant leadership characteristics of colleagues and the organization, the creation of a comprehensive 360-degree leadership assessment profile was outside of the scope of this study.

The research study utilized validated servant leadership test instruments, and also added generic demographic questions to provide additional data regarding organizational roles and relationships. The dissertation leveraged the highly correlated and predictive survey variables

and questions from two survey instruments, but it is important to note that the SLQ and the SOLA have never before been combined prior to this research study. However, each instrument is highly reliable and has been tested individually by multiple studies. Finally, this study identified relationships, but did not seek to measure any additional causal implications outside the scope of this study. For example, answering the question whether servant leadership should be implemented first at the board of directors' level to facilitate broad organizational change was out of scope for this research dissertation.

Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined to supply a contextual background for the dissertation:

Leadership: Northouse noted that many individuals have tried to define leadership over the years, with varying levels of success articulating and operationalizing the concept (Northouse, 2012). Northouse noted that some researchers defined leadership as "a transactional event" that is "a process, ... involves influence, ... occurs in groups, ... and involves common goals" (loc. 452). However, for the purpose of this study, leadership will be defined as transformational, noting that leaders "transcend their own self-interests and work toward the common goal of the followers" (Bass & Riggio, 2006, loc. 446).

Servant Leadership: The theory of servant leadership as defined by Robert K. Greenleaf noted that servant leaders had the "natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve *first*" (Sipe, 2009, loc. 218). Greenleaf did not formally create a list of servant leadership characteristics, but for the purpose of this dissertation, servant leadership will be defined by transformational leadership, with an "altruistic calling, emotional healing, persuasive mapping, wisdom, and organizational stewardship" as previously defined in the Conceptual Framework section (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006, p. 300).

Board Governance: Board governance entails managing a firm to achieve the long term goals of the firm's owners, by defining guidelines and outcomes, rather than specific transactional, or operational processes to achieve the firm's long term goals (Carver, 2007; Khan, 2011; Subramanian, 2015). Proper governance has been defined as being so closely aligned with the interests of a firm's owners that it represents "ownership one step down rather than management one step up" (Carver, 2007, p. 5). The board speaks in "one voice", and "maintains accountability," while ensuring that the CEO performs his operational leadership role (p. 5).

SLQ (Servant Leadership Questionnaire): The Servant Leadership Questionnaire (SLQ) was created by Barbuto and Wheeler (2006) to emulate and elevate the MLQ instrument. Evaluating both the unique characteristics of servant leadership, and the transformational leadership aspects measured by the MLQ, the SLQ began with "the 10 characteristics of Spears (1995) with the dimension calling—the natural desire to serve others" (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006, p. 304). Barbuto and Wheeler's research distilled eleven servant leadership concepts into five attributes through multiple iterations of a Delphi study which continually refined the SLQ's questions, items, and subscales (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006). In addition to evaluating transformational leadership, the SLQ measures "altruistic calling, emotional healing, persuasive mapping, wisdom, and organizational stewardship" (p. 300). Incorporating aspects from the MLQ, the SLQ customized the transactional aspects of the MLQ to answer questions specific to servant leadership.

SOLA (Servant Organizational Leadership Assessment): The "Servant Organizational Leadership Assessment (SOLA)" refined Spears' list of Greenleaf's servant leader attributes into six servant leader actions, and then assessed whether these actions were present in an organization (Laub, 1999, p. 7). Based on Laub's research, Greenleaf's ultimate organization

would consist of servant leaders who: "valued people, developed people, built community, displayed authenticity, provided leadership, and shared leadership" (p. 83).

Summary

In summary, the objective of this dissertation was to draw a correlation between servant leadership on the front-lines in a for-profit organization, and the leadership style(s) of the same organization's board of directors. To determine whether a positive, negative, or no statistically significant relationship existed, two survey instruments were administered to the board members of for-profit companies that publicly advocate servant leadership. To analyze whether a relationship existed, the variables in the SLQ survey instrument, and the SOLA survey instrument were both statistically analyzed. Finally, after presenting the results of the research, new directions for research, training, and leadership education will be proposed.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

To provide a contextual background and justification for the research to be performed, this literature review outlines both the governance process of for-profit corporations and the theory of servant leadership. Board governance practices and theories will be explored from inception in the late 1700s, through present day. Challenges associated with governance will be presented, and subsequently approached from two differing perspectives—a true governance approach, and a more hands-on, participative approach. Servant leadership theory will be explored from its initial articulation by Robert Greenleaf, through its characterization by Larry Spears, and the subsequent instrumentation of servant leadership theory. Instruments will be presented and explored that quantify the aptitude of a servant leader and the status of an entire organization in relation to a servant leader mindset. In a summary, the gap in literature that exists between corporate governance and servant leadership will be identified, outlined, explored.

Literature Review Process

The literature review process began with the works of Robert K. Greenleaf (1977) and Adam Smith (1904), who wrote cornerstone, seminal works focused on servant leadership and economics. Scholarly published journal articles, books, and dissertations were reviewed. The scope of the literature review expanded with the use of commercial search engines, electronic card catalogs, and the ProQuest and EBSCO databases. Broad keyword combinations were used, such as: servant leadership, board leadership, board directors, for-profit, and Greenleaf. Once a core group of dissertations and journals were compiled, analyzed and summarized, the references listed in the works were sought to expand the list of materials to review. Hundreds of dissertations were read to identify which key seminal works advanced the academic dialogue underpinning servant leadership and board governance theory.

To automatically monitor the continually evolving academic dialogue on a daily basis, several automated search 'bot' engines were created through Google and ProQuest. The 'bots' automatically emailed daily notifications and alerts when works were updated and new works were published. Once the literature review was nearing completion, the use of the automated 'bots' aided in narrowing the scope of the literature review to only address newly published works on servant leadership in a for-profit board setting.

Board Governance

From its theoretical inception in 1776, corporate governance and agency theory has evolved in the United States as financial markets drove the US economy, and later struggled during the Great Depression (1929-1939). Corporations became larger and increasingly complex as boards sought to create the proper structure to provide an acceptable return for shareholders (Davis, 1991; Jensen & Meckling, 1976; Mizruchi, 2004). As the financial landscape changed, corporate boards adjusted to the financial times, and changed their composition (Khan, 2011; Mizruchi, 2004). Berle and Means addressed the challenges pertaining to corporate governance in the 1930s, and literature regarding corporate governance was notably absent until the early 1970s (Petrey, 2011; Subramanian, 2015). In fact, "there were virtually no published critiques of managerialism between 1932 and 1970" (Mizruchi, 2004, p. 7).

In the late 1960s, a "congressional investigation ... examined the stockholdings of commercial bank trust departments, "once again placing the spotlight upon large corporations, sparking new economic and sociological academic research (Mizruchi, 2004, p. 9). In the 1970s, new research rekindled the debate regarding the ownership and control of corporations (Jensen & Meckling, 1976). Provocative, pseudo-business themes, such as "peoples' capitalism," and the "soulful corporation" opened researchers' eyes to the massive amount of power that large

companies were wielding in relation to society (Mizruchi, 2004). Several economists (Dooley, Zald, & Zeitlin(1969)) "raised specific questions about management control," and "stock dispersal" in regards to which group controlled a firm—its owners, or its managers (p. 8).

In 1976, Jensen and Meckling published research that further defined agency theory and explored "agency costs" to demonstrate how "property rights, agency, and finance" contributed to the operation of a corporation (Jensen & Meckling, 1976, p. 2). Jensen and Meckling's research produced a theoretically predictive economic model, which mapped supply/demand curves with optimal levels of agency costs, outside equity, and outside financing, but the model did not account for instances where management held shares in the corporation (p.58). Research along these same lines continued throughout the 1980s, more specifically focusing on changes in "managerial autonomy" (Mizruchi, 2004, p. 20). This trend was primarily due to the fact that the stock market had not experienced substantial growth in the 1970s, causing shareholder unrest and unprecedented turnover on several large corporate boards (Charan, 2014; Mizruchi, 2004).

Beginning in the 1990s, managerial restructurings, mergers, and acquisitions in the interest of shareholder equity took place, as large "investment fund managers such as CalPERS, Fidelity, TIAA-CREF, and Vanguard" rose to power by obtaining key board positions (Charan, 2014, p.15). In the last decade, individual corporate shareholders have put more pressure on board members to be accountable for their actions, and the government has instituted laws to hold board members personally liable for their firm's actions (e.g. Sarbanes-Oxley Act (2002), Dodd-Frank Act (2010), etc.) (Charan, 2014; Vandewaerde et al., 2011). Increasingly, risk mitigation and liability minimization have become the purview of the board's committees as boards have taken their new accountability seriously (Subramanian, 2015).

Board leaders today execute governance based on either an arm's-length approach with the management of the firm (Carver, 2002), or in a participative and collaborative manner (Charan, 2014). In both instances, risks must be mitigated, and board members should regularly interact with internal and external legal counsel to understand the implications of their actions as a board. Fear of litigation and the increasingly "abusive litigation tactics" present in the corporate marketplace can place pressure on both board members and counsel (Fortin, 2009, p. 593). Varying levels of "risk preference" among shareholder groups can also drive the actions of board members and can become "a major source of conflict between the principal and the agent" (Khan, 2011, p. 3). To alleviate some of the tensions present between board members and legal counsel, a "servant lawyer" approach was proposed by Fortin in 2009. Fortin proposed that lawyers should employ a "professionalism paradigm" to their actions, rather than a "business paradigm," while seeking alternative dispute resolution methods, which had the potential to strengthen business relationships (Fortin, 2009, p. 597). Fortin's approach might appear overly optimistic, but her approach has produced tangible results, strengthened relationships, reduced the time required to resolve a dispute, and has saved clients money (Fortin, 2009). Regardless of the board's leadership style(s) and level of risk preference, directors should represent the best interests of the corporation's owners while taking a long term perspective and governing to instill values (Subramanian, 2015).

Genesis and Background. For-profit corporation ownership is represented by shares of stock. The issuance of shares of stock capitalizes, quantifies, and prioritizes the rights of the corporate owners (Smith, 1904). The structure of a board, and its corporate governance model is influenced by the country in which the organization incorporated and established its primary office. Although Adam Smith wrote primarily from a European governance perspective in

Wealth of Nations, his postulations regarding the interests of the owners and managers still ring true today (Khan, 2011). While the law has traditionally viewed corporations as individual entities with rights akin to a "corporate personhood," once formed, Zeitlin observed that corporations "were not necessarily independent entities," rather corporations were "tools of individuals or family groups who used them to accumulate capital" (Mizruchi, 2004, p. 10; Ramsey, 2013, p. 10). Due to variances in board structures worldwide, the unitary board model employed in the United States will be the only structure explored in this literature review.

The issuance of stock enumerates individual share ownership, and the aggregate interests of a corporation's shareholders are typically represented by a board of directors who make choices on the behalf of the corporation's shareholders (Carver, 2002). Shareholders can potentially have different financial objectives than the corporate management (Khan, 2011; Mizruchi, 2004; Subramanian, 2015). Adam Smith noted that simultaneously balancing both shareholder interests and management interests is important to satisfy the specific needs of the firm's owners and its managers (Smith, 1904). While owners wish to obtain a return on their capital investment, management receives compensation to operationally maintain or grow the firm while keeping it financially viable. Owners are typically absent from the daily operations of a firm, so their financial interests are represented by a board of directors, who oversee, or 'govern' over the implementation of the firm's policies to guide the CEO's actions (Carver, 2002; Charan, 2014; Khan, 2011). "The board-ownership relationship is the essential, defining relationship of an organization" (p. 57).

Board Structure and Roles. During The Great Depression of 1929, board leadership and governance was at an all time low (Berle & Means, 1932). The boards of corporations that survived the initial shock of The Great Depression needed guidance and structure, and Berle and

Means published their seminal and timely work entitled *The Modern Corporation and Private Property* in 1932 to emphasize the "separation from ownership from control in large U.S. Corporations" (Mizruchi, 2004, p. 1). After the great depression, firms and trusts were created to manage shareholder funds, and the new trusts began acquiring large positions in corporations. Conversely, a shift of board directors ensued, and many board members were replaced with 'fund managers' from the trusts who represented the consolidated ownership rights of "institutional shareholders" (Khan, 2011, p.3). In these instances, trusts had been established to use their consolidated shareholder power to occupy a director seat on the board to control the corporation's actions, and ensure shareholder return on investment (Mizruchi, 2004). In the 1990s and early 2000s, trusts and banks became the subject of congressional scrutiny, since "major financial institutions' ... control spanned several corporations simultaneously," creating interlocks, which allowed trusts to control multiple corporations in the same industry and effectively manipulate the market (Mizruchi, 2004, p. 10). Despite the repeated changing of director types over the decades, "there is still hardly any evidence on what determines a board's effectiveness and how this in turn is related to firm performance" (Vandewaerde et al., 2011, p. 403).

Organizationally, the board only has one direct employee who it can hire or fire, and this is the CEO (Carver, 2007). Additionally, the board is typically organized and administered by the chairman of the board (COB), however the COB may or may not hold a superior position over the directors on the board (Charan, 2014; Vandewaerde et al., 2011). The COB's primary role is to help build board consensus and enable the board to speak and act as a single, unified entity (Vandewaerde et al., 2011). The COB's main purpose is to orchestrate "one voice" from the board while providing consistency to those who follow the board's governance policies

(Carver, 2002; Charan, 2014). Although separation between the CEO and the board has been prescribed in the past, many boards allow their CEO to serve in a director position on the board, or even lead the board (e.g. As the COB). Some governance theorists have written that CEOs who have either a directorate seat on the board they serve, or serve in a dual CEO/COB role can risk encountering "conflicts of interest," since "having the CEO on the board must eventually damage governance in some way," and if CEO mistakes were made, the board would do damage control (Carver, 2002, p. 169). If mistakes were made, the dual CEO/COB would be certain to do extra damage control (reflecting conflicts of interest). For example, during the Enron scandal, the CEO was able to block data requests from other directors to enable "self-dealing," and "management motives" were only questioned "in retrospect" after the damage had been done to the organization's operations and finances (Charan, 2014, p. 93). Conversely, other governance theorists believe that CEOs should "lead directly and in partnership" with board directors to steer the organization effectively, thus blurring the traditional definition of the CEO/board relationship (Charan, 2014, p. 214). CEOs who also serve as COBs further blur governance lines and organizational structure, and could possibly exert undue influence upon a board (Carver, 2002). The current body of research regarding for-profit board governance is more focused on financial performance than leadership, and pursuing quarterly returns for investors—regardless of the board's structure (Khan, 2011; Subramanian, 2015).

Ends vs. Means Approach. Modern day governance theorists and practitioners have prescribed that board directors are obligated to manage the firm's policies and work with their current CEO to establish practices, guidelines, and boundaries to minimize the firm's liability and also provide a return for the stockholders who own the firm (Carver, 2002; Mizruchi, 2004; Vandewaerde et al., 2011). John Carver's Policy Governance Model® translated governance

theory into practical, tactical leadership actions, so that new board members could navigate their role as a board member, understand their peers' expectations, and also understand how to properly provide governance (Carver, 2007). Carver asserted that a governing board must use a process that "explores, expresses, and achieves its intentions about that which it governs" (Carver, 2002, p. 30). In many of Carver's works, he delineated between board and staff actions as either pursuing the "ends" or the "means" (Carver, 2007, p. 50). The "ends," or the operational goals, are pursued and enabled with the board's governance, whereas the "means," which the CEO's operational staff would orchestrate, entailed the tactical maneuverings necessary to accomplish its goals (Carver, 2007).

In one of Carver's supplementary publications supporting his *Governance Model*, Carver made the point that the chairperson of the board (COB) would be most effective if they led with a servant leader mindset (Carver, 1997; Carver, 2007). Carver noted that the COB's role as a facilitator and consensus builder on governance issues was "secondary to the board's job," and the COB should exercise their role in a stewarding fashion as a servant leader (loc. 22). While Carver's early prescriptive writing made the connection between the COB and servant leadership, he used his personal experiences with boards, rather than quantitative data to support his assertions.

Based on Carver's model, board members should govern in a manner that allows the organization to achieve its goals, but board directors should not directly interact with the CEO's staff to influence the operations required to accomplish the 'means' (Carver, 2007). Although Carver's research pertained primarily to non-profit organizations, his research has produced director checklists, toolkits, and board processes that have resonated among directors.

Active Board Participation. Directors on smaller boards tend to mingle with the managerial members that report to the CEO and can influence operational actions, in a positive, or a negative manner (Charan, 2014). When researching larger corporations, Charan wrote that when board members become more accountable for their governance actions, they are exceedingly cultivating a "duty of care," and a "duty of loyalty," which has driven the need for a "need of leadership" (p. 18). Davis' research on board performance in relation to board structure supported the assertion that "returns to shareholders may be improved by combining, rather than by separating, the roles of chief executive officer and chairman of the board" (Davis, 1991, p. 237). While Davis' study findings were conclusive, his results were based on a sample size of 243 Fortune 500 firms over multiple years (Davis, 1991). Both Charan and Davis' research indicated that engaged board members who effectively lead their organization positively contribute to the overall success of their organization.

Vision Casting and Leadership. Leading a firm requires a shared vision of the future, and active involvement in navigating the organization's determined path, rather than passively reacting to organizational demand (Kouzes, J., & Posner, 2011). Every organization needs a goal, and a plan must be put in place by the board as to which ends they will pursue (Flint, 2012). Research regarding values and vision also found that "unless personal values were clear it didn't matter how clear the organization's values were" to drive future growth and profitability (Kouzes & Posner, 2011, loc. 319). Therefore leadership at the board level is essential to help the CEO both cast a vision, and pursue the long term goals of the owners of the firm. Unfortunately, "there seems to be a lack of information on leadership strategies used by boards of directors" (Byrne, 2012, p. 21). Boards that are able to identify successful leadership practices and employ

servant leadership can unlock the "foresight and conceptualization" skill sets to create a "high performing board" (p. 241).

Servant Leadership

Robert K. Greenleaf put pen to paper in the early 1970s and postulated a new version of leadership through essays, which later became *The Servant as Leader*, which he wrote based on his corporate management leadership experiences at AT&T (Greenleaf, 2008). Greenleaf wrote that a servant leader must have the "natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve *first*" (Sipe, 2009, loc. 218). While the concept of servant leadership might seem paradoxical at first, its simple, yet powerful tenet delivers results in both for-profit and nonprofit organizations (Flint, 2012). Servant leadership concepts and principals are subtly evolving with additional research, and tools to assess servant leader qualities, but Greenleaf's seminal writings still serve as a litmus test for new leadership theories claiming to be based on servant leadership principles.

Genesis and Background. Greenleaf "spent much of his organizational life in the field of management research, development, and education," and his theory reflected the wisdom of his life experiences and readings (Spears, 1995, p. 2). Greenleaf continually sought to understand the 'big picture' in life, and drew upon the works of novelists and poets similar to Emerson, E.B. White, Whitman, Tolstoy, and Robert Frost (Greenleaf, 1998). During his later work and essays after his retirement from AT&T, Greenleaf sought to bring servant leadership into the world via educational institutions, foundations, and church organizations (Greenleaf, 2008). He explored and expanded his theory of servant leadership, seeking to help organizations evolve, rather than revolutionize, while "communicating a basis for hope" by showing leaders how to experience a "rewarding life" through the practice of servanthood (Spears, 1995, p. 21).

The "Great Man" model of leadership concept was intuitively compelling to Greenleaf, but based on his many years of experience, he knew that leaders should seek a higher calling to serve others and improve their environments (Greenleaf, 1998, loc. 213). Greenleaf wrote that the "servant must stand against the culture on two critical issues: *power* and *competition*" (loc. 1023). The leadership principles Greenleaf posited were counter-cultural at the time. He shared that when servant leaders were successful, "the people will say, we did it ourselves," thus deflating the 'Great Man' model of a leader and building up followers (loc. 1620).

Servant as Leader Conceptualization. Greenleaf conceptualized and broadly outlined the principals of servant leadership based on his "intuitive insight," rather than his "conscious logic" after "reading Herman Hesse's *Journey to the East*" (Greenleaf, 2008, loc. 383). After he was able to conceptualize and articulate the mindset required to lead in a manner where a leader primarily served others, Greenleaf began to further expand his theory's strong ethical foundation that was rooted in relationships with followers (Sipe, 2009). In an interview questioning his epiphany while reading Hesse's literary work, Greenleaf was asked where the earliest teaching of servant leadership had occurred, and he "replied, in the Bible, of course, beginning early in the Old Testament" (Greenleaf, 1998, loc. 1198).

Visionary leadership and a compelling strategic vision for followers are important components of servant leadership (Ou, 2014). Greenleaf called this act "foresight," and was adamant that a servant leader should both serve, and lead while "practicing living partly in the future—all of the time" (loc. 1775). Foresight shared with followers in a positive manner provides a "basis for hope" to combat the heavy-handed transactional nature of leaders, who Greenleaf called "*anti-leaders*" (loc. 1648). Greenleaf also noted that intuition played a role in enabling foresight in servant leaders, since an intuitive leader can make a good decision despite

any gaps in the limited information that he is given (Greenleaf, 2008). A servant leader who can both keep an eye on the future, and also motivate in the present, can unlock the hidden potential that lies deep within his followers.

Greenleaf believed that building an environment of trust was imperative to unlocking the potential of followers (Sipe, 2009; Ou et al., 2014; van Dierendonck, 2011). He wrote that "the basis of trust... is an awareness that a critical watch is being kept," thus showing that everyone is a valuable member of the organization, and fairness should be fostered, regardless of rank or privilege (Greenleaf, 1977, loc. 1411). In business settings, trust can be further fostered through authenticity (Flint, 2012). The simple act of a leader apologizing to his subordinates can tip the balance of power for a brief instant to illustrate that the leader is human, humble, and open to the same rules as his followers (Autry, 2001; Ou, 2014). In his writings, Greenleaf lifted up Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) as the type of servant-led institution that is built upon trust and accountability (Greenleaf, 2008). He noted that AA was the type of organization that fostered trust through its principles, simple charter, and focus on healing its members. Discarding self-righteousness and pride while clothing oneself in humility helps a leader engage his followers as a servant leader (Autry, 2001; Ou, 2014).

Greenleaf wrote that when servant leadership was properly modeled and executed in the workplace, the servant leadership practices would become "self-regenerating," because the organization would benefit from the effectiveness of servant leaders, and in turn, foster the same values, mindset, and skills in its new leaders (Greenleaf, 1998, loc. 940). Servant leadership can 'rub off' on others over time, but to equip and empower an organization to produce great servant leaders, upper management must take the time and spend the money to "prepare them, educate them, and train them" (Autry, 2001, p. 53). Typically, for-profit companies install at least a

basic hierarchical organization structure in place to perform tasks, but to facilitate the servant leadership creation process, upper management should practice transparency, solicit candid feedback, and allow organizational communication boundaries to fall (Autry, 2001; Flint, 2012; Ou, 2014). Flattening the organization's communication structure enables the firm to cultivate rich dialogue amongst diverse individuals, identify leadership talent, and utilize its formal structure to its fullest (Petrey, 2011).

The quest to become a good servant leader is a "self-perpetuating cycle" that can span a lifetime (Liden et al., 2014). Greenleaf noted that the leader's journey, and the resulting character development was more important than a person's status, fame, or personal wealth (Greenleaf, 1998). To illustrate the fact that a servant leader might not be the most obvious leader, Greenleaf used Hawthorne's short story entitled *Great Stone Face* (Greenleaf, 1998). In the story, villagers search for a man who resembles the great stone face in the mountain, since a prophecy has pronounced that this mythical person will "enrich" the lives of the individuals in the town (Greenleaf, 1998, loc. 1353). After generations pass, none of the outsiders who have visited the town have resembled the stone face. However, as one of the inhabitants of the town matured and aged, his features transformed to match the stone face that everyone sought (Greenleaf, 1998). The moral of Hawthorne's story, and Greenleaf's retelling of the story provides insight as to the development of a servant leader—because as years pass, lives are enriched over time.

Characteristics. Larry Spears helped distill Greenleaf's theory of servant leadership into an "institutional philosophy and model," so that large companies could identify and replicate the positive traits, skills, and benefits of servant leadership (Spears, 1995, p. 8). As the first president of the Robert K. Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership, Spears helped synthesize

Greenleaf's speeches, essays, and books to identify the "ten characteristics of the servant-leader" (p. 4). Servant leader characteristics identified included: listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people, and building community (Sipe, 2009; Spears, 1995). Spears commented that the characteristics were "by no means exhaustive" (Spears, 1995, p. 7). Spears' action of distilling the soft management skills embodied in servant leadership served as a springboard for other researchers to identify and measure the attributes, skills, and principles of servant leaders.

After Spears' ten characteristics of servant leadership were codified, additional scholars shared their own variations on the theme of servant leadership using the elements of servant leadership. Laub (1999), Dennis (2004), Barbuto and Wheeler (2006), Sendjaya (2008), van Dierendonck (2011), and others began with Spears' list to refine a list of essential characteristics and skills for servant leaders to obtain, pursue, and emulate. To determine which organizations practiced servant leadership effectively, instruments were created, tested, and validated to assess the level of servant leadership in an organization (Laub, 1999). Please refer to Table 2.1 for a more detailed timeline of servant leadership definition and instrumentation.

One instrument, the "Servant Organizational Leadership Assessment (SOLA)" further refined Spears' list of Greenleaf's servant leader attributes into six servant leader actions, and then assessed whether these actions were present in an organization that subscribed to servant leadership beliefs (Laub, 1999, p. 7). Based on Laub's research, Greenleaf's ultimate organization would consist of servant leaders who: "valued people, developed people, built community, displayed authenticity, provided leadership, and shared leadership" (p. 83). In a later study, van Dierendonck (2011) proposed that servant leadership is shown by "empowering and developing people; by expressing humility, authenticity, interpersonal acceptance, and

stewardship; and by providing direction" (van Dierendonck, 2011, p. 1228). While several core, central themes can be noted from historical research, it is clear that a single operationalized list of servant leadership characteristics does not exist at this point in time.

Compilations of servant leader characteristics continue to be refined, and research over the last four decades has helped distill the essence of the theory to add clarity to the definition and instrumentation of the theory (van Dierendonck, 2011). When assessing survey instrumentation for dissertation research, only research instruments with the highest Cronbach alphas were sought. Utilizing the principle of Ockham's razor, which is also referred to as the law of parsimony, the SLQ instrument (overall Cronbach alpha = .981) was chosen, and the SOLA instrument (overall Cronbach alpha = .980) was chosen for use in the research study (Dannhauser, 2007). However, it is possible that Greenleaf never intended servant leadership to be a checklist of actions, skills, or attributes, but rather a simple, internalized philosophy that drove leaders toward success while helping others and building a community of servant leaders (Sipe, 2009).

Criticisms. Thomas Jefferson has been quoted as saying "Our critics are our friends, because they do show us our faults" (Sipe, 2009, loc. 1211). Servant leadership theory has been lightly criticized by proponents of other leadership theories. Over the last few decades, researchers have sought to further build upon Greenleaf's intuitive, yet theoretical foundation to provide a prescriptive method to both practice and identify servant leadership. Four criticisms of servant leadership are: the "paradoxical nature" of its title, debated core elements, a "utopian ring" by "putting others first", and the vague nature of the "conceptualizing" behavior that Liden (2011) included in his servant leadership model (Northouse, 2012, loc. 4292). Additionally, researchers commonly note that when analyzing servant leadership instruments, "caution is

warranted here, since models and measures may sometimes use different vocabulary for similar concepts, and vice versa (van Dierendonck, 2011, p. 1232).

Criticism regarding gender bias or preference in regards to servant leadership was alleged by Dr. Eicher-Catt in her 2005 *Women in Language* journal article entitled *The Myth of Servant Leadership: A Feminist Perspective*. In this article, Eicher-Catt theorized that "*servant and leader* together as a leadership model is unfeasible, and ... harmful to women," because "the *degendering* or *de-feminization* of servant leadership will never be possible" (Diehl, 2015, p. 68). To determine if a quantifiable link existed between gender and servant leadership, Diehl performed a quantitative study in 2015. Diehl's findings were conclusive, and determined that "no statistically significant differences emerged between the genders" in relation to servant leadership (p. 113).

While the criticisms listed are specific, they could be reclassified as concerns, or areas requiring further research. As the body of research evolves involving servant leadership, additional correlative relationships should be established to further refine the definition of servant leadership and quantify its impact upon an organization's effectiveness (Laub, 1999). Definitions of intangible concepts, such as wisdom, trust, and servanthood can be subjective in nature, so research further detailing and decomposing the dimensions which comprise the foundation of servant leadership could add clarity to the academic servant leadership dialogue.

Accountability and Performance. Accountability in the servant leader/follower relationship consists of a reciprocal relationship that the servant leader initiates and accompanies empowerment (Flint, 2012; Laub, 1999; Sipe, 2009; Spears, 1995; van Dierendonck, 2011). Greenleaf wrote that institutions "require of all a common purpose and a clear definition of obligations" (Greenleaf, 1977, loc. 2078). Furthermore, accountability, ethical behavior, and

performance are all interrelated (Northouse, 2012). Dr. Edgar Schein, who contributed seminal writings to the field of organizational culture and development, wrote that accountability can only be fostered by clear, consistent, communication, which utilizes objective mechanisms for feedback (Schein, 2010). Schein noted that "consensus must be achieved on what to measure, how to measure it, and what to do when corrections are needed" (Schein, 2010, p. 83). Servant leaders believe that they are responsible for initiating the accountability process, and helping their followers reach levels of high performance (Ou, 2014).

Liden et al., researched servant leadership in service-based organizations, and affirmed that accountability was key, since followers needed to adopt the same mindset as their leaders to succeed (Liden et al., 2014). In Liden et al.'s research, eight hypotheses were tested that focused on followers emulating a servant leader mindset, and the resulting impact on follower performance (Liden et al., 2014). Findings indicated that servant leadership fostered a "serving culture" in which followers emulated the attributes of their leader, increased their performance level, and felt accountable to their leaders, thus assisting in fulfilling their obligations (p. 1435). When accountability feedback mechanisms are utilized regularly, trust can be fostered, and synergies will be created to boost performance levels (Flint, 2012; Liden et al., 2014; Ou, 2014).

Once a servant leader connects with followers, followers typically reciprocate in a serving manner to continue building the leader/follower relationship. Receptivity to a leader's vision aligns follower thoughts, expectations, and actions with the shared vision that has been cast (Flint, 2012; Hybels, 2008). A recent study exploring servant leader effectiveness in increasing volunteerism at a fundraising "cause-related sporting event," revealed that a strong vision cast by a servant leader can increase follower receptivity and participation (Parris, 2012, p. 266). Furthermore, the study found that "servant leadership enhances volunteer motivation," by

tapping into the unique gifts of each follower, and by fostering intrinsic motivation (p. 266).

Although Parris and Peachey's findings were focused on servant leadership in the nonprofit sector, their findings can be applied to the for-profit business arena. In effect, follower reciprocation to servant leadership is driven by the ethical ideals and principals of servant leadership, which resonate with caring, high-performing individuals who are seeking a common cause, or goal (Davis, 1991; Flint, 2012; Ou, 2014). Servant leaders who can engage followers and unlock their desire to help others can build a community, which values high ideals, morals, and builds new servant leaders to impact both the workplace and the community (Parris, 2012).

Operationalization Through Survey Instruments. Transformational leadership theory has greatly impacted the 20th and 21st centuries, enabling leaders to look beyond the transactional nature of their roles to help advance the interests of their followers, and their organization (Bass, 2006; Flint, 2012; Sendjaya, 2008). Once the theory of transformational leadership was posited by Burns (1978), initially measured by Bass (1985) and other researchers, Avolio and Bass (1993) created the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) to identify and measure the major components of transformational leaders (Avolio, 1999). The MLQ instrument was vetted by subsequent studies, and multiple researchers have modified the MLQ to identify new transformational components in emerging leadership styles, such as servant leadership, that contain underlying transformational elements (Barbuto & Hayden, 2011; Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006; Liden et al., 2014; Pierro, 2013).

An early precursor to the MLQ was Bass' "six-factor model," which was initially given to military officers, and further refined over time by practitioners and researchers employing the six-factor instrument (Avolio, 1999, p. 441). The MLQ was subsequently established by Avolio, Bass, and Jung in 1999 to test and refine Bass' original six-factor leadership model, because the

measurement of the "charisma/inspirational factor" required more scrutiny to accurately quantify the characteristic (p. 444). Thousands of respondents from multiple countries participated to validate the MLQ 5X model, and to determine both higher order transformational leadership characteristics, as well as the lower level transactional elements of leadership (Avolio, 1999). The MLQ instrument is simple, yet robust, and requires input from both the leader and the follower to fully evaluate the transformational leadership characteristics of a leader from multiple perspectives (Bass, 2006). The five transformational elements of the MLQ (5X) are: "idealized influence (charisma), idealized influence (behaviors), inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration" (loc. 513). The MLQ also assesses the transactional full range of leadership model (FRL) to a degree, and specifically measures the following transactional leadership styles: "contingent reward, management-by-exception (active & passive), and laissez-faire" (loc. 535). By integrating both transformational and transactional factors from two separate respondent perspectives, the MLQ provides both a comprehensive approach, and robust analysis of a leader's leadership characteristics (Pierro, 2013).

Additional leadership instruments have been constructed to assess transformational leadership in specific settings and with unique characteristics. For example, the Transformational Leadership Questionnaire (TLQ) bears "conceptual similarity" with the MLQ, despite its more narrow focus (Bass, 2006, loc. 706). The TLQ redefined the lens of the MLQ to encompass eight leadership actions and skills, and was oriented more toward "public sector organizations in the United Kingdom" (loc. 707). While the TLQ has expanded its categories to evaluate transformational leadership on additional levels, researchers could postulate that a more parsimonious model could yield more robust results than a wide, fragmented approach. Although transformational leadership is a component of servant leadership, servant leadership

"differs from traditional approaches to leadership" because "it stresses personal integrity" and "forming strong long-term relationships with employees" (Liden et al., 2008, p. 162).

To assess the unique characteristics of servant leadership, the Servant Leadership Questionnaire (SLQ) was created by Barbuto and Wheeler (2006) to emulate and elevate the MLQ instrument. Evaluating both the unique characteristics of servant leadership, and the transformational leadership aspects measured by the MLQ, the SLQ began with "the 10 characteristics of Spears (1995) with the dimension calling—the natural desire to serve others" (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006, p. 304). Barbuto and Wheeler's research distilled eleven servant leadership concepts into five attributes through multiple iterations of a Delphi study which continually refined the SLQ's questions, items, and subscales (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006). In addition to evaluating transformational leadership, the SLQ measures "altruistic calling, emotional healing, persuasive mapping, wisdom, and organizational stewardship" (p. 300). Incorporating aspects from the MLQ, the SLQ expanded the MLQ instrument by focusing on follower outcomes with specific servant leader questions (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006).

Sendjaya et al., performed a literary review of published servant leadership literature and instruments, and produced the initial format for a "Servant Leadership Behaviour Scale (SLBS)" (Sendjaya, 2008, p. 417). Their study assessed the Organizational Leadership Assessment (OLA)(Laub, 2003), the Revised Servant Leadership Profile (RSLP) (Wong & Page, 2003), the Servant Leadership Questionnaire (SLQ) (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006), and the Servant Shepherd Leadership Scale (SLSS) (Whittington et al., 2006) in an attempt to produce a refined survey instrument (Sendjaya, 2008, p. 411). The resulting SLBS was a slimmer instrument with 35 items and 6 subscales, but additional validation needs to be performed on the instrument to prove its validity (Sendjaya, 2008). Sendjaya et al.'s research produced an instrument that concerned

researchers because of its "issue of factorial validity" (van Dierendonck, 2011, p. 1242). Based upon the literature review, at this point in time, the SLQ is the most parsimonious individual servant leader survey instrument with 23 items and 5 subscales, and also has been validated by subsequent research studies by other researchers (Barbuto & Hayden, 2011).

To assess the overall servant leadership strength of an entire organization, Laub (1999) configured and validated a new instrument. His Servant Organizational Leadership Assessment (SOLA) was an extension of his previous work to assess overall organizational leadership styles at a corporation (Laub, 1999). Laub's "three-part Delphi study" refined the instrument's items during multiple iterations (p. 56). Additionally, Laub was able to positively correlate an organization's SOLA score with the level of employee "job satisfaction" at the organization (p. 85). Laub postulated in his conclusion that if the SOLA could be correlativity linked to organizational outcomes, such as productivity, then "the instrument could be used for predicting probabilities of success within organizational units" (p. 88).

Although research continues to revise and refine a core set of servant leadership characteristics, several instruments are continually revisited to determine their validity. For example, the MLQ was revised to create the SLQ, and has been tested and validated with subsequent studies. Additionally, the Servant Leadership Profile instrument (SLP) has been through several iterations to determine whether the key salient points that the instrument measures are the most valid servant leadership characteristics. Table 2.1 presents the high points of servant leadership research over the last two decades and illustrates the iterative nature of several instruments. A more thorough analysis, which includes all of the dimensions for each theory or instrument is included in Appendix. G.

Table 2.1 - Chronology of Servant Leadership Research

<u>Researcher(s)</u>	<u>Year(s)</u>	<u>Items</u>	<u>Subscales</u>	<u>Significance and/or Instrument</u>
Greenleaf	1977	N/A	N/A	Theory & Conceptualization - Focus on Follower
Avolio & Bass	1993, 1997	36	5	MLQ (5X) - Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire, Multiple Iterations
Spears	1995	N/A	10	Initial Characterization into 10 Items
Farling, Stone, & Wilson	1999	N/A	5	Conceptual presentation - Service based
Laub	1999	43	6	SOLA-Servant Organizational Leadership Assessment
Page & Wong	2000	99	8	SLP-Servant Leadership Profile
Russell & Stone	2002	N/A	9	Transformational/Servant Leader 'Practical' Model (Lit Rev)
Laub	2003	60	6	OLA-Organizational Leadership Assessment
Page & Wong	2003	97	10	RSLP- Servant Leadership Profile-Revised
Patterson	2003	N/A	7	Value Based Transformational Model (Kuhn-based)
Dennis	2004	25	6	Servant Leadership Assessment Tool (SLA)
Dennis & Bocarnea	2005	42	5	Revision of Patterson's 2003 Model
Barbuto & Wheeler	2006	23	5	SLQ-First Servant Leader Questionnaire
Whittington et al.	2006	30	4	SLSS-Servant Shepherd Leadership Scale
Wong & Davey	2007	62	5	SLP-Servant Leadership Profile-Revision to 5 dimensions
Sendjaya, et al.	2008	35	6	SLBS-Servant Leadership Behaviour Scale
Liden, et al.	2008	28	7	SLQ - Revised to Explore Servant Leadership and LMX Theory
Sipe & Frick	2009	10	7	7 Elements
van Dierendonck & Nuijten	2011	30	8	SLS-Servant Leadership Survey
Barbuto & Hayden	2011	23+7	4	SLQ Combined with the LMX-7
Flint, Jr.	2012	N/A	7	7 Principles of Servant Leadership
Wong & Page	2013	62	7	SLP - Revision (7 factors)

*Multidimensional Analyses - With and without instrumentation

** Research performed without a quantitative instrument will have N/A in the 'Items' column

Analysis of Literature Review

As a result of the comprehensive literature review focused on board governance methods in relation to servant leadership characteristics and execution, a research gap has been identified. Extensive literature regarding governance and servant leadership exists, but no research currently available bridges the research gap between the two subject areas by exploring the leadership practices of board directors in relation to an organization's transactional servant leadership practices. Servant leadership is a powerful leadership style that "offers the potential to positively revolutionize interpersonal work relations and organizational life" (Russell, 2002, p. 154). Additionally, servant leadership is effective because it "impacts followers," through a "role modeling process" (Liden et al., 2014, p. 1445). The conceptual framework in Exhibit 1.1 illustrated relationships, which have not previously been tested to determine if correlations exist, and Table 2.1 provided an overview of the current body of research regarding servant leadership. Details regarding the exact dimensions and subscales from Table 2.1 are in Appendix G.

In the next chapter, the framework of the research methodology is presented. The process utilized for identifying the sample group members and collecting data will be presented, and the data analysis process will be described. Details regarding the subscales and dimensions present in both the SLQ and the SOLA survey instruments will be diagrammed to illustrate the levels of servant leadership present in the resulting data set obtained by the survey instrument. Finally, the data analysis methods used to evaluate servant leadership, organizational health, and to test whether a relationship existed will be described.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

The research design, independent and dependent variables, research questions, and the hypotheses tested are presented. The two research instruments employed (the SLQ and the SOLA) are outlined, the regression method is presented, the population and sampling group are defined, and the statistical analysis methods is provided. The research methodology is summarized in a flowchart format in Exhibit 3.1, and is elaborated upon throughout the chapter.

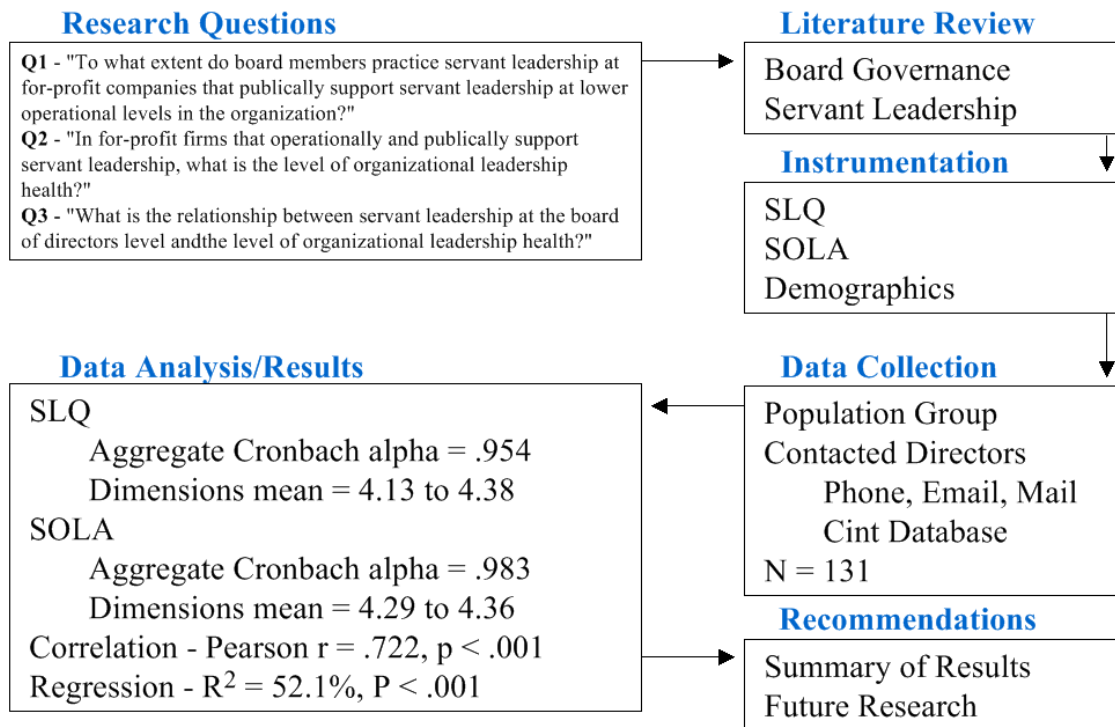


Exhibit 3.1 - Methodology Roadmap

Research Design

The research design was quantitative in nature and combined a survey research design utilizing the SLQ and the SOLA survey instruments with subsequent correlation and regression

analysis design types. Both the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient and the regression analysis tested whether a relationship existed between servant leadership at the board of directors' level (SLQ-independent variable), and the organizational health of the operational servant organization (SOLA-dependent variable).

A quantitative research methodology was selected because the majority of the research reviewed during the literature review utilized a qualitative research framework. Additionally, the quantitative research framework provided the following advantages over a qualitative approach:

- Objective statistical methods could be employed and verified
- Research results required less interpretation and verification
- An empirical and systematic approach
- Easily reproduced to support future research

At each of the for-profit organizations in the sample group, the board member perceptions of servant leadership were evaluated on two levels: the director level, and the organizational level. First, the leadership style of the board of directors was assessed using the SLQ instrument in a self-assessment survey format (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006). Secondly, to obtain the board of directors' assessment of the effectiveness of the organization's leadership practices, the SOLA instrument was given to generate an organizational health assessment (see Appendix D) (Laub, 1999). To provide a constant, anchoring data point, each for-profit corporation in the defined sample group had externally marketed or publicly professed a belief in operational servant leadership. Board participants were informed that the survey was a leadership assessment, but were not informed that the survey quantified servant leadership skills and beliefs until at the end of the assessment. A regression analysis was performed using the aggregate scores of the two instruments (SLQ and SOLA) to substantiate the servant leadership

findings.

To test whether a relationship existed between the independent servant leader variables (in the SLQ) and the dependent variables (in the SOLA), an analysis with the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient (a type of bivariate correlation) was performed to determine how closely the SLQ and SOLA variables were linked together. The resulting r value demonstrated the strength of the variables' relationship, and the statistical significance of the result was calculated. The coefficient of correlation was assessed to determine the direction and strength of the relationship between the variables. To determine the cause and effect relationship between the two variables, a linear regression was performed on the aggregate SLQ and SOLA scores to determine what proportion of the variance in the SOLA score was explained by the SLQ score.

In addition to the data from the two survey instruments, demographic data was gathered, which included: gender, tenure/experience, and age range. The demographic data was analyzed to determine if a predominant psychographic profile existed for the respondent group members. An overview containing the specific variables for each portion of the survey instrument is illustrated in Exhibit 3.2. The SLQ and SOLA instruments are presented in their entirety in Appendices A and C, respectively.

Independent and Dependent Variables

The SLQ generated the data required to evaluate the servant leadership characteristics of the for-profit board members, and served as the independent variable in the study, since the SLQ "combines the 10 characteristics of Spears (1995) with the dimension calling—the natural desire to serve others" (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006, p. 304). Although the SLQ encompasses all 10 of Spears' original servant leader characteristics, Barbuto and Wheeler further distilled Spears' servant leadership concepts into five attributes (sublevels/subscales) through multiple iterations

of a Delphi study, which refined the survey questions to create a highly reliable and efficient instrument containing only 23 questions (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006).

Data from the SOLA instrument was used to evaluate Hypothesis 2 (H2), and the data from the SOLA was used as the dependent variable to test Hypothesis 3 (H3). The dependent SOLA data quantified whether the beliefs and practices of the board members were congruent with the organizations that they governed. A 360-degree organizational health assessment was outside of the scope of this study, and managerial and operational individuals did not complete the SOLA instrument to evaluate the effectiveness of the organization's board. The research was designed to focus on the leadership style of the directors, and determine the board's assessment of the health of the for-profit organizations that operationally practice servant leadership.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

Three research questions (Q1, Q2, and Q3), and three hypotheses (H1, H2, and H3) were addressed via the research. The first two research hypotheses (H1, H2) tested whether servant leadership existed at the board level, and whether the board of directors believed that the organization's operational leadership was healthy (as defined by the SOLA). After analyzing the results from the hypothesis tests, a correlation and regression analysis was performed to test the servant leadership present at the board of directors' level in relation to the perceived health of the organization (as a defined by servant leadership practices). Each null hypothesis tested is presented below with its alternative hypothesis.

Research Question One (Q1). The first research question was: "To what extent do board members practice servant leadership at for-profit companies that publicly support servant leadership at lower operational levels in the organization?" Each board of director's response to the SLQ instrument was evaluated, and the results were aggregated to determine whether

directors in the sample group practiced servant leadership. To date, no quantitative research is known to exist that has evaluated servant leadership at the board of directors' level in for-profit firms that publicly support servant leadership.

Research Question Two (Q2). "In for-profit firms that operationally and publicly support servant leadership, what is the level of organizational leadership health?" Board directors' responses to the SOLA instrument were analyzed to determine whether the board of directors evaluated their firm as displaying a high level of organizational health as defined by servant leadership attributes. The SOLA instrument quantified the organizations' level of health, and more specifically, the level of servant leadership present on the SOLA's six separate subscales. The aggregate score of all subscales provided an overall indicator of organizational health.

Research Question Three (Q3). "What is the relationship between servant leadership at the board of directors' level and the level of organizational leadership health?" Once the first two questions (Q1, Q2) were answered, the SLQ and SOLA data were analyzed to create a regression model to determine whether servant leadership at the board of directors' level (independent variable) could predict organizational health (criterion variable) based on the input of the board directors. To date, no quantitative research exists that has evaluated servant leadership at the board of directors' level in relation to the board member's perceived organizational health (in for-profit servant-led companies).

Hypothesis One (H1). The following hypothesis was tested to determine the answer to the first research question (Q1).

H1₀: There is no servant leadership present at the board of directors' level in for-profit firms that operationally and publicly promote servant leadership.

H1_a: Servant leadership is present at the board of directors' level in for-profit firms that operationally and publicly promote servant leadership.

Hypothesis Two (H2). The following hypothesis was tested to determine the answer to the second research question (Q2):

H2₀: For-profit firms operationally and publicly promoting servant leadership do not have above average operational health.

H2_a: For-profit firms operationally and publicly promoting servant leadership have above average operational health.

Hypothesis Three (H3). The following hypothesis was tested to determine the answer to the third research question (Q3):

H3₀: There is no relationship between servant leadership at the board of directors' level in for-profit firms, and the operational health of the organization.

H3_a: When servant leadership is present at the board of directors' level in for-profit firms, the organization has above average operational health.

Population and Sampling

The population group consisted of for-profit organizations that publicly support servant leadership at an operational level to achieve the goals of their firm. The research sample group included organizations that were (at the time of this research):

- For-profit sponsors of the Robert K. Greenleaf' Center for Servant Leadership, or companies that were featured in 'Greenleaf Profiles of Success'
- Members of Conscious Capitalism[®], which is a group that holds servant leadership as one of its core tenants
- For-profit firms listed on ModernServantLeader.org

- Firms that had the term 'servant leadership' written into the company's operational bylaws or 10-K statements
- Firms where servant leadership was publicly marketed as a core component of the organization's go-to-market strategy

The sample group consisted of 200 organizations. The data collection phase sought to obtain a convenience sample that would produce statistically significant results with a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin for error. After inputting the sample group size, the confidence interval, and the required margin for error into the online SurveyMonkey sample size calculator, the webtool noted that 132 respondents would be needed to produce results within the required parameters. While the number of responses at each organization varied, at least two complete survey responses were requested from each organization. This requested sample (2+ board members per organization) sought to ensure that a single board response would not bias the leadership evaluation for an entire servant-led organization, but this metric could not be verified. The response rates and the number of responses were statistically validated with the assistance of a statistical consultant during the data analysis portion of the study to determine which outliers to accept, and which to reject from the sample data group.

Instrumentation

The research study combined and employed three survey instruments. The three instruments were combined into a single instrument and remotely administered to the respondent group. The individual instruments were the SLQ, the SOLA, and a demographic collector consisting of three categorical questions. Both the SLQ and the SOLA have been vetted and are previously validated survey instruments—utilized and refined by hundreds of respondents. Both

the SLQ and the SOLA instruments have a reliability (Cronbach alpha) $> .980$ (Laub, 1999; Barbuto & Hayden, 2011). A summary of the instrumentation follows in Exhibit 3.2:

<u>SLQ</u>	<u>SOLA</u>
<u>Measures:</u> Total Servant Leadership - 5 Sublevels	<u>Measures:</u> Organizational Leadership - 6 Sublevels
<u>Questions:</u> 23	<u>Questions:</u> 60
<u>Administered to:</u> Board Members	<u>Administered to:</u> Board Members
<u>Results:</u> Score 1 (Low) to 5 (5 = High)	<u>Results:</u> Score 1 (Low) to 5 (5 = High)

Demographic Collector

Gender

Board Tenure (Years)

Age Range

Exhibit 3.2 - Instrumentation Summary

Servant Leadership Questionnaire (SLQ). The leadership style(s) of the board of directors were assessed using the Servant Leadership Questionnaire (SLQ) by Barbuto and Wheeler in a self-reporting survey format (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006). Barbuto and Wheeler's SLQ instrument's five subscales of servant leadership are: "altruistic calling, emotional healing, persuasive mapping, wisdom, and organizational stewardship" (p. 300). The SLQ's five major subscales possess the following alpha coefficients: Altruistic calling (alpha = .820), emotional healing (alpha = .910), wisdom (alpha = .920), persuasive mapping (alpha = .870), and organizational stewardship (alpha = .890) (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006). Each of the subscales has been tested for reliability (Cronbach alpha), and the overall instrument had an alpha of .981. A summary of the alpha scores of both instruments is presented in Exhibit 3.3.

The SLQ assessed the presence of servant leadership in a leader, and established a servant leadership score for each board member. The SLQ utilized a 5 point Likert-type scale to rate each respondent's level of servant leadership (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006). Each of the SLQ's five subscales was scored to assess the areas where respondents possessed servant leadership strengths in specific areas (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006). Aggregated scores were also evaluated to determine whether board members did or did not practice servant leadership to test Hypothesis 1 (H1). The SLQ instrument is presented for reference in Appendix A, and a copy of an email from Dr. Wheeler granting the use of the SLQ instrument for this study is contained in Appendix B.

Servant Organizational Leadership Assessment (SOLA). The SOLA instrument was administered in conjunction with the SLQ to obtain a second assessment of the board of directors' opinions regarding the indicators of organization's leadership effectiveness and strengths (Laub, 1999). The dimensions assessed in the SOLA included: values people (alpha = .910), develops people (alpha = .900), builds community (alpha = .900), displays authenticity (alpha = 0.93), provides leadership (alpha = .910), and shares leadership (alpha = .930) (Laub, 1999, p. 83). Additional variable validation existed because "each of the two subscores/subscales, *Organization* and *Leadership*, had high reliability scores", specifically, the organization assessment subscore had an alpha = .950, and the leadership assessment subscore had an alpha of .980 (Laub, 1999, p. 68). The instrument employed a Likert-type scale, which ranked the organizational health of an organization (1-5). Additional information regarding the overall health assessment from the instrument is contained in Appendix D.

After Laub originally created the SOLA instrument in 1999, he subsequently renamed the instrument the OLA, and founded the OLAGroup (Laub, 2015). The renaming of the SOLA was performed to appeal to a wider audience. The slightly modified OLA instrument incorporated

six additional employee satisfaction questions, which are utilized when using the instrument in a 360-degree organizational health analysis (Laub, 2015). For the purposes of the research study, three of the six employee satisfaction questions were removed from the instrument. The removal of the stand alone employee satisfaction subscale did not impact the significance of the results. The results were evaluated and confirmed by a statistical consultant as statistically significant. Additionally, the SOLA subscales were previously tested separately (by Dr. Laub, as noted above), and each possessed a reliable alpha value. The written format of the SOLA instrument is available for reference in Appendix C, and Dr. Laub's approval to utilize the SOLA is located in Appendix E.

Each question in the SOLA was rated on a 5 point Likert-type scale. The SOLA instrument produced a score to indicate a level of organizational health as defined in Exhibit 3.3:

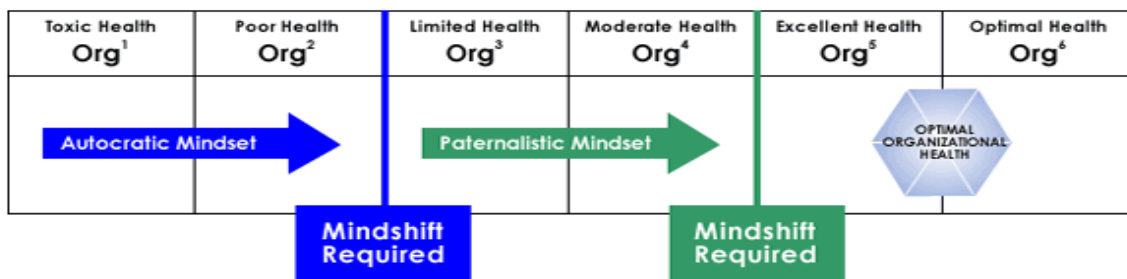


Exhibit 3.3 - SOLA Organizational Health - Overall SOLA Assessment (Laub, 2015)

SLQ

Altruistic Calling ($\alpha = .82$)
 Emotional Healing ($\alpha = .91$)
 Wisdom ($\alpha = .92$)
 Persuasive Mapping ($\alpha = .87$)
 Organizational Stewardship ($\alpha = .89$)

SLQ Overall ($\alpha = .981$)

SOLA

Values People ($\alpha = .91$)
 Develops People ($\alpha = .90$)
 Builds Community ($\alpha = .90$)
 Displays Authenticity ($\alpha = .93$)
 Provides Leadership ($\alpha = .91$)
 Shares Leadership ($\alpha = .93$)

SOLA Overall ($\alpha = .980$)

Exhibit 3.4 - Instrumentation Reliability and Subscale Alphas

In addition to the SLQ and SOLA instruments, the survey instrument included demographic questions (as noted in Exhibit 3.1) to contextualize any statistically significant findings. Descriptive statistics were used to understand the "general nature of the data obtained" (Leedy, 2013, p. 10). The data analysis incorporated information regarding the role of the board member, the tenure of the board member (in relation to their board position), and the age band, which categorized each respondent. The age bands utilized were < 30, 30-40, 41-50, 51-60, and 70+. This information collected was kept strictly confidential, and a summary of the findings has been offered to each of the respondents upon the successful defense of the dissertation.

Ethical Assurances

Ethical awareness is of the utmost concern when performing research on human subjects (Belmont Report, 1979). Concern and care for the personal data of the respondents were both woven into the survey design, data collection, and data analysis phases of the research. All respondents were made aware that the completion of the survey was voluntary, and respondents could abandon the survey at any time. Each survey respondent was made aware that the survey

tool evaluated leadership characteristics, although servant leadership was not mentioned specifically until the end of the survey. Each respondent was given a unique number, and personal information was removed from the data set prior to analysis. All three of the primary ethical principals outlined in the Belmont Report of 1979 were taken into consideration. During the research design and execution a "respect for persons," as well as an attitude of "beneficence," was present (Belmont Report, 1979, p. 6). Additionally, respondents were given a venue for "justice" if they had any questions regarding the survey or their personal information (p. 8). Piedmont International University reviewed the survey in the submitted International Review Board (IRB) application submitted in April 2016. The IRB application included the survey design, the consent form, and additional information pertaining to the nature of the research. At the conclusion of the survey, respondents were provided with the researcher's personal contact information and respondents were also offered a free copy of the resulting dissertation. Prior to analysis, all personal data was removed from the respondents' data rows. During the data analysis phase, respondent data was kept on a separate USB drive, which was kept in a locked location at the researcher's residence. In addition to the safeguards employed by the researcher, Cint also reviewed the survey instrument and approved it for use with its respondent base. The additional oversight by Cint ensured that the research adhered to international research codes of ethics, specifically ESOMAR (www.esomar.org), and also CASRO (www.casro.org). Both the ethical treatment and care of respondents and their data is of paramount importance to scholarly research.

Data Collection

Prior to collecting the data from the sample group, the researcher submitted an application for initial review of research using human subjects to the Institutional Review Board

(IRB) at Piedmont International University for approval. Upon receiving approval from the IRB, each of the for-profit organizations supporting operational servant leadership was contacted via phone, email, and conventional mail methods to fill out the survey, which was created and hosted in SurveyMonkey. SurveyMonkey notes on their website that they are the "world's leading provider of web-based survey solutions". The SurveyMonkey survey combined the SLQ, the SOLA, and the demographic questions previously outlined. When responses are entered online via SurveyMonkey, data is stored in a uniform manner to be extracted in a tabular format later to aid in data analysis. Each row of the data table downloaded from SurveyMonkey was associated with a single respondent, and each respondent was given a unique ID. To maintain the confidentiality of the respondents, personal data identifying the respondent and their organization was not included in the data set. When respondents filled out a paper version of the survey, this researcher entered their data into the database manually to maintain the integrity of the SurveyMonkey dataset.

Each respondent provided consent prior to filling out the survey. An example of the consent form is located in Appendix F. Additionally, the beginning of each version of the survey began with the statement that "Your completion of this survey implies consent to participate in this research". Respondents were given the option to discontinue filling out the survey at any point, and no incomplete responses were obtained. At the conclusion of the survey, respondents were given the opportunity to request additional information regarding the survey from the researcher.

Since the sample group consisted of individuals who have hectic schedules and have assistants who screen their phone calls, emails, and mail, the initial attempts at data collection were difficult and produced very few responses. Potential respondents did not initially return

phone calls despite repeated attempts, and an email campaign to over 100 potential respondents only produced one completed survey in SurveyMonkey. After over 100 phone calls were made, and over 100 emails were sent, this researcher modified his approach to leverage multiple media types to solicit responses. The data collection methods employed were (in order of initiation):

1. Phone and email
2. LinkedIn InMail Requests
3. Direct Mail Campaign
4. SurveyMonkey Database Engagement
5. Cint Database Engagement

Direct Mail Campaign. The third method of data collection produced twenty-two (22) responses during the data collection period. After the data analysis phase was completed, four (4) additional direct mail responses were received, but not included in the responses. The direct mail piece was an oversized 9"x12" manila envelope with multiple unique postage stamps to create visual interest. Each external envelope was stamped with the phrase "Leaders Pay it Forward" to further draw interest. Each direct mail envelope contained the following:

1. A personalized letter from the researcher, customized for each recipient
2. An informed consent letter
3. An informed consent form
4. A printed copy of the SurveyMonkey survey
5. A self-addressed stamped oversized manila envelope (also bearing multiple colorful stamps and stamped with the phrase "Leaders Pay It Forward")

In addition to a response from the original recipient, several board members copied the survey and gave it to their fellow board members to complete. The direct mail phase of data

collection began in June 2016, and concluded in August 2016. An overview of the data collection phase is provided in Exhibit 3.5.

Cint Database Engagement. To reduce the length of the data collection period, this researcher contacted SurveyMonkey to obtain responses from their respondent pool. After working with SurveyMonkey for two weeks to outline respondent characteristics, SurveyMonkey concluded that they could not refine their respondent pool to meet the needs of this researcher. Seeking contact with additional for-profit board members, this researcher was referred to a company named Cint.

Cint is a marketing research firm who owns and maintains one of the largest databases for online market research. Their "online insight exchange platform" contains 19,000,000 potential respondents for surveys from around the world, and they lease portions of their database to SurveyMonkey and other market research platforms. In the United States, Cint has 2,300,000 online respondents per their website as of October, 2016. After a contract was signed with Cint and the respondent demographics refined the number of potential respondents, 397 potential for-profit board members were available to take the survey (pending qualification). Cint directed for-profit board directors to the same SurveyMonkey survey, and this researcher added two additional questions to verify that the potential respondents were part of the target sample group for the research study. The two pre-screener qualification questions were:

1. Do you currently sit on the board of a for-profit company? - Y/N
2. Does the corporation where you are a board member endorse or practice (Y/N):
 - Servant Leadership
 - Steward Leadership
 - Conscious Capitalism

If a potential respondent entered the survey and answered 'no' to either question, they were thanked for their time and the survey ended. The goal for the Cint survey was to collect 100 valid responses +/-10% over a 10 day period of time. The survey launched at noon on a Monday, and the required number of valid responses were collected by Tuesday afternoon. Cint tracked both the disqualified respondents and the successfully completed surveys. Out of the potential 397 for-profit board members who were selected for the survey based on the demographic profiles contained in the Cint database, 221 entered the survey, 112 did not qualify to take the survey and exited, and 109 respondents qualified to take the survey and recorded valid responses in SurveyMonkey.

A summary of the data collection phases and the subsequent data analysis is presented below in Exhibit 3.5:

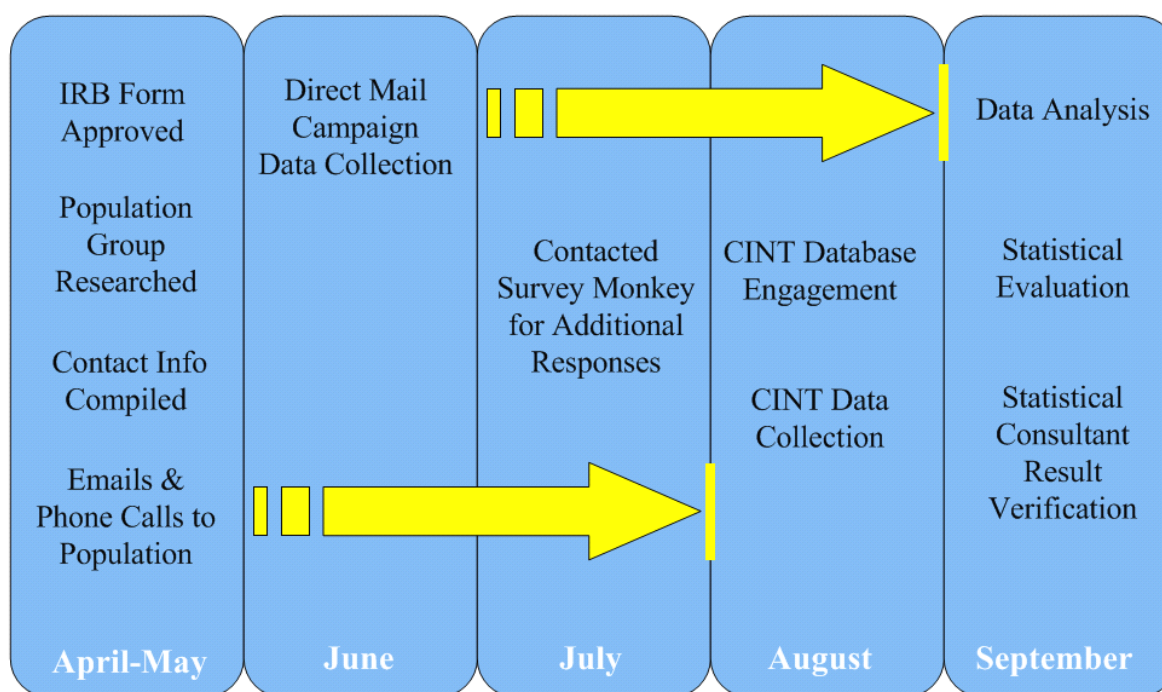


Exhibit 3.5 - Data Collection and Analysis Timeline

Data Analysis

Once the data were collected, respondent scores were evaluated on both a micro (dimensional) level, and a macro (aggregate) level. Both aggregate SLQ and SOLA scores, as well as the subscores from each of the instruments were analyzed with a battery of statistical tests. After determining whether it was possible to accept or reject the null hypotheses (H1, H2, and H3), the demographic data collected provided additional insights and perspectives for future research.

SPSS data analysis software was employed to analyze the data set. A professional statistics consultant was utilized to validate the data analysis to accept or reject each of the hypotheses. After reformatting the data obtained from the survey for analysis, descriptive statistics, such as the mean and the standard deviation were calculated to determine the dispersion, central tendency, and range of the resulting data set(s). A frequency distribution was calculated (seeking a significance value of $> .05$) to determine whether a normal distribution was present in the data, or if the data was skewed. Confidence intervals were created for the data from both the SLQ and the SOLA to determine the validity of the data, and the means of the two instruments were evaluated.

Statistical analysis was performed to evaluate each of the interactions between the subscales in the two survey instruments. Statistical correlation scores were calculated to test and evaluate each of the 30 interactions (without manipulation) between the functional attributes/subscales of the SLQ instrument and the SOLA instrument. The data was analyzed to determine if there was a relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable.

To test whether to accept or reject $H1_0$ as false, the overall SLQ scores were aggregated

and analyzed. A cluster analysis was performed, and the central tendency of the data was analyzed. The SLQ was evaluated at both a micro and a macro level to determine the consistency of the SLQ scores. Finally, a p -value test was performed to determine whether to accept or reject $H1_0$.

To test whether to accept or reject $H2_0$ as false, the overall SOLA scores were aggregated and analyzed. A cluster analysis was performed, and the central tendency of the data was analyzed. The SOLA was evaluated at both a micro and a macro level to determine the consistency of the SOLA scores. Finally, a p -value test was performed to determine whether to accept or reject $H2_0$.

To test whether to accept or reject $H3_0$ as false, the independent servant leader variables (in the SLQ) and the dependent organizational assessment variables (in the SOLA) were tested using correlation and regression analysis to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between servant leadership and the operational health of the organization. The Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient (a bivariate correlation method, also referred to as Pearson's r) produced a F -value, with a standard deviation and an r value to determine if the SLQ and SOLA data is linked. A t-test was performed to determine the statistical significance of any relationship. To visualize the goodness of fit, a cluster analysis was produced with a scatter plot with the resulting r value. Finally, a p -value was calculated to test whether a relationship existed between board level servant leadership and organizational health, and to accept or reject $H3_0$.

After $H1$, $H2$, and $H3$ were tested, the SOLA and SLQ data were analyzed and partitioned by the demographic data variables (age, gender, and tenure). Scatter plots were created to illustrate the linear regression equation. This analysis sought to determine if a

predominant psychographic profile existed among the sample group members, and if differences existed based on the respondent demographics.

Summary

The quantitative research study utilized a survey and correlational research design methodology with a targeted sample group consisting of 200 for-profit organizations that publicly support operational servant leadership. The research obtained a convenience sample consisting of 131 respondents to produce statistically significant results with a low margin for error. Data was collected via an online survey hosted by SurveyMonkey and via paper surveys. All manual responses were entered into SurveyMonkey and stored in a spreadsheet for analysis utilizing SPSS. Descriptive statistics were used to understand the "general nature of the data obtained" (Leedy, 2013, p. 10). The three hypotheses were tested to determine whether servant leadership existed at the board of directors level (H1), to determine the level of organizational leadership health (H2), and to quantify a relationship between servant leadership at the board of directors' level and organizational health (H3). After the three hypotheses were tested, demographic data was incorporated to provide contextual information of the sample group. The data analysis portion of the study was verified by a statistics consultant prior to finalizing Chapter Four: Results.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

This quantitative analysis explored the intersection between board leadership and operational servant leadership in for-profit firms. The sample consisted of 200 firms. To collect the required sample data, two survey instruments (the Servant Leadership Questionnaire (SLQ; Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006) and the Servant Organizational Leadership Assessment (SOLA; Laub, 1999)) were administered to board members remotely. Potential respondents were contacted via phone, email, direct mail, and through the Cint database. Valid survey responses, with no missing values, were provided by 131 board members of for-profit companies that endorsed or practiced servant leadership, steward leadership, and/or conscious capitalism. A summary of the data collection process is summarized in Exhibit 4.1.

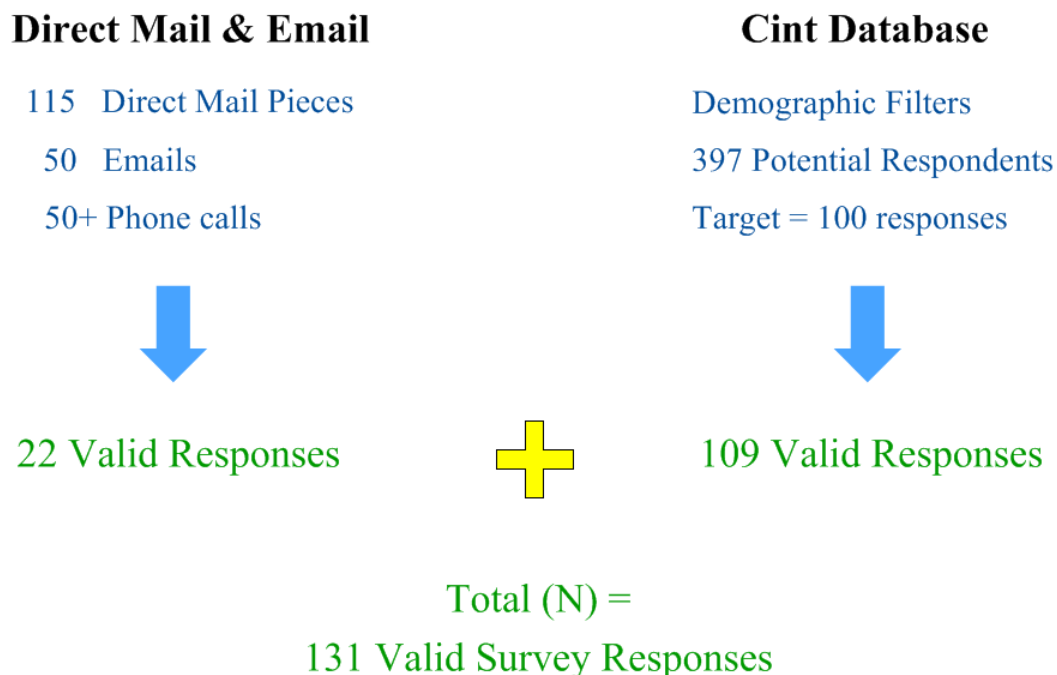


Exhibit 4.1 - Breakdown of Data Collection Process

The survey results are presented systematically in four sections. The first section describes the demographic characteristics of the 131 respondents. The next three sections present statistical evidence to address the three research questions, and to test their associated hypotheses.

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Table 4.1 summarizes the frequency distributions (counts and percentages) of the demographic characteristics of the 131 respondents. The majority of the respondents (60.3%, $n=79$) were male. The tenure of the males ranged from 1 to 20 years. The tenure of over half of the respondents (53.4%, $n=70$) was from 1 to 10 years. Respondents ranged in age from < 30 to 79 years. The most frequent age group (43.5%, $n=57$) was 30 to 39 years.

Table 4.1 - Frequency Distributions of Demographic Characteristics (N = 131)

Characteristic	Category	<i>n</i>	Percent
Gender	Male	79	60.3%
	Female	52	39.7%
Tenure (Years)	1 to 5	11	8.4%
	6 to 10	59	45.0%
	11 to 15	27	2.6%
	16 to 20	16	12.2%
	>20	18	13.7%
Age (Years)	< 30	4	3.1%
	30 to 39	57	43.5%
	40 to 49	22	16.8%
	50 to 59	27	2.6%
	60 to 69	18	13.7%
	70 to 79	3	2.3%

Primary Research Question

The primary question was "To what extent do board members practice servant leadership at for-profit companies that publicly support servant leadership at lower operational levels in the organization?" The null hypothesis was tested that there was no servant leadership present at the board of directors' level in for-profit firms that operationally and publicly promote servant leadership. A statistical analysis of the SLQ survey data was conducted to determine whether servant leadership existed at the board of directors' level.

The 5-point response format for each of the 23 items in the SLQ instrument was 1 = *Not at all*, 2 = *Once in a while*, 3 = *Sometimes*, 4 = *Fairly often*, 5 = *Frequently, if not always*. The scores for the 23 items were classified into five dimensions. A reliability analysis was conducted using Cronbach's alpha to estimate the internal consistency reliability of the item scores in each dimension, as well as the aggregated scores for the 23 items. The results of the reliability analysis are presented in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 - Reliability Analysis for the SLQ Instrument (23 Items)

Dimension	Items	Number of Items	Cronbach's alpha
Altruistic Calling	1,2,16,21	4	.814
Emotional Healing	3,8,12,17	4	.826
Wisdom	4,7,9,13,22	5	.868
Persuasive Mapping	5,6,10,14,18	5	.881
Organizational Stewardship	11,15,19,20,23	5	.872
SLQ — Aggregate	1 to 23	23	.954

The internal consistency reliability of the five dimensions was good (Cronbach's alpha = .814 to .881). The very good internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's alpha = .954) of the 23 items (SLQ Aggregate) was close to the value (Cronbach's alpha = .981) previously reported for North American samples by Dannhauser and Boshoff (2007).

The descriptive statistics, specifically Minimum (Min), Maximum (Max), Mean, Standard Deviation (SD), Skewness (Skew) and Kurtosis (Kurt) of the SLQ dimensions and SLQ aggregate based on the averaged item scores for the 131 respondents are summarized in Table 4.3. None of the respondents had a minimum average score of 1 = *Not at all*, implying that all the respondents supported servant leadership at least *once in a while*. The mean values for the five dimensions (4.12 to 4.38) were consistently located at the higher ends of the scales, indicating that servant leadership was supported more than *fairly often*. The standard deviations (0.62 to 0.69) were similar, reflecting a consistent dispersion of the scores across each dimension. The skewness statistics (-0.92 to -1.43) were consistently negative, reflecting negatively skewed distributions, in which the modes (highest frequencies) were not at the centers, but at the higher ends of the scales. The skewness statistics indicated that most of the respondents endorsed 4 = *Fairly Often* or 5 = *Frequently, if not always*. The Kurtosis statistics were consistently positive (0.53 to 1.70) reflecting leptokurtic or peaked distributions, caused by the clustering of the responses around a peak between scores of 4 and 5.

Table 4.3 - Descriptive Statistics for the SLQ Instrument (N = 131)

	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Skew	Kurt
Altruistic Calling	1.25	5.00	4.13	0.69	-0.92	1.54
Emotional Healing	1.50	5.00	4.12	0.69	-0.72	0.53
Wisdom	1.40	5.00	4.28	0.68	-1.43	3.22
Persuasive Mapping	1.80	5.00	4.29	0.67	-1.15	1.23
Organizational Stewardship	2.00	5.00	4.38	0.62	-1.26	1.70
SLQ Aggregate	37.00	115.00	97.76	13.37	-1.36	3.37

The maximum and mean SLQ aggregate scores were 115.00 and 97.76 out of a maximum possible total score of $23 \times 5 = 115.00$. The SLQ aggregate scores were strongly negative skewed and leptokurtic (Skewness = -1.36, Kurtosis = 3.37). The histogram in Exhibit 4.2 illustrates the asymmetric negatively skewed shape of the distribution of the SLQ aggregate scores, with a mode between 90 and 110, representing the majority ($30.5\% + 29.8\% = 60.3\%$) of the respondents.

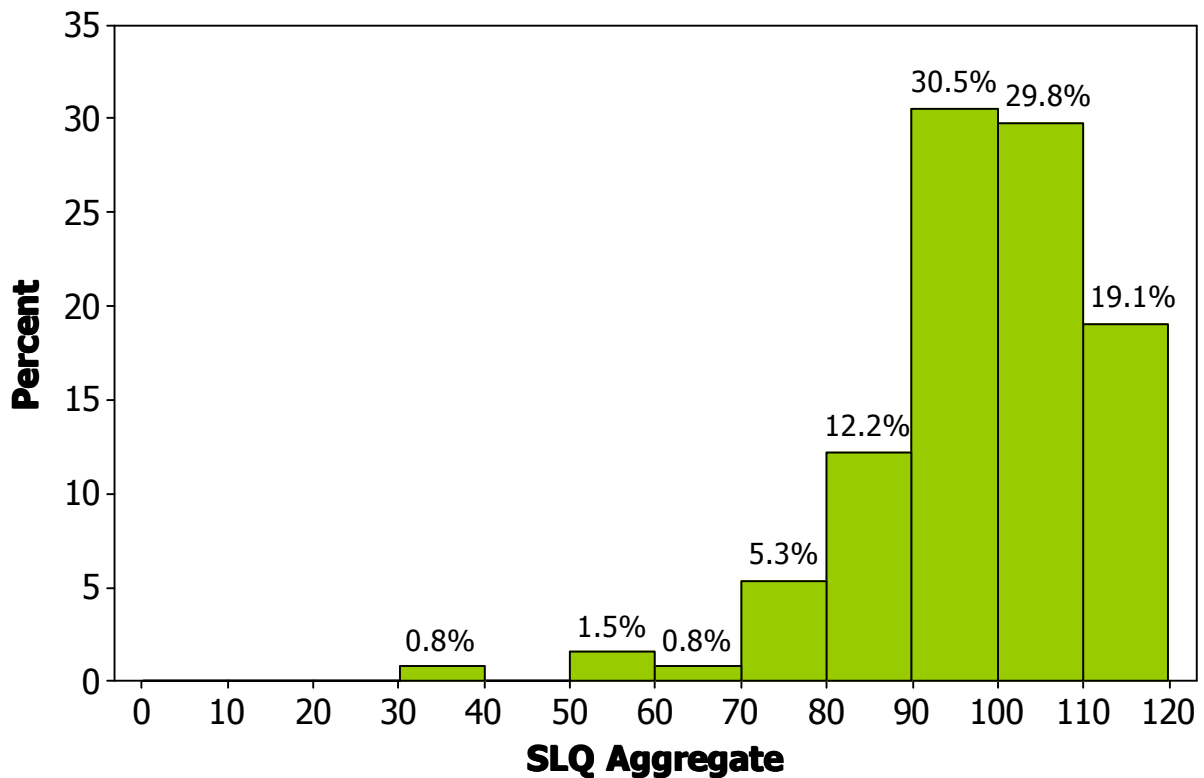


Exhibit 4.2 - Frequency Distribution Histogram of SLQ Aggregate Scores

The descriptive statistics in Table 4.3 and the frequency distribution histogram in Exhibit 4.2 indicated that the scores for the SLQ deviated from normality (i.e., they did not correspond to symmetrical bell shaped curves, with a central tendency, indicated by a mean score at the center). The respondents demonstrated a strong tendency toward endorsement of the higher ends of the item scales. The majority of the respondents agreed that they supported servant leadership *fairly often or frequently, if not always*. The respondents did not consistently endorse the lower ends of the item scales, corresponding to 1 = *Not at all*.

The statistical evidence was not consistent with the null hypothesis that there was no servant leadership present at the board of directors' level in the for-profit firms. Based on the reliably measured responses to the SLQ instrument, the answer to the primary research question

“To what extent do board members practice servant leadership at for-profit companies that publicly support servant leadership at lower operational levels in the organization?” was that the sample group demonstrated a high level of servant leadership. The extent of servant leadership exhibited can be quantified as a value of 4.25 on a Likert-type scale of 1 to 5.

Secondary Research Question

The secondary question was "In for-profit firms that operationally and publicly support servant leadership, what is the level of organizational leadership health?" The addressing of this question was justified, because the answer to the primary research question, defined above, was affirmative. The null hypothesis was tested that for-profit firms operationally and publicly promoting servant leadership do not have above average operational health. A statistical analysis of the data collected from the SOLA instrument ranked the health of the operational servant leadership firms according to their operational health.

The 5-point response format for each of the 60 items in the SOLA instrument was 1 = *Strongly Disagree*, 2 = *Disagree*, 3 = *Undecided*, 4 = *Agree*, 5 = *Strongly Agree*. The scores for 57 items (because 3 items were discarded) were classified into six dimensions. A reliability analysis was conducted using Cronbach's alpha to estimate the internal consistency reliability of the item scores for each dimension, as well as the aggregated scores. The results of the reliability analysis are presented in Table 4.4.

The internal consistency reliability of the six dimensions was very good (Cronbach's alpha = .896 to .926). The very good internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's alpha = .983) of the 57 items (SOLA Aggregate) was close to the value (Cronbach's alpha = .980) previously reported for North American samples by Dannhauser and Boshoff (2007).

The descriptive statistics, specifically Minimum (Min), Maximum (Max), Mean, Standard Deviation (SD), Skewness (Skew) and Kurtosis (Kurt) of the SLQ dimensions and SLQ aggregate based on the item scores for the 131 respondents are summarized in Table 4.5.

Table 4.4 - Reliability Analysis for the SOLA Instrument (57 Items)

Dimension	Items	Number of Items	Cronbach's alpha
Values People	1,4,9,15,19,52,54,55,57	9	.902
Develops People	20,31,37,40,42,44,46,50,59	9	.908
Builds Community	7,8,12,13,16,18,21,25,38,47	10	.926
Displays Authenticity	3,6,10,11,23,28,32,33,35,43,51	11	.914
Provides Leadership	2,5,14, 22,27,30,36,45,49	9	.913
Shares Leadership	17,24,26, 29,34,39,41,48,49	9	.896
SOLA - Aggregate	1 to 60, excluding 56, 58, 60	57	.983

Table 4.5- Descriptive Statistics for the SOLA Instrument (N = 131)

Dimension	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Skew	Kurt
Values People	1.44	5.00	4.36	0.57	-1.67	5.23
Develops People	1.56	5.00	4.35	0.56	-1.28	3.87
Builds Community	1.30	5.00	4.33	0.61	-1.78	5.84
Displays Authenticity	2.00	5.00	4.35	0.54	-1.38	3.90
Provides Leadership	1.56	5.00	4.33	0.60	-1.49	4.24
Shares Leadership	1.33	5.00	4.29	0.60	-1.39	3.83
SOLA - Aggregate	88.0	285.00	247.04	31.56	-1.56	5.04

None of the respondents had a minimum average score of 1, implying that none of the respondents strongly disagreed with all of the items. The mean values for the six dimensions (4.29 to 4.36) were consistently located at the higher ends of the scales, indicating that most of the respondents agreed with servant organizational leadership. The standard deviations (0.54 to 0.60) were similar, reflecting a consistent dispersion of the scores across each dimension. The skewness statistics (-1.38 to -1.67) were consistently negative, reflecting negatively skewed distributions, in which the modes were at the higher ends of the scales. The skewness statistics indicated that most of the respondents endorsed 4 = *Agree* or 5 = *Strongly Agree*. The Kurtosis statistics were consistently positive (3.83 to 5.84) reflecting leptokurtic distributions, caused by the clustering of the responses around a peak between scores of 4 and 5.

The maximum and mean SOLA aggregate scores were 285.00 and 247.04 out of a maximum possible total score of $57 \times 5 = 285.00$. The SOLA aggregate scores were strongly negative skewed and leptokurtic (Skewness = -1.56, Kurtosis = 5.04). The histogram in Exhibit 4.3 illustrates the asymmetric negatively skewed shape of the distribution of the SOLA aggregate scores, with the majority ($29.1\% + 19.8\% + 17.6\% = 65.8\%$) of the respondents scoring between 240 and 285, corresponding to agreement or strong agreement with the items.

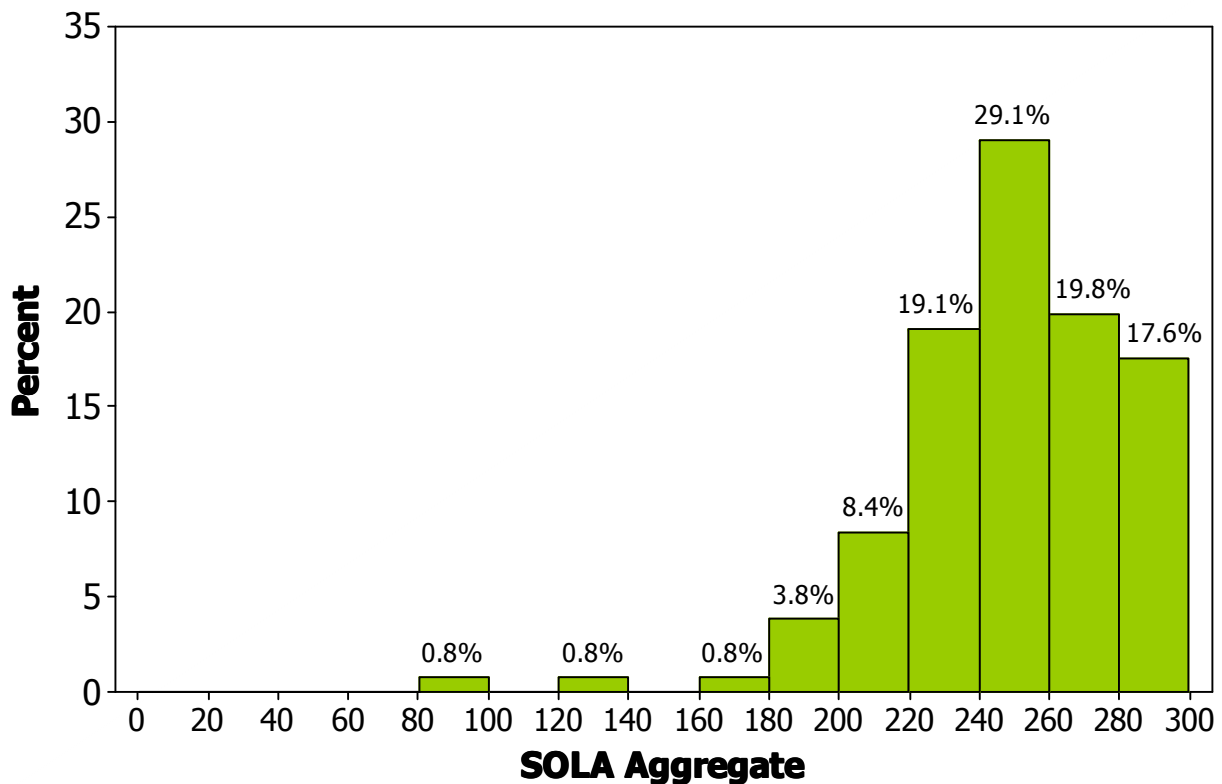


Exhibit 4.3 - Frequency Distribution Histogram of SOLA Aggregate Scores

The descriptive statistics in Table 4.5 and the frequency distribution histogram in Exhibit 4.3 indicated that the scores for the SOLA deviated from normality. The respondents demonstrated a strong tendency toward endorsement of the higher ends of the item scales, between 4 and 5, corresponding to excellent and optimal servant health. The respondents did not consistently endorse the lower ends of the item scales (i.e., 1 = *Strongly Disagree* or 2 = *Disagree*) corresponding to toxic or poor servant health.

The statistical evidence was not consistent with the null hypothesis that for-profit firms operationally and publicly promoting servant leadership do not have above average operational health. An affirmative answer, based on the reliably measured responses to the SOLA instrument,

was therefore justified to address the secondary research question “In for-profit firms that operationally and publicly support servant leadership, what is the level of organizational leadership health?” The extent of organizational leadership health present as assessed by the sample group can be quantified with a value of 4.33 on a Likert-type scale of 1 to 5.

Tertiary Research Question

The tertiary research question was "What is the relationship between servant leadership at the board of directors' level and the level of organizational leadership health?" The null hypothesis was that there was no relationship between servant leadership at the board of directors' level in for-profit firms, and the operational health of the organization. Correlation and regression analysis were conducted to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between servant leadership and operational health.

The scatterplot in Exhibit 4.4 was constructed assuming that the SLQ aggregate score was the predictive, or independent variable, and the SOLA aggregate score was the criterion, or dependent variable. The correlation coefficient (Pearson's $r = .722, p < .001$) was statistically significant. A linear trend line was fitted to the data using simple regression analysis. The linear regression statistics are presented in Table 4.6.

The linear regression equation was $Y = 80.49 + 1.70 X$, where Y = SOLA aggregate score, X = SLQ aggregate score, 80.49 = intercept (i.e., SOLA aggregate when SLQ aggregate is zero); and 1.70 = slope (i.e., increase in SOLA aggregate for every one unit increase in SLQ aggregate). The intercept and slope were significantly different from zero, indicated by $p < .001$ for the t-test statistics. The R^2 statistic indicated that a moderate proportion (52.1%) of the variance in the SOLA aggregate score was explained by the SLQ aggregate score.

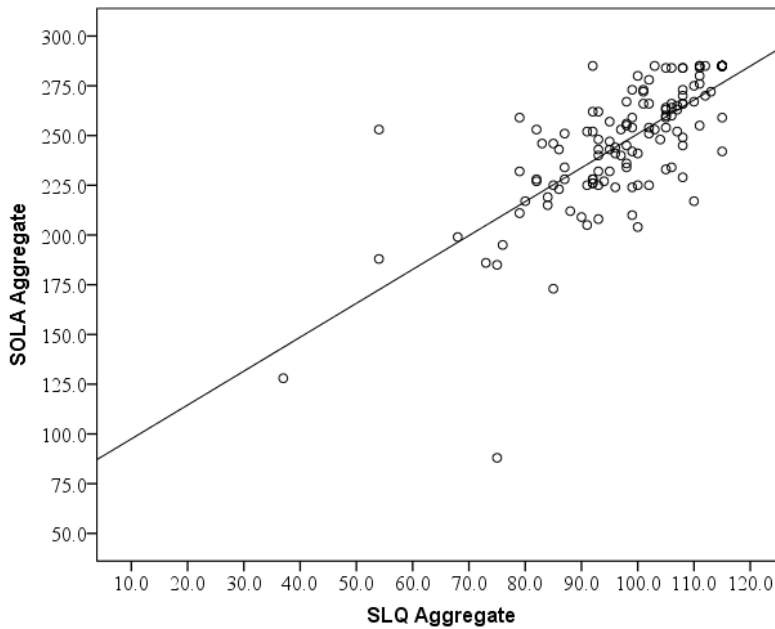


Exhibit 4.4 - Correlation Between SOLA and SLQ Aggregate Scores

Table 4.6 - Linear Regression Statistics

	Unstandardized Coefficients		t	P	R ²
	Standard Error				
Intercept	80.49	14.19	5.67	<.001*	52.1%
Slope	1.70	0.14	11.85	<.001*	

The scatterplot in Exhibit 4.5 was constructed by partitioning the SLQ aggregate scores and the SOLA aggregate scores by gender (male or female). The correlation coefficient for the 79 male respondents (Pearson's $r = .782, p < .001$) was higher than that for the 52 female respondents (Pearson's $r = .747, p < .001$).

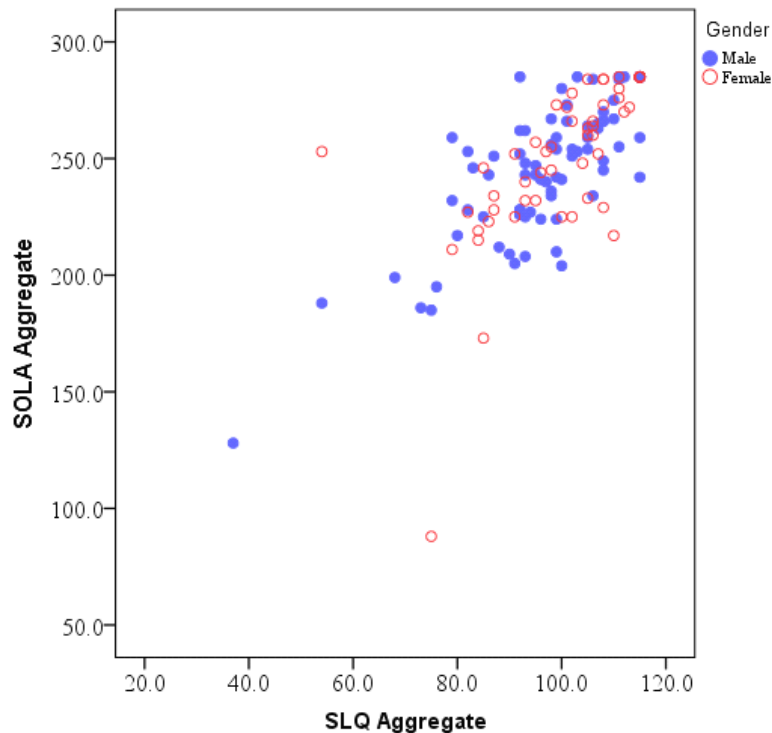


Exhibit 4.5 -Correlation Between SOLA and SLQ Aggregate Scores Partitioned By Gender

The scatterplot in Exhibit 4.6 was constructed by partitioning the SLQ aggregate scores and the SOLA aggregate scores by tenure (1 to 10 years, or > 10 years). The correlation coefficient for the 70 respondents with a shorter tenure of 1 to 10 years (Pearson's $r = .707$, $p < .001$) was lower than that for the 61 respondents with a longer tenure of > 10 years (Pearson's $r = .747$, $p < .001$).

The scatterplot in Exhibit 4.7 was constructed by partitioning the SLQ aggregate scores and the SOLA aggregate scores by age (< 30 to 49 years, or 50 to 69 years). The correlation coefficient for the 81 younger respondents with an age of < 30 to 39 years (Pearson's $r = .742$, $p < .001$) was higher than that for the 50 older respondents with an age of 50 to 69 years (Pearson's $r = .663$, $p < .001$).

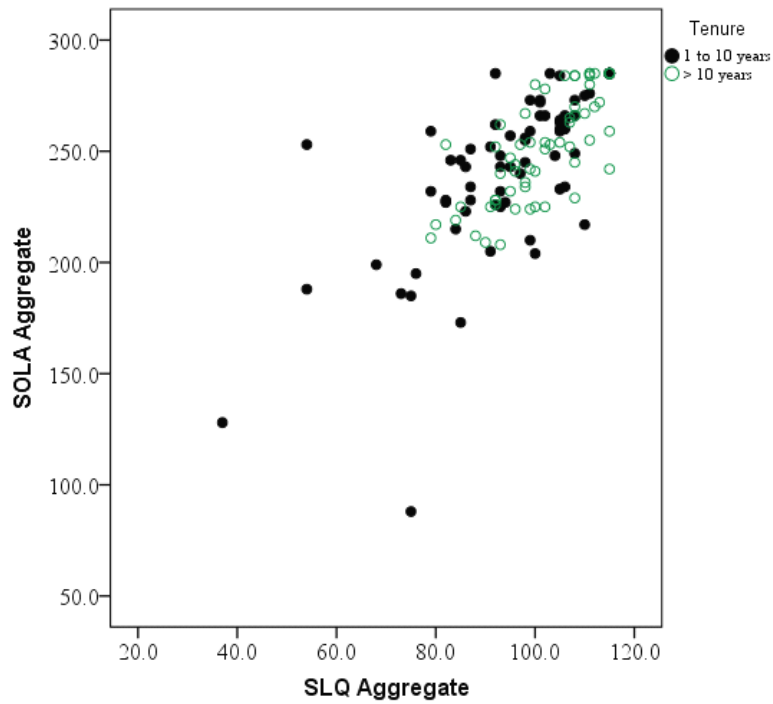


Exhibit 4.6 - Correlation Between SOLA and SLQ Aggregate Scores Partitioned By Tenure

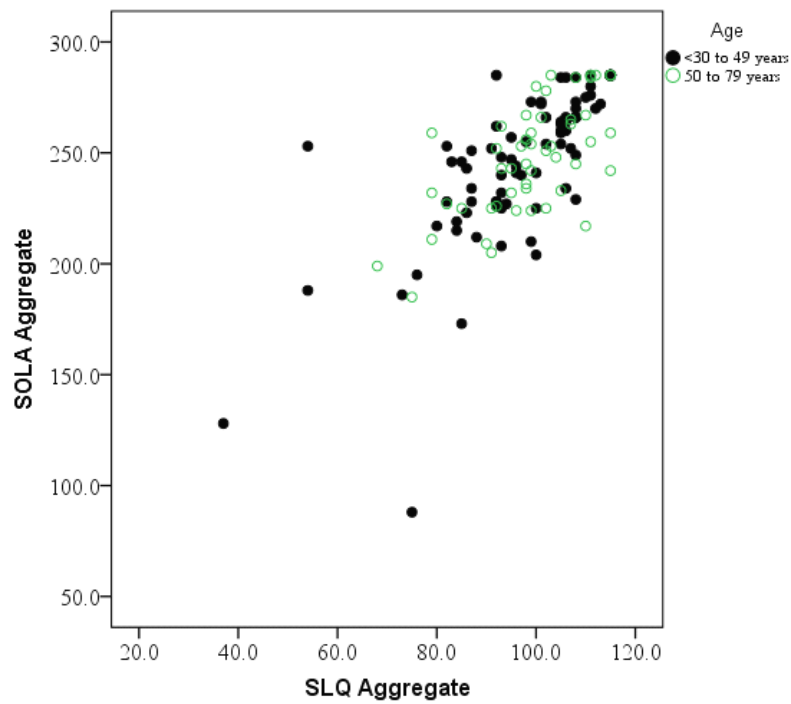


Exhibit 4.7 - Correlation Between SOLA and SLQ Aggregate Scores Partitioned By Age

The statistical evidence was not consistent with the null hypothesis that there was no relationship between servant leadership at the board of directors' level in for-profit firms, and the operational health of the organization. Correlation and regression analysis noted there was a positive relationship between board level servant leadership and organizational leadership health. The linear regression equation further quantified the relationship, noting that a moderate proportion (52.1%) of the variance in the level of organizational health was explained by the level of servant leadership present in the sample group. The correlation analysis and the linear regression effectively answered the research question "What is the relationship between servant leadership at the board of directors' level and the level of organizational leadership health?"

Summary

The statistical analysis performed in SPSS produced statistically significant results to test all three hypotheses. The study had 60.3% male respondents, and 39.7% female respondents. The age group that responded most frequently to the survey fell into the 30-39 year age range. The majority of the board directors (45.0%) served on their board for 6-10 years.

All three of the null hypotheses were rejected as false, effectively affirming all three research questions. Among the sample of board directors at for-profit firms in the United States that publicly support servant leadership at the lower operational levels of the organization:

- Board members practiced servant leadership (based on the SLQ results)
- The organization possessed an above average level of organizational health (based on the SOLA results)
- A quantifiable relationship did exist between servant leadership and perceived organizational health (based on the regression analysis and correlation on the SLQ (independent/predictive variable), and the SOLA (dependent/criterion variable)).

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

The research findings are discussed and placed in the context of the research questions that the study was designed to answer. Each research question is stated, and the statistical findings are unpacked to draw conclusions. Every study has limitations, so a postmortem analysis of the survey process and the results are presented. After a discussion of the results, recommendations for further research and exploration are proposed, and the research study is concluded.

Findings

The quantitative study's purpose was threefold: to quantify servant leadership at the board level in for-profit operationally servant-led firms; to quantify board members' perceptions of organizational health in the organizations that they govern; and to quantify any relationship between board servant leadership values and the presence of effective organizational servant leadership in for-profit firms. The research effectively viewed servant leadership through the lens of board governance to quantify a relationship in for-profit organizations that publicly align themselves with the theory of servant leadership.

The instrument created to evaluate the study's three hypotheses was a combination of the Servant Leadership Questionnaire (SLQ), the Servant Organizational Leadership Assessment (SOLA) instrument, and three demographic qualification questions, which recorded each respondent's gender, tenure, and age. The resulting instrument was distributed to a sample group of 200 companies, and 131 valid results from board members were obtained with no missing values. The data was stored in SurveyMonkey, extracted, and analyzed with SPSS to yield the results obtained.

To test the internal consistency of the results, each of the dimensions of the SLQ instrument and the SOLA instrument were evaluated. The internal consistency of the SLQ and SOLA aggregate scores were compared to the Cronbach's alpha scores from the original instruments as designed by Barbuto and Wheeler (2006), and Laub (1999). Results indicated that the reliability of the data was good for all of the values, and all Cronbach's alpha scores (dimensional and aggregated) were in excess of 0.810.

Research Questions and Conclusions

All three questions were evaluated to determine whether to reject or to fail to reject each of the null hypotheses based on the statistical analysis and information presented in Chapter Four: Results. The first question's null hypothesis was rejected based on the results provided by the SLQ data and analysis. The second question's null hypothesis was rejected based on the results analysis of the SOLA data and analysis. The third question's null hypothesis was rejected based on the results of the correlation and regression analysis.

Research Question One (Q1). The first research question was: "To what extent do board members practice servant leadership at for-profit companies that publicly support servant leadership at lower operational levels in the organization?" Each board director's response to the SLQ instrument was evaluated, and the results were aggregated to determine whether directors in the sample group practiced servant leadership. The internal consistency reliability of the 23 questions was very good (Cronbach's alpha = .954), and the Cronbach's alpha data across all five dimensions was also very good (ranging from .814 to .881). The mean of the SLQ scores were consistently skewed toward the higher end of the scale, and most respondents endorsed 4 = *Fairly Often* or 5 = *Frequently, if not always*. Based on the statistically significant results from the 23 questions, which comprised the SLQ portion of the survey instrument, an affirmative

answer to the question is justified. The null hypothesis is rejected as false. Based on the responses from the sample group (N = 131), it can be stated that the board of directors at for-profit companies that publicly support servant leadership at lower operational levels in the organization practice a high level of servant leadership.

Research Question Two (Q2). "In for-profit firms that operationally and publicly support servant leadership, what is the level of organizational leadership health?" Board directors' responses to the SOLA instrument were analyzed to determine whether the board of directors evaluated their firm as displaying a high level of organizational health as defined by servant leadership attributes.

Each board director's response to the 57 questions in the SOLA portion of the survey instrument was evaluated. The results were aggregated to determine whether directors in the sample group believed that the organizations they served had an above average level of organizational health. The internal consistency reliability of the scores was very good (Cronbach's alpha = .983), and the Cronbach's alpha data across all six SOLA dimensions was also very good (ranging from .896 to .926). The mean of the SOLA scores were consistently skewed toward the higher end of the scale, and most respondents endorsed 4 = *Agree* or 5 = *Strongly Agree*. Based on the statistically significant results from the 57 questions, which comprised the SOLA portion of the survey instrument, an affirmative answer to the question is justified. The null hypothesis is rejected as false. Based on the responses from the sample group (N = 131), it can be stated that the board of directors at for-profit companies that publicly support servant leadership at lower operational levels in the organization believe that the organization they govern has between excellent and optimal health.

Research Question Three (Q3). "What is the relationship between servant leadership at the board of directors' level and the level of organizational leadership health?" The first two questions (Q1, Q2) were answered affirmatively, so the SLQ and SOLA data was analyzed to create a regression model and a correlation analysis to determine whether servant leadership at the board of directors level (independent variable) could predict organizational health (criterion variable) based on the input of the board directors.

The result of the Pearson product-moment correlation was statistically significant (Pearson's $r = .722, p < .001$). The regression analysis determined that the intercept and slope were significantly different from zero, indicated by $p < .001$ for the t-test statistics. The R^2 statistic indicated that a moderate proportion (52.1%) of the variance in the SOLA aggregate score was explained by the SLQ aggregate score. When separating the respondent data by the demographic data gathered (gender, tenure, and age), it is notable that the correlation coefficient for the 79 male respondents was slightly higher than the correlation coefficient for the 52 female respondents. Based on the correlation and regression analysis findings, the null hypothesis is rejected as false. Therefore, based on the responses from the sample group ($N = 131$), it can be stated that a positive relationship exists between servant leadership at the board of directors level and a higher than average level of organizational health.

Limitations

Each study has limitations, and this study is no exception. This study's survey instrument was new, although it was a combination of two previously vetted instruments, which were both statistically valid: Barbuto and Wheeler's version of the Servant Leadership Questionnaire (SLQ), and Laub's Servant Organizational Leadership Assessment (SOLA) (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006;

Laub, 1999). The combination of the two instruments yielded valid results, but the longer format could have caused respondents to fatigue during the survey, thus resulting in skewed responses.

The section of the survey instrument containing the self-rater version of the SOLA questions could have been interpreted differently by each board director, since each respondent was asked to evaluate multiple levels and relationships in the organization through the course of the survey. Some of the board directors might not have been knowledgeable about the leadership health at the lower levels of the firm, and possibly made assumptions, which carried over into their responses. Additionally, since the respondent group (directors on boards) typically did not view the chairman of the board (COB) as their superior, the respondents could have struggled with answering questions regarding supervisory roles.

An additional limitation to the study was the inability to identify the individual institutions for all of the respondents when the survey was taken online. To protect the anonymity of the respondent pool, individuals were requested to self-identify at the end of the survey. This was an optional field on the survey, and not all individuals provided follow-up contact information at the end of the survey. Some of the companies contacted in the sample group responded that they did not allow their board of directors to respond to surveys due to the sensitive nature of the directors' governance role. Other institutions did not properly understand the difference between governance and management in an organization and declined to respond. If the study's data collection period were extended to obtain additional responses, the expanded respondent pool would yield a higher number of data points to enhance the validity of the study.

Some of the respondents were requested to fill out the survey by the chairman of the board (COB), so the request by the COB could have impacted the directors' responses. Additionally, in some organizations, the COB is also the CEO, who directs the operational

actions of the company. In these instances, it is possible that the alignment between the CEO (if he/she sat on the board of directors) and the organization would be higher than in an organization, which separated its governance function(s) from its operational function(s).

While there were limitations to the study, respondents could also possess personal biases regarding surveys that could have impacted the results. Personal biases could include acquiescence bias, which would translate into higher scores, and/or social desirability bias, which would lead respondents to choose the most socially acceptable response. While these individual biases are potentially present in everyone, the statistical results verified that individual biases were limited (possibly to outlier data), and might not have negatively impacted the study.

Recommendations for Research and Exploration

Myriad trajectories exist for future research exploring both servant leadership and the leadership concepts underpinning board governance. As previously noted, some researchers have proposed a redesign of corporate for-profit board director governance functions, and this study provided a quantifiable link between board leadership practices and the leadership health in an organization (Carver, 2010; Charan, 2014; Greenleaf, 1977; Subramanian, 2015; Vandewaerde et al., 2011). Studying both servant leadership and the influence that the board can exert on lower levels of the organization are in line with Ram Charan's assertion that board directors should be more engaged and involved with "large impact decisions" that "will change the future" of the organization (Charan, 2014, p. 200). Additionally, the increased need for board accountability (above and beyond the financial bottom line) can be advanced by aligning the leadership practices of board members with the organizations that they serve. Rather than simply providing governance from afar, board directors should challenge themselves and seek to

share their effective leadership with the organizations that they serve, so that they can evolve from a simple "ceremonial monitor to a leader" in the organization (Charan, 2014, loc. 59).

This study represents a quantifiable advancement in the servant leadership dialogue through the lens of board governance in a for-profit organizational environment. Strong, vibrant board leadership is vital to the sustainability of any for-profit business, and board members should advance the concept of a "Triple Bottom Line (sustaining people, profits, and the planet)" to help others "heal, grow, and thrive through mutual caring and trust" (Kimball, 2014, p. 40). To extend and expand on the findings of this research study, several approaches are proposed and are presented in order of viability and importance. The approaches for additional research are: a mixed-methods psychographic research study, a time study, the creation of a board leadership 'alignment instrument', and a study to understand if servant leadership beliefs and views are reflected in the governance actions of the board directors. The first two proposed approaches would extend the available research regarding servant leadership, and the last two proposed approaches provide guidance to align leadership beliefs and practices. Since servant leadership is a relatively new leadership theory and practice, research that can help identify servant leadership talent and cultivate the practice of servant leadership will help organizations excel and will produce the highest dividends (Greenleaf, 1977).

Mixed-Methods Psychographic Research. The research study utilized a 5 point Likert-type scale to quantify each respondent's level of servant leadership and the level of the organization's health. To build upon the findings of this study, the depth of the research could be enhanced with additional qualitative and demographic data. A mixed-methods study could provide additional context behind the complexities that exist in the boardroom and the conceptual framework presented in this study (Exhibit 1.1). Understanding each organization's

hierarchy, and how a CEO could influence board members through his or her leadership style, light would be shed upon the leadership interactions which take place in a boardroom setting.

The data analysis in Chapter Four revealed that demographic attributes influenced the Pearson's r value. For example, respondents with more experience serving as a board member tended to have a higher level of servant leadership. Conversely, respondents who self-identified as belonging to a younger age bracket (30-39 years old) exhibited higher levels of servant leadership. Additionally, the gender component had an impact on the Pearson's r value, indicating that males in the respondent group both rated themselves highly on the servant leadership scale, and also rated their organizations as having above average leadership health.

All of the demographic findings beg further research to determine if demographic variables have a significant impact on creating servant leaders. Since Greenleaf noted that servant leaders have the "natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve *first*," it is plausible to speculate that certain generational groups (Baby Boomers, Generation Xers, Generation Yers, etc.) have shared experiences that could trigger an affinity toward servant leadership (Sipe, 2009, loc. 218). Demographics can lead to psychographic persona creation, and additional cluster analysis of servant leader attributes could assist human resource professionals in identifying and recruiting talent for their organization. If multiple psychographic personas were created, researchers could explore the most effective method for introducing servant leadership to individuals in each group. A carefully targeted introduction to servant leadership could help speed the adoption of servant leadership beliefs, attitudes, and practices to enable a servant leader to thrive in any environment.

Time Study Research. To facilitate the adoption of servant leadership in lower levels of for-profit organizations, it would be theoretically viable to partner a board member who was a

servant leader with a junior or a senior executive in the organization. The resulting mentor/mentee relationship could allow servant leadership behaviors to be shared and modeled across levels of the hierarchy which are not typically spanned. To study this interaction, a time study could be conducted with the SLQ instrument to evaluate the level of servant leadership that the junior or senior executive exhibited prior to the establishment of the mentor/mentee relationship with a board member. This type of interrupted time series design would allow a researcher to track any leadership changes and compose a timeline of events to understand any leadership changes. This type of research could help provide the foundation for a servant leadership training program and a timeline to facilitate the adoption of servant leadership practices in a 'top-down' fashion—from board member mentors to operational executives.

Membership Alignment Instrument. As mentioned in Chapter One, governing boards and companies practicing servant leadership should be regularly reviewed to make sure that they are practicing what they preach, lest their actions become ineffective in the organization which they govern. Conscious Capitalism® is an organization that supports servant leadership and sustainable and collaborative business practices. Their website, www.consciouscapitalism.org, explains the four pillars underpinning Conscious Capitalism®, and also notes which corporations are counted among its membership ranks. Membership in organizations like Conscious Capitalism® is based upon the endorsement of servant leadership principles, but not the practice of servant leadership. Research could focus on two or three membership organizations and how to establish a servant leadership 'metric' for each membership organization. This alignment instrument could help all member organizations adopt the same view and daily practice of servant leadership. Organizations with a high level of organization health could promote, evaluate, and advance servant leadership among similar organizations with a lower adoption rate

of servant leadership. Each organization's journey toward optimal organizational health (as defined by Laub's SOLA instrument), could be tracked and updated regularly to determine if the organization had created its own version of 'servant leadership,' or if it had truly adopted the central values and dimensions of servant leadership as defined as an "altruistic calling, emotional healing, persuasive mapping, wisdom, and organizational stewardship" (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006, p. 300). The hypothetical instrument could combine the SLQ and the SOLA survey instrument, but would also include a psychographic profile to evaluate the types of individuals present at each member organization. This robust instrument could provide a holistic, 360-degree view of each member organization and the servant leader practitioners. When the instrument was first administered, it could provide members with an initial organizational leadership health baseline. Once a baseline was set, each individual organization could then understand the next steps they must take in their quest to increase their organizational leadership health, since the pursuit of servant leadership is a "self-perpetuating cycle" that can span a lifetime (Liden, et al., 2014). The servant leadership baseline could also serve as a measurement tool to evaluate training programs, mentor/mentee programs, and sustainability initiatives. This type of research instrument and research would allow companies to truly quantify their "Triple Bottom Line (sustaining people, profits, and the planet)" to help others "heal, grow, and thrive through mutual caring and trust" (Kimball, 2014, p. 40). By regularly measuring members of non-profit groups supporting servant leadership, both the non-profit and the for-profit organization would benefit.

Board Servant Leaders. Board leaders who operationally practice servant leadership might prescribe to servant leader values, but could possibly perform governance duties in a different manner when sitting on a board. "Words are the board's tools," which must deftly

define governance actions for an organization and determine the strategic direction to enhance shareholder profitability (Carver, 2007, p. 260). Research could be undertaken to determine if servant leadership beliefs translate directly into governance actions. By reviewing and cataloging the words used and the tone of a corporation's governance guidelines in comparison with servant leadership principles, it could be possible to determine if servant leadership translated directly into governance actions. Additional research could then provide a governance model for servant-led firms to adopt and follow to enhance governance and operational performance.

Conclusion

Prior to this study, individuals intuitively assumed that the board directors at operationally servant-led organizations were in alignment with the operational leadership practices of their organizations, although no quantifiable link had previously been identified (Laub, 1999; Ou et al., 2014; Spears, 1995; van Dierendonck, 2011). To address the gap in the current literature regarding servant leadership through the lens of board governance, this study quantified the relationship between servant leadership at the board level and operational servant leadership. "The job of the board of directors in the least developed element in enterprise" with "meager theory development and discomfiting pragmatics," so this study sought to build upon the limited knowledge base (Carver, 2001, p. 53-54).

To advance the academic leadership dialogue, a sample group of for-profit board members who sat on the boards of operationally servant-led companies in the United States was contacted and asked to self-rate their level of servant leadership. The same respondent group also rated the overall organizational health of the organizations that they served. The sample group (N=131) was deemed statistically valid, and statistics were generated to test the

hypotheses in the study. A correlation and regression analysis quantified the relationship between servant leadership and higher than average levels of organizational health at servant-led for-profit organizations in the United States. Servant leadership was found to be present at the board of directors level in the organizations, and the board members evaluated the companies they governed as exhibiting above average organizational health (as defined by servant leadership). The relationship between servant leadership at the board level and above average organizational health was positively related, and the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable was quantified using both a correlation and a regression analysis. Based on the statistically valid results, the findings could serve as the justification for additional research to explore the intersection of servant leadership and board governance.

Future research into servant leadership and board directors could take many trajectories, including the assessment of internal servant leadership dynamics in a 360-degree format, determining the impact of servant-led boards on overall triple-bottom line profitability, and how training courses could be designed to allow servant leadership practices to flow freely up and down the organizational hierarchy. Regardless of which research studies build upon the findings of this study, it is a worthwhile endeavor to continue studying servant leadership in a for-profit board context to advance trustee leadership practices for corporate America, for society, and for the rest of the world.

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Appendix A

The Servant Leader Questionnaire (SLQ) Instrument (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006)

This questionnaire is to describe your leadership behaviors and attitudes as you perceive them. Please answer all of the questions. Please indicate how well each of the following statements describes you.

Please use the following rating scale:

Not at all	Once in a While	Sometimes	Fairly Often	Frequently, if not Always
0	1	2	3	4

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

SLQ Individual Scoring Sheet

Altruistic Calling: 1)____, 2)____, 16)____, 21)____ = (Sum)

Emotional Healing: 3)____, 8)____, 12)____, 17)____ = (Sum)

Wisdom: 4)____, 7)____, 9)____, 13)____ 22)____ = (Sum)

Persuasive Mapping: 5)____, 6)____, 10)____, 14)____ 18)____ = (Sum)

Organizational
Stewardship: 11)____, 15)____, 19)____, 20)____ 23)____ = (Sum)

Appendix B*Permission to Utilize the SLQ (Servant Leadership Questionnaire) Instrument*

From: Dan Wheeler
Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2015 3:16 PM
To: R. Brian Denning
Subject: Re: SLQ - Instrument Use Permission Request - Denning

Hi Brian. Sounds like an interesting study. I grant permission to use the SLQ. I understand from your description that you will be using the self-rating version, which is attached. I will be interested in your results. Dan Wheeler

From: R. Brian Denning
Sent: Monday, September 21, 2015 12:12 PM
To: Dan Wheeler
Subject: SLQ - Instrument Use Permission Request - Denning

Dr. Wheeler:

Thank you for your contributions to the academic community furthering the study of servant leadership. I have read many of your writings, and would like to utilize one of your survey tools to complete my dissertation.

I am a PhD candidate at Piedmont International University exploring the intersection of corporate board governance and servant leadership. In my proposed quantitative study, I have designed an assessment tool that consists of your SLQ (Servant Leadership Questionnaire), and the SOLA (Servant Organizational Leadership Assessment)(Laub, 1999). During the research phase of the study, board members of for-profit firms who are listed with the Robert K. Greenleaf foundation will be presented the SLQ and SOLA instruments. I would like to use the SLQ as the independent variable to assess the level of servant leadership present at the board of directors' level, and the SOLA will be used as the dependent variable to determine how the board assesses the leadership practices of their organization. The conclusion of the study will determine whether a correlation can be drawn between board leadership practices and operational leadership practices. By establishing a quantifiable link between board leadership practices and operational leadership practices, the study will support the premise that board level leadership training can steer the operational leadership practices in a for-profit organization.

Your assistance and endorsement are very important for the successful completion of my dissertation. I would appreciate the use of your SLQ instrument to assess servant leadership at the board level, and will gladly furnish a copy of my dissertation and research findings upon the successful completion of my dissertation. I agree to not sell or receive any compensation for the use of the study, and will include any required copyright marks on the survey. If you would like additional information regarding my background, please feel free to give me a call, or you can view my LinkedIn profile at: <https://www.linkedin.com/pub/brian-denning/12/88/851>

Please let me know your thoughts regarding the use of the SLQ instrument, and the next steps required for the approval process. Thank you again for your help and guidance through this approval process.

Respectfully,

R. Brian Denning

Appendix C*Servant Organizational Leadership Assessment (SOLA) Instrument (Laub, 1999)*

Please provide your response to each statement by placing an X in one of the five boxes

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree

Section 1

In this section, please respond to each statement as you believe it applies to the entire organization including workers, managers/supervisors and top leadership

In general, people within this organization

	1	2	3	4	5
1 Trust each other					
2 Are clear on the key goals of the organization					
3 Are non-judgmental – they keep an open mind					
4 Respect each other					
5 Know where this organization is headed in the future					
6 Maintain high ethical standards					
7 Work well together in teams					
8 Value differences in culture, race & ethnicity					
9 Are caring & compassionate towards each other					
10 Demonstrate high integrity & honesty					
11 Are trustworthy					
12 Relate well to each other					
13 Attempt to work with others more than working on their own					
14 Are held accountable for reaching work goals					
15 Are aware of the needs of others					
16 Allow for individuality of style and expression					
17 Are encouraged by supervisors to share in making <i>important</i> decisions					
18 Work to maintain positive working relationships					
19 Accept people as they are					
20 View conflict as an opportunity to learn & grow					
21 Know how to get along with people					

Please provide your response to each statement by placing an **X** in one of the five boxes

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree

Section 2

In this next section, please respond to each statement as you believe it applies to the leadership of the organization including managers/supervisors and top leadership

Managers/Supervisors and Top Leadership in this Organization		1	2	3	4	5
22	Communicate a clear vision of the future of the organization					
23	Are open to learning from those who are <i>below</i> them in the organization					
24	Allow workers to help determine where this organization is headed					
25	Work alongside the workers instead of separate from them					
26	Use persuasion to influence others instead of coercion or force					
27	Don't hesitate to provide the leadership that is needed					
28	Promote open communication and sharing of information					
29	Give workers the power to make <i>important</i> decisions					
30	Provide the support and resources needed to help workers meet their goals					
31	Create an environment that encourages learning					
32	Are open to receiving criticism & challenge from others					
33	Say what they mean, and mean what they say					
34	Encourage each person in the organization to exercise leadership					
35	Admit personal limitations & mistakes					
36	Encourage people to take risks even if they may fail					
37	Practice the same behavior they expect from others					
38	Facilitate the building of community & team					
39	Do not demand special recognition for being leaders					
40	Lead by example by modeling appropriate behavior					
41	Seek to influence others from a positive relationship rather than from the authority of their position					
42	Provide opportunities for all workers to develop to their full potential					
43	Honestly evaluate themselves before seeking to evaluate others					

Please provide your response to each statement by placing an **X** in one of the five boxes

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree

Managers/Supervisors and Top Leadership in this Organization		1	2	3	4	5
44	Use their power and authority to benefit the workers					
45	Take appropriate action when it is needed					
46	Build people up through encouragement and affirmation					
47	Encourage workers to work <i>together</i> rather than competing against each other					
48	Are humble – they do not promote themselves					
49	Communicate clear plans & goals for the organization					
50	Provide mentor relationships in order to help people grow professionally					
51	Are accountable & responsible to others					
52	Are receptive listeners					
53	Do not seek after special status or the “perks” of leadership					
54	Put the needs of the workers ahead of their own					

Section 3

In this next section, please respond to each statement as you believe it is true about you personally and your role in the organization

In viewing my own role in the organization ...		1	2	3	4	5
55	I feel appreciated by my supervisor for what I contribute to the organization					
56	I am listened to by those <i>above</i> me in the organization					
57	I receive encouragement and affirmation from those <i>above</i> me in the organization					
58	I trust the leadership of this organization					
59	I am respected by those <i>above</i> me in the organization					
60	In this organization, a person's work is valued more than their <i>title</i>					

Appendix D

OLA Group - Definition of Organizational Health (Laub, 2015)

Power Levels

The OLA identifies six levels of organizational health each designated by a power level. These power levels are determined by the extent to which the Six Key Areas of organizational health are present in the organization. In an Org5 and Org6 these characteristics are perceived to be present within the leadership and throughout the organization. In an Org1 and Org2, these characteristics are mostly absent. The Org3 and Org4 levels represent organizations with a varied mix of these characteristics.

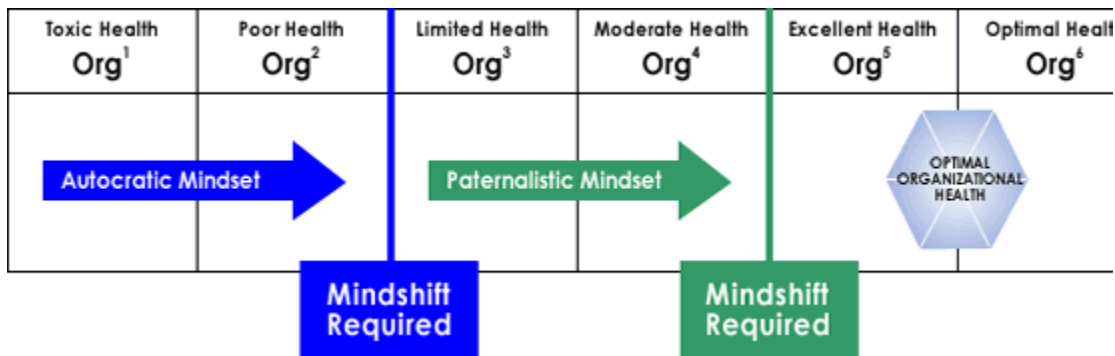
You will notice that the power levels are presented exponentially. An Org5 (to the 5th power) is incredibly more powerful than an Org2 (to the 2nd power). This is done intentionally to represent three very different ways of looking at growth and change.

First, there is **inertia** or the inability to move or change. (Org1 – Org2) This lack of growth will keep the organization from moving toward greater health and performance. The organization still functions, but it operates only on the energy of the past. It lacks the organizational health to move positively towards the future.

Second, there is gradual or **incremental** change. (Org3 – Org4) This kind of growth requires a steady, measured energy...the ability for an organization to better what it has done in the past...to make improvements over time. This organization can and will improve, but it will begin to rest on a plateau of “good enough”...dulled by its own achievement and success with an ever growing contentment to be just a little better than the rest.

Third, there is exponential or **quantum change**. (Org5 – Org6) This kind of change requires something very different from what has been done in the past. It requires a totally new way of thinking about organizations and leadership. It requires a true paradigm change...a mind-shift that sees all in the organization as potential leaders...and refuses to measure itself against anything less than its own incredible potential.

An organization cannot simply move from inertia to incremental change to quantum growth. Moving from one of these levels to the next requires a major shift in thinking and behaving. This is never easy, but must be done, or the organization will continue to merely perpetuate itself without the power, or energy, to move to the next level.



Power represents the ability to do...to act. In an organization it provides the capacity to fulfill a

compelling vision, to meet goals, to develop the highest quality workers and to deal effectively and creatively with ever-present change.

An interesting paradox is that we are the most powerful when we give our power away. Shared power within a healthy organizational environment provides for an exponential growth in the ability to act. The healthy organization is in the best position to leverage its resources, its strategies and its dreams.

Before Albert Einstein (and other quantum thinkers) came on the scene in the early 1900's we were satisfied with the formula **$E = mv^2$** ...Energy = mass x velocity (squared). Two vehicles at 2000 lbs of mass each collide at a velocity of 60 miles per hour. The energy produced by this collision is immense and measurable. This formula would represent our Org3 and Org4 levels. These organizations have the ability to act...to meet their goals and to become good companies. Most of the organizations we see are in this category. Good, but not great. The energy they produce is sufficient to keep the organization moving forward, but it cannot move them to the next level of exceptional performance. That kind of quantum leap will require a new formula...a totally new way of thinking about how organizations are run.

Enter Albert Einstein and a new theory of relativity producing a different formula... **$E = mc^2$** . What changed in this formula?...just one small letter. Now we are looking at Energy = mass x the speed of light (squared). Within the last half of the 20th century this formula has led to the creation of space flight, weapons, energy production and innovations that were unthinkable prior to this new understanding of power. This new formula represents our Org5 and Org6 levels. The change at first glance seems simple enough, but the effects are exponential.

Healthy organizations are powerful organizations that have found the way to tap into the awesome energy of a servant-minded culture unleashing the incredible capacity within each individual and the entire group.

Appendix E*Permission to Utilize the SOLA Instrument from Dr. Laub*

From: Jim Laub
Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2015 7:59 AM
To: 'R. Brian Denning'
Subject: RE: Denning Dissertation - OLA for Research

Brian - it seems clear that you will not be using the online delivery of the OLA through the OLAgroup site so I will not be setting up any organizations for you. Therefore, you are asking permission to use Items 1-54 for your study and will put these into Survey Monkey for delivery to your participants. We could do this for just the \$300.00 base price for using the OLA for academic research since I will not be setting up these organizations for you or handling the data in any way.

I would recommend that you check with your stats consultant about using just part of the OLA instrument rather than the entire instrument (there may be questions about whether the strong psychometric properties of the OLA will hold if you use just a portion of it).

I've attached a document that presents the breakdown of OLA items by category. This will be useful in seeing which items connect to which sub-area of the OLA (+ the added on Job Satisfaction scale). Please see my responses to your questions below. I wish you well with your study.

Jim Laub, Ed.D.
OLAgroup
18240 Lake Bend Drive
Jupiter, FL 33458
561-379-6010



From: R. Brian Denning
Sent: Tuesday, September 22, 2015 12:58 PM
To: 'Jim Laub'
Subject: RE: Denning Dissertation - OLA for Research

Dr. Laub:

Thank you for your quick reply, and for sending the OLA materials. After reviewing the information, my impression is that the OLA will be appropriate to assess servant leadership in the organizations. When administering the OLA to the board of directors, I would like to use questions 1-54 (thus omitting section 3) since I will only be surveying board members for their input regarding the state of servant leadership in their organization - is this acceptable? For a collector, my plan was to use SurveyMonkey to capture both the SLQ responses (23 Likert type-

scale questions), and the OLA responses together in the same record (for each respondent), so that I would not need to join data together after the fact. Please let me know if these modifications will present any challenges.

Two questions did arise when reviewing the information that you sent:

1. When reading your 1999 dissertation, you originally named the instrument the 'SOLA', and the name has changed to the 'OLA' instrument over the years - I am assuming that this was to open up the instrument to a wider base of organizations. In your opinion, is the current version of the instrument appropriate to assess servant leader health in an organization? **Yes - the OLA was designed to measure servant leadership health in organizations** Would you prefer that I refer to the instrument in my dissertation as the OLA, or could I use your original name (SOLA) in my dissertation? **The instrument has been referred to as the OLA consistently for the past 15 years + (since the dissertation)**
2. Since I will be using a shorter version of the OLA, and since I will only be asking board members for responses, is it possible to negotiate a lower per unit rate with you? As you can imagine, as a PhD student, my funds are quite tight, and I would like to survey 50 boards as a sample size, but the cost is prohibitive. Could we negotiate a lower per unit price, since my expectation is to expose as many for-profit servant-led companies to the OLA as possible? If you would like, at the end of the survey, I can help you market to the organizations to promote the use of the OLA on a wider scale for a 360 degree review of their organization health. Please let me know your thoughts on both proposals. **I would welcome a conversation around this opportunity. I've attached an OLA brochure that might be useful in presenting the OLA to these various companies.**

Thank you again for the continued dialogue, and your assistance with the OLA. I look forward to your response.

R. Brian Denning

From: Jim Laub

Sent: Monday, September 21, 2015 1:33 PM

To: 'R. Brian Denning'

Subject: Denning Dissertation - OLA for Research

Brian: thank you for your interest in using the OLA for your dissertation. Please review the attached file for the necessary agreements, understandings and costs for using the OLA for academic research. I am assuming you are planning to use the current OLA instrument (see attached) that has 60 OLA items + 6 additional Job Satisfaction items. Are you going to assess the organizations (Workforce, Managers, Top Leaders) or just have these Board members assess the organization from their unique vantage point?

I want to make sure that the OLA is the right instrument to match your specific research design. Normally the OLA set up and delivered online. How do you plan to do this in your study?

Please review the attached document and get back to me with any questions. Thank you for your interest in the OLA and servant leadership research.

Jim Laub, Ed.D.
OLAgroup
18240 Lake Bend Drive
Jupiter, FL 33458
561-379-6010



From: R. Brian Denning
Sent: Monday, September 21, 2015 12:46 PM
To: jlaub@olagroup.com
Subject: (S)OLA Instrument Use - Denning Dissertation

Dr. Laub:

Thank you for your contributions to the world of leadership and organizational health. I have read most of your writings, and would like to utilize one of your survey tools to complete my dissertation.

I am a PhD candidate at Piedmont International University exploring the intersection of corporate board governance and servant leadership. In my proposed quantitative study, I have designed an assessment tool that consists of the SLQ (Servant Leadership Questionnaire) by Barbuto & Wheeler (2006), and your initial SOLA (Servant Organizational Leadership Assessment) from your 1999 dissertation. During the research phase of the study, board members of for-profit firms who are listed with the Robert K. Greenleaf foundation will be presented the SLQ and SOLA instruments. The SLQ will be used as the independent variable to assess the level of servant leadership present at the board of directors' level, and I would like to use the SOLA as the dependent variable to determine how the board assesses the leadership practices of their organization. Each of the organizations selected for the population group has publicly supported the Robert K. Greenleaf foundation and/or servant leadership in their marketing efforts. The conclusion of the study will determine whether a correlation can be drawn between board leadership practices and operational leadership practices at the organizational level. By establishing a quantifiable link, we will be able to approach boards with leadership training to help them provide leadership governance for their organization.

Your assistance and endorsement is very important for the successful completion of my dissertation. I would appreciate the use of your (S)OLA instrument to assess organizational leadership, and will gladly furnish a copy of my dissertation and research findings upon the successful completion of my dissertation. I agree to not sell or receive any compensation for the use of the study, and will include any required copyright marks on the survey. If you would like additional information about my background, please feel free to give me a call, or you can view my LinkedIn profile at: <https://www.linkedin.com/pub/brian-denning/12/88/851>.

Please let me know your thoughts regarding the use of the (S)OLA instrument, and the next steps required for the approval process. Thanks again for your help and guidance through this process.

Respectfully,

R. Brian Denning

APPENDIX F**Piedmont International University
Informed Consent Letter**

Dear Executive Business Leader,

Thank you for choosing to participate in this doctoral research study. I understand your time is a valuable commodity to your organization. However, I am certain that your leadership practices and beliefs will benefit the leadership research community. Thank you in advance for your contributions to this study.

Participation in this study will involve taking an 86-item, secure web-based survey (or paper based survey) that consists of questions focused on board leadership practices and beliefs. The study survey takes an estimated five (5) minutes to complete.

By signing the included Informed Consent Form, you are agreeing to participate in the study. The Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Piedmont International University reserves the right to review all informed consent forms. Consent forms will not be attached to survey responses. You are not required to participate. Even if you agree to participate and then later change your mind, you may discontinue, and withdraw from participation during any part of the study, without repercussion. There is no form of compensation for participating, but there will be a giveaway (as noted in the survey) to encourage participation.

Your responses cannot be associated to you and all information provided during the survey process will be expressed as numerical data. The summarized results from this research will be published in a dissertation and might later be published in journal articles. You may request a copy of the findings of this study by checking the box on the attached Informed Consent Form.

If you have questions or concerns about this study, your rights as a participant, or your participation, you can contact me or the researcher. Our contact information is provided below. Thank you again.

Respectfully,

Supervising Faculty
Dr. Craig D. Lawrence, Sr.
Piedmont International University
Winston Salem, NC
Ph: 205-482-8523

Researcher
R. Brian Denning
Piedmont International University
Chattanooga, TN
Ph: 706-302-2057

Informed Consent Form

I have read the informed consent letter, am over 18 years of age, in good physical health, and wish to participate in the doctoral research study conducted by Brian Denning, who is studying at Piedmont International University, Winston-Salem, North Carolina.

Please fill out the areas indicated below, and return a completed and signed electronic copy of the form to the researcher at: denningr@piedmontu.edu.

I _____ give Brian Denning permission to use my research data, provided through the secure, web-based (online) survey for his doctoral research study. I understand that participation in this study is voluntary, and that I may elect to discontinue participation, at any time, without repercussion. I also understand that participation will require an estimated five (5) minutes, and there is no guaranteed form of compensation.

Printed Name

Signature

Date

☐ Please send me a copy of the report produced from the summary of the findings.

Name – please print

E-mail Address

APPENDIX G

Chronology of Servant Leadership Research

Researcher(s)	Year	Instrument Items	Functional Attributes/ Subscales	Individual Elements									
				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Greenleaf	1977	N/A	N/A	Theory & Conceptualization - Focus on Follower	Idealized Influence (Behaviors)	Inspirational Motivation	Intellectual Stimulation	Individualized Consideration	Conceptualization	Forethought	Stewardship	Commitment to Growth of People	Building Community
Avolio & Bass	1993, 1997	36	5	MLQ (5X) - Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire, Multiple Iterations	Empathy	Healing	Awareness	Persuasion	Service	Service	Stewardship	Commitment to Growth of People	Building Community
Spears	1995	N/A	10	Initial Characterization into 10 Items	Empathy	Healing	Awareness	Persuasion	Service	Service	Stewardship	Commitment to Growth of People	Building Community
Furling, Stone, & Wilson	1999	N/A	5	Conceptual presentation - Service based	Influence	Credibility	Trust	Service	Service	Service	Stewardship	Commitment to Growth of People	Building Community
Lamb	1999	43	6	SOLA-Servant Organizational Leadership Assessment	Develops People	Builds Community	Displays Authenticity	Provides Leadership	Shares Leadership	Shares Leadership	Stewardship	Commitment to Growth of People	Building Community
Page & Wong	2000	99	8	SLP-Servant Leadership Profile	Values People	Community	Authenticity	Leadership	Leadership	Leadership	Stewardship	Commitment to Growth of People	Building Community
Russell & Stone	2002	N/A	9	Transformational Servant Leader 'Practical' Model (Lit Rev)	Vision	Integrity	Trust	Service	Modeling	Pioneering	Appreciation for Others	Empowerment	Egotistic Pride
Lamb	2003	60	6	OLA-Organizational Leadership Assessment	Displays Authenticity	Values People	Provides Leadership	Builds Community	Develops People	Shared Decision Making Service	Integrity	Abuse of Power	Egotistic Pride
Page & Wong	2003	97	10	ESLP- Servant Leadership Profile-Revised	Leading	Servant Leadership	Developing Others	Team Building	Empowering Others	Shared Decision Making Service	Integrity	Abuse of Power	Egotistic Pride
Patterson	2003	N/A	7	Value Based Transformational Model (Kuhn-based)	Love	Humility	Vision	Trust	Empowerment	Shared Decision Making Service	Integrity	Abuse of Power	Egotistic Pride
Dennis	2004	25	6	Servant Leadership Assessment Tool (SLA)	Love	Humility	Vision	Trust	Empowerment	Shared Decision Making Service	Integrity	Abuse of Power	Egotistic Pride
Dennis & Boccia	2005	42	5	Revision of Patterson's 2003 Model	Empowerment	Love	Humility	Trust	Empowerment	Shared Decision Making Service	Integrity	Abuse of Power	Egotistic Pride
Barbuto & Wheeler	2006	23	5	SLQ-First Servant Leader Questionnaire	Altruistic Calling	Emotional Healing	Persuasive Mapping	Organizational Stewardship	Empowerment	Shared Decision Making Service	Integrity	Abuse of Power	Egotistic Pride
Whittington et al.	2006	30	4	SLSS-Servant Shepherd Leadership Scale	Other-Centeredness	Facilitative Environment	Affirmation	Organizational Stewardship	Empowerment	Shared Decision Making Service	Integrity	Abuse of Power	Egotistic Pride
Wong & Davey	2007	62	5	SLP-Servant Leadership Profile-Revision to 5 dimensions	Seeing Ourselves as Servant	Serving God by Serving Others	Relating to Others to a Higher Purpose	Integrity and Authenticity	Empowerment	Shared Decision Making Service	Integrity	Abuse of Power	Egotistic Pride
Sandjaja, et al.	2008	35	6	SLBS-Servant Leadership Behaviour Scale	Voluntary Subordination	Authentic Self	Responsible Morality	Transforming Influence	Empowerment	Shared Decision Making Service	Integrity	Abuse of Power	Egotistic Pride
Liden, et al.	2008	28	7	SLQ - Revised to Explore Servant Leadership and LMX Theory	Empowering	Helping Subordinates Grow	Emotional Healing	Conceptual Skills	Creating Community Value	Shared Decision Making Service	Integrity	Abuse of Power	Egotistic Pride
Sipe & Frick	2009	10	7	7 Elements	Person of Character	Put People First	Compassionate Collaborator	Forethought	Systems Thinker	Moral Authority	Stewardship	Abuse of Power	Egotistic Pride
van Dierendonck & Nuijten	2011	30	8	SLS-Servant Leadership Survey	Standing Back	Forgiveness	Empowerment	Accountability	Authenticity	Humility	Stewardship	Abuse of Power	Egotistic Pride
Barbuto & Hayden	2011	23+7	4	SLQ Combined with the LMX-7	Emotional	Altruistic	Wisdom	Accountability	Authenticity	Humility	Stewardship	Abuse of Power	Egotistic Pride
Flint, Jr.	2012	N/A	7	7 Principles of Servant Leadership	Caring heart	Desire to Help Others	See Potential in Others	Build Relationships to Motivate	Christian Worldview	Humility	Stewardship	Abuse of Power	Egotistic Pride
Wong & Page	2013	62	7	SLP - Revision (7 factors)	Empowering & Developing Others	Vulnerability & Humility	Participatory Leadership	Inspiring Leadership	Visionary Leadership	Coracious Leadership	Stewardship	Abuse of Power	Egotistic Pride

*Multidimensional Analyses - With and without instrumentation

** Research performed without a quantitative instrument will have N/A in the 'Items' column