

**Exploring How Organisational Culture Influences the Practice of Servant
Leadership Behaviours in Banking in South Africa**

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Abstract

Despite modern leadership frameworks available to today's leaders, traditional leadership models that produce adverse outcomes in organisations continue to be practiced. Servant leadership is a leadership style with its foundations in service and prioritising the follower. Organisational culture has an important role to play in the performance of an organisation and in facilitating servant leadership behaviours within an organisation. This study aims to explore how organisational culture influences the enablement or inhibition of servant leadership behaviours in an organisation.

A qualitative case study research design with an interpretive paradigm was used in search of rich exploration and explanation of how organisational culture impacts the practice of servant leadership behaviours in an organisation. A single case study methodology was used in understanding the in-depth real-life phenomenon of this study in the context of the natural environment of the case organisation explored.

In-depth interviews using semi-structured questions with a sample of participants from a banking organisation in South Africa provided deep insights on the dynamics of organisational culture that influence the display of servant leadership behaviours in the organisation. A purposive sampling strategy was used in the selection of executives, senior managers, senior followers and junior followers for this study. Thematic analysis was used as the main interpretive framework to analyse the data, together with observational data, to arrive at the themes of this study.

The findings suggest that servant leadership behaviours are an outcome of organisational culture conditions that enhance or constrain servant leadership behaviours. The extent of employee empowerment, organisational collaboration and organisational communication in the organisation's artefacts; the practiced values and organisational structure in the organisation's values and the organisation's inclination regarding performance and people within the organisation's core beliefs impact the practice of servant leadership behaviours of ethical behaviour, empowerment, putting follower's first, helping followers grow and succeed, creating value for the community and emotional healing associated with the organisation's culture.

Keywords: Servant leadership, organisational culture, leadership, followers

Plagiarism Declaration

I declare that this research project is my own work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Business Administration at the Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University. I further declare that I have obtained the necessary authorisation and consent to carry out this research.

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

List of Abbreviations

E1	Executive1
E2	Executive2
SM	Senior Manager
SF	Senior Follower
JF	Junior Follower
SL	Servant Leadership
SL -7	Servant Leadership 7- item Scale
Short Term	0 – 2 years
Medium Term	2 – 5 years
Long Term	> 5 years
LMX	Leader Member Exchange
VOE	Voice of Employee

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1 Chapter 1: Introduction To the Research Problem

1.1 Introduction

Organisational culture is a crucial management area for organisations, significantly impacting their functionality (Gorzelany et al., 2021). The organisational culture of an organisation can have a significant impact on its success or failure. As such, cultural processes in organisations have been studied in the literature for many years. With the advancement in globalisation over time, organisational culture has become a comparative advantage for an organisation, through the business strategy of the organisation (Reddy, 2019). Organisations with conducive organisational cultures create conducive work environments that empower employees and their decision-making (Reddy, 2019). However, such conducive organisational cultures require leadership in an organisation that understands and supports the kind of organisational culture that improves organisational efficiency (Reddy, 2019). Organisational culture is a key environmental factor that guides employees within the organisation to participate in the organisational activities (Oh & Han, 2020). Thus, the establishment of an effective organisational culture can improve the performance of an organisation.

Certain leadership styles have been identified as associated with negative outcomes in an organisation as they promote the self-interest of a leader (Canavesi & Minelli, 2022). Servant leadership has emerged as a moral-based leadership styles centred around the development and support of followers by an integrous and altruistic leader. Servant leadership has been linked to various favourable results in an organisation, including positive organisational behavioural citizenship, positive employee engagement, job satisfaction, proactive and innovative behaviour, and positive team performance (Canavesi & Minelli, 2022). It is for this reason that several organisations have sought an organisational environment grounded in service, stewardship, and integrity for organisational success. Servant leadership research has grown notably in recent years as it has been identified as a holistic leadership type compared to many of the other leadership styles, given its incorporation of serving multiple stakeholders, both internal and external to the organisation, including followers, customers, and the organisation's

community (Canavesi & Minelli, 2022). Servant leadership also balances leadership with serving others, when compared to other leadership styles (Saleem et al., 2020). This is worth noting because leadership approaches like charismatic and transformational leadership can create exceptional outcomes; this can have adverse side effects if there are no moral constraints. Here, the servant leadership philosophy remains inspirational along with ethical safeguards (Saleem et al., 2020). The servant leadership approach, thus, seeks to uphold ethics in an organisation while seeking performance, which is often a paradox that is not achieved by other leadership approaches (Saleem et al., 2020).

Organisational culture and leadership play a key role in organisational performance (Reddy, 2019). There have been few studies that investigate the relationship between organisational culture and servant leadership behaviours in an organisation (Giambatista et al., 2020). In particular, there have been few studies on how organisational culture supports and encourages the practice of servant leadership behaviours in organisations (Eva et al., 2019). This has led to the identification of a research gap in understanding the relationship between organisational culture and servant leadership. The purpose of this study is to investigate this gap by examining the relationship between organisational culture and servant leadership.

To address this, this research aimed to explore how organisational culture facilitates the practice of servant leadership behaviours in an organisation. The objective of the research will be to understand the organisational culture of a selected organisation case and analyse the impact of this organisational culture on enabling servant leadership behaviours in the organisation (Eva et al., 2019). This study aims to advance the understanding of the link between organisational culture and the practice of servant leadership behaviours in an organisation, enabling it to establish a culture that enables the practice and display of servant leadership behaviours toward the optimal performance of the organisation. To present this study, I will begin with a literature review on organisational culture and servant leadership, articulating the boundaries around these concepts.

1.2 Background to the Research Problem

An organisational culture is an involved concept that is often critical for the success and growth of an organisation (Al Issa, 2019). Andrew Pettigrew is often credited in the literature as having introduced the concept of culture to organisational theory in 1979 (Gorzelany et al., 2021). He defined organisational culture as a system of collectively and publicly accepted meanings that operate for a given group at a given time. Culture has been studied in organisations within management studies relating to work processes and societies (Gorzelany et al., 2021).

Servant leadership was first introduced in the literature in Robert Greenleaf's 1970 essay "The Servant as a Leader" (Hu et al., 2023). Servant leadership was later further developed and conceptualised by Robert Greenleaf in 1977, who initially defined it as a way of life centred around the desire to serve others (Chaudhry et al., 2022). Greenleaf asserted that genuine leadership came from altruism toward others, these being employees, customers, and the community (Canavesi & Minelli, 2022). He argued that this was because the leader's highest concern was to serve others in order to enable them to fulfil their needs, rather than the leader fulfilling their own needs (Canavesi & Minelli, 2022). Since then, the definition of servant leadership has evolved and been refined by many scholars.

1.3 Research Problem Statement

Organisational culture influences how employees in an organisation behave and thus the performance of an organisation (Gorzelany et al., 2021). Servant leadership has been associated with various positive outcomes in organisations and has, as a result, gained traction as a leadership style (Canavesi & Minelli, 2022). Both organisational culture and servant leadership behaviours can influence organisational performance.

While both organisational culture and servant leadership are relatively well-researched constructs in the literature, few empirical studies have researched the relationship between these two constructs, and in particular, how organisational culture affects,

facilitates, or impedes servant leadership behaviours in the organisation (Eva et al., 2019). While it is noted that organisational culture plays a crucial role in impacting the display and practice of servant leadership behaviours in an organisation, the exact mechanisms of how this is done are not well understood.

Much of the research on organisational culture and servant leadership has been carried out in North America and Asia. It has been quantitative in nature; furthermore, contextually, this has not been researched in South Africa (Eva et al., 2019). Thus, this study aims to contribute qualitatively to the banking sector in South Africa, an area where there has been minimal qualitative exploration of this relationship.

Understanding the relationship between organisational culture and servant leadership can help organisations create cultural environments that improve employee engagement, enable effective and ethical leadership, and improve organisational performance (Reddy, 2019). Given the advancement in globalisation, this is important for the effective leadership strategies and competitive advantage of organisations. Globalisation has created external pressures for organisations, requiring them to adapt their internal cultures so that they remain competitive and can survive and perform under turbulent external pressures (Al Issa, 2019). The globalised market also requires effective leadership to motivate employees. This study will contribute primarily to the literature on organisational culture and also to the literature of servant leadership.

1.4 Research Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study, an exploratory and qualitative research, was to address the underexplored area in the literature by examining the relationship between organisational culture and servant leadership, and how organisational culture facilitates/influences servant leadership behaviours within an organisation. The design or strategy of enquiry of this study is a case study in a banking organisation in South Africa. This study explores how organisational culture enables leaders to adopt servant leadership behaviours in an organisation. This will be achieved by analysing the organisational culture of an organisation and examining its influence on the display of servant leadership behaviours in an organisation. Thus, this study aims to qualitatively

investigate the organisational culture experiences of an organisation, through its members, and how this culture influenced the practice and display of servant leadership behaviours in a banking organisation in South Africa. By determining the existing organisational culture of the selected organisation and analysing how aspects of the organisational culture impact the display of servant leadership behaviours in the organisational setting, this study will yield an understanding of the organisational conditions that support and impede servant leadership behaviours in an organisation, thus contributing to the development of leadership strategies (Lerutla & Steyn, 2022)

This study's results provide insights for organisational leaders to understand how the organisational culture can enable servant leadership behaviours in the organisation. The targeted population for the study was executives, senior managers, and followers in the case organisation, who had been in the organisation for longer than six months, as these individuals would have experienced the culture of the organisation adequately for this study (Liao et al., 2024a). This target population was the primary source of the data given through first-hand evidence. The findings of this research should equip leaders with knowledge on how to strategise to create organisational cultures that enable servant leadership behaviour practices.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The results of this study are useful for leaders in the private sector who face challenges in improving the organisational culture of the organisations they operate in (Eva et al., 2019). The implementation of the findings and recommendations of this research could promote a better organisational culture in these organisations, thereby enhancing their performance. The required changes encompass adjustments to policies, processes, behaviour, value creation, and foundational assumptions.

The findings of this research will assist leaders in understanding how organisational culture influences the practice of servant leadership behaviours within the organisation through the experiences of the individuals in the organisation. This is particularly valuable given the importance of organisational culture in a business's performance.

1.6 Contribution to Business Practice

The understanding of organisational culture by the leaders of an organisation enables them to establish and maintain an effective organisational culture to achieve their desired business goals in the organisation and enhance its performance (Eva et al., 2019). This is paramount as the performance of a business is important for its survival, particularly in a competitive environment. Thus, understanding organisational culture and how to optimise it effectively is a strategic objective of an organisation.

The findings of this research contribute to the understanding of organisational culture by business leaders by explaining how organisational culture enables or hinders servant leadership practices in the organisation (Eva et al., 2019). Simultaneously, this research addresses an important gap in the literature regarding how organisational culture supports servant leadership in an organisation.

1.7 Assumptions

Some assumptions were made in conducting this research. One assumption of the study was that the participants recruited and interviewed for the study would respond truthfully to the interview questions of the study, aimed at answering the research questions, given that the participation of respondents was voluntary. Another assumption was that the selected participants had a sufficient understanding of organisational culture of the case organisation, to participate in the study. The third assumption was that the respondents selected suited the requirements of the study as they had first-hand primary observation, experience, and exposure to the organisational culture of the case study (Alvesson, 2023)

1.8 Limitations

One of the conditions and shortcomings of this study was the personal bias of the respondent participants, given their tenure and experiences with the organisational culture of the case study organisation. The second condition is that the participants'

responses were based on their understanding of organisational culture and leadership. The participants also possessed varying levels of seniority in the organisation and were in various teams, which may increase the participant bias in the study (Alvesson, 2023)

1.9 Delimitations

The first delimitation of this study was that it explores the role of organisational culture in a single case study organisation. The second delimitation is that all the participants of the study are based in South Africa. The third delimitation is that this study does not qualify for generalisability. It does, however, qualify for the exploration of rich, detailed, and in-depth perspectives in the case, and this is the aim of this research. A fourth delimitation is the restricted time the researcher had to conduct the study, along with the time the researcher had with participants in the study to explore organisational culture (Alvesson, 2023).

1.10 Structure of the Research Report

This section presents the remaining structure of this research report. This study is organised into seven chapters.

Chapter 1: Introduction to the Research Problem

This chapter provides an orientation to this study, including an introduction and background to the research problem, the motivation for the research, and the value of the research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter provides a review of the relevant literature on organisational culture and servant leadership, which is pertinent to this study and essential for achieving its research aim.

Chapter 3: Research Questions

This chapter focuses on the conceptual frameworks of the organisational culture model by Schein (2016), and the SL-7 servant leadership framework by Liden et al. (2015). In this chapter, these frameworks are explored in relation to their fit within this study.

Chapter 4: Research Methodology

This chapter expands on the methodology and procedures used for this study to achieve the study's aim and addresses the design, paradigm, sample, ethical issues, and limitations of the study.

Chapter 5: Findings and Results

This chapter focuses on the analysis of the data from the interviews conducted and depicts the key themes that emerge from the data, which answer the research questions of this study.

Chapter 6: Discussion of Results

This chapter presents a discussion of the data and themes, exploring how they collectively address the research questions, supported by the existing literature on organisational culture and servant leadership.

Chapter 7: Conclusions and Recommendations

This final chapter of the research report provides a summary of the entire study. Conclusions, recommendations, limitations, reflections on the research, and direction for future research are put forward.

1.11 Summary

A case study design was used, with a qualitative approach, to explore how organisational culture influences the practice of servant leadership behaviours in a bank in South Africa. The use of a qualitative case study research design allowed for the exploration of the research questions through the collection of data from followers, senior management, and executives in a bank in South Africa (Saunders & Lewis, 2017). This qualitative case study contributes to the body of knowledge on organisational culture and servant leadership. These two constructs are inadequately researched,

particularly in the banking private sector and in South Africa (Eva et al., 2019). The findings of this research give insight into how organisational culture enhances or hinders the display of servant leadership behaviours in the organisation. Furthermore, the findings contribute to the limited number of qualitative studies that directly examine how organisational culture influences the display of servant leadership behaviours in private sector organisations in South Africa.

2 Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This literature review is an integrative literature review that synthesises existing literature relevant to how organisational culture impacts servant leadership behaviours in an organisation (Eva et al., 2019). This literature review establishes an important foundation for answering the research question and supporting the findings of this study. The literature review incorporates various published sources from academic journals, dissertations, theses, and periodicals, which are available on various online databases. Example keywords, such as organisational culture, servant leadership, and service leadership, were used in the search to obtain the relevant literature. Below is a table of the literature review sources used:

Table 1: Literature Review Sources

Publication	Published within 5 years	Published more than 5 years ago
Books	1	3
Dissertations	1	0
Peer-reviewed articles	30	11
Total	32	14
Total (%)	70%	30%

2.2 An Overview of Organisational Culture

An organisational culture is a complex concept and has been defined in several ways in the literature (Asatiani et al., 2021). One of these definitions describes organisational culture as common ideals that are constructed by the members of the organisation through internal and external integration (Tadesse Bogale & Debela, 2024). Another includes the behaviours, mentalities, assumptions, and practices among the members in an organisation. Another definition states that organisational culture unifies the organisation by providing a reference for the organisation's identity and effectiveness (Al Issa, 2019). It involves the underlying assumptions, shared values, and behavioural patterns learned over time by members of the organisation relating to what is important,

correct, and worthy. While these cultural elements are constructed by existing members of the organisation, these norms are often transmitted to newcomers in the organisation. Oh and Han (2020) add that these elements are integrated by members of the organisation to focus combined effort towards one direction within the organisation. According to Tadesse Bogale and Debela (2024), an organisational culture is established over time and, once established, it can be resistant to change. Organisational culture has also been described as a lens that can be used to understand and analyse an organisation. It can be manifested through work processes, procedures, perceptions, patterns, symbols, myths, and cultural activities (Tadesse Bogale & Debela, 2024). These can be divided into informal aspects, such as rituals, language, and historical narratives, or formal aspects, such as leadership, power structures, decision-making processes, and human resource systems (Oh & Han, 2020).

An organisational culture is a fundamental attribute of an organisation, anchoring the organisation and permeating all its dimensions (Tadesse Bogale & Debela, 2024). It guides communication, interpersonal engagements, and management among colleagues in an organisation. An organisational culture also enables or hampers organisational learning, depending on the values that are encouraged in the organisation, by influencing members' perception of what functional knowledge in the organisation is and framing the context for knowledge creation, distribution, and institutionalisation (Oh & Han, 2020). Asatiani et al., (2021) argue that an organisational culture can also be a sustainable competitive advantage in strengthening organisational performance. Additionally, Rosario and Catacutan (2021) propose that pragmatically, an organisational culture is an ideology that helps employees solve their daily problems. An organisational culture has also been described as "the way things are done around here," the context that individuals find themselves in when looking around and outside themselves for guidance, as opposed to within themselves.

An organisational culture is a crucial concept in the literature and for organisations, given its impact on the overall functioning and performance of an organisation (Gorzelay et al., 2021). This makes it a vital leadership component. Beyond individuals within the organisation, an organisational culture indicates who an organisation's customers, competitors, and suppliers are, and how the organisation works with its stakeholders.

The organisational culture also enables employees to appreciate the organisation's strategy and attract individuals aligned with the culture, and those who will likely be successful in the organisation, given this culture (Gorzalany et al., 2021).

2.2.1 Organisational Culture Frameworks

There exist many frameworks that have been developed over time to explain and measure organisational culture. This study requires an understanding of the layers of various organisational cultures to explore how deep cultural elements shape leadership behaviours within the organisation. To understand how servant leadership behaviours are exhibited or inhibited at different cultural levels, Schein's model will be used in this regard (Asatiani et al., 2021).

2.2.1.1 Schein's Organisational Culture Model

Edgar Schein has made a significant contribution to organisational culture research through a foundational framework that continues to be a general framework of perspective used when examining organisational culture (Billstein & Hamasdi, 2023). This model proposes that the culture of an organisation is the essential set of beliefs established by the members of the organisation through the process of integration internally in the organisation (Tadesse Bogale & Debela, 2024). Schein also argues that leaders play a significant role in forming and reinforcing the social norms of the organisation.

Schein's model proposes an organisational culture model of three hierarchical levels: artefacts, values, and underlying assumptions (Asatiani et al., 2021). Together, these three levels establish the foundation of the culture of an organisation. Each level is characterised by a distinct measure of the cultural phenomenon in the organisation experienced by an observer (Billstein & Hamasdi, 2023). The levels encompass both elements of apparent representations within the organisation that are perceivable and tangible, and elements that are subconscious assumptions. The distinctly stated factors include the organisation's values and artefacts, while the implied factors are the organisation's underlying assumptions.

2.2.1.1.1 The Artefacts – The Visible Level

The artefacts are the first level in Schein's organisational culture model (Billstein & Hamasdi, 2023). This level represents the open and physical elements at a surface level of the organisation and its culture. The organisation's artefacts are the most distinguishable part of the organisation's culture, these being symbols, rituals, dress code, and language used (Asatiani et al., 2021). These artefacts are visible at the surface level and can be seen, heard, and observed (Reddy, 2019). Also included in the artefacts level are the observed behaviours, processes, and structures in the organisation.

2.2.1.1.2 The Shared Values – The Stated Level

The second level of the model is the shared values (Billstein & Hamasdi, 2023). This level is metaphysical for the most part and becomes most apparent during problem-solving, and new implementations are executed in the organisation. The organisation's values are a set of stated core expectations that describe the actions of members in the organisation, usually formalised by the organisation in a manner that is clear to comprehend, such that all employees are aware of them (Asatiani et al., 2021). To this, Schein (2016) notes that the values are at a deeper level than the artefacts and may not be directly observable, but can explain the actions of the individuals in the organisation. The shared values are most often explicitly stated, visible, and communicated regarding the core features of the organisation's culture in a simple manner (Asatiani et al., 2021b). Schein (2016) argues that the shared values motivate the observed behaviour of individuals in the organisation and support the artefacts of the organisation.

2.2.1.1.3 Basic Underlying Assumptions – The Tacit Core Level

The third level in Schein's model is the basic underlying assumptions of the organisation (Billstein & Hamasdi, 2023). Schein completes describing the framework with the underlying assumptions of the organisation being the implied, indirect, and subliminal elements of the organisation that direct and guide the actions of members of the organisation (Asatiani et al., 2021b). These explain the behaviours of individuals in the

organisation that are not explicitly detailed in the artefacts and values of the organisation, and can be challenging to study as they require prolonged, rooted immersion in an organisation (Asatiani et al., 2021). The underlying assumptions form the deepest core level of the organisation; they are factors that are less debatable and guide social engagement of individuals in the organisation (Reddy, 2019). These tacit and unconscious elements guide behaviour in the organisation. According to Schein, when a solution that has solved a problem in the organisation begins to work well, for a period of time or repeatedly, there is a good possibility that this solution may be assumed (Billstein & Hamasdi, 2023). These assumptions are ingrained in the organisation, bridging the gap in understanding the culture that is not explained by the artefacts and stated values (Asatiani et al., 2021b). The implicit and unconscious underlying assumptions are challenging to study and require deep and prolonged immersion in a specific organisational environment.

An important critique of Schein's Model includes the argument that the individuals in the organisation may not all truly share the values formalised by the organisation and thus may not all conform to the culture of the organisation in this regard, as there may be a conflict between the organisation's values and the personal values of the organisation's individuals (Asatiani et al., 2021). This critique questions whether the organisation's values are a good indicator of the behaviour of individuals in the organisation.

2.2.1.2 Cultural Web

The cultural web framework is a useful framework when analysing the organisational culture of an organisation by analysing the symbolic, behavioural, and physical indications of an organisation's culture (Billstein & Hamasdi, 2023). According to Billstein and Hamasdi (2023), the strength of this framework lies in its ability to represent various organisational cultural elements that form part of the organisation's paradigm, simultaneously, rather than separately. The six elements that establish the organisational paradigm include: symbols, stories, rituals and routines, control systems, organisational structures, and power structures (Billstein & Hamasdi, 2023).

The cultural *paradigm* of the organisation is the shared beliefs and assumptions of the organisation's members and is the core of the cultural web model (Morris, 2020). Understanding an organisation's paradigm is crucial for accurately grasping its culture; however, identifying this paradigm can be challenging, as it is often not explicitly discussed by the organisation's members (Billstein & Hamasdi, 2023). Furthermore, objects, acts, events, and individuals that create meaning beyond purpose in an organisation represent the cultural *symbols* of the organisation (Billstein & Hamasdi, 2023). Titles, logos, office designs, language forms, and individuals representing historical moments can all be considered symbols within an organisation's culture.

The *myths and stories* within an organisation's culture often reveal what is important to the organisation, relating to success and failure. They are often associated with personality traits and events (Billstein & Hamasdi, 2023). These stories are usually told by organisational members to each other, recruits, or outsiders about the history of the organisation (Morris, 2020). Additionally, the daily behaviour of the organisation's members in tasks and toward each other is often anchored in legacy and how things are done in the organisation (Billstein & Hamasdi, 2023). Events, activities, and procedures for assessment and promotion that reinforce the culture of the organisation can be perceived as the *rituals and routines* of the organisation (Morris, 2020).

Formal *control systems* in organisations are used to manage the organisation in line with incentives, quality assurances, and rewards (Morris, 2020). The control elements often determine whether organisational members have collective or individualistic approaches or whether they have a short-term or long-term focus (Billstein & Hamasdi, 2023). Moreover, the organisation's hierarchy speaks to the *organisational structures* that are important for conceptualising relationships and power within the organisation (Morris, 2020). Informal power dynamics form part of these organisational structures, with subcultures and hierarchies influencing knowledge sharing and communication within the organisation (Billstein & Hamasdi, 2023).

According to Billstein and Hamasdi (2023), the power structures in the organisation are closely linked to its paradigm, with the most powerful groups influencing the organisation's assumptions, beliefs, and values.

2.3 An Overview of Servant Leadership

Servant leadership is a values-based leadership style, whose values frame its behaviours and approach (Giambatista et al., 2020). It is a prosocial leadership style where the leader invests in and supports followers. It has its foundations in moral and ethical values (Grobler & Flotman, 2021). Servant leadership is a leadership style that emphasises serving followers, with the intent of enabling them to self-actualise and achieve the desired organisational outcomes through relational engagement (Chaudhry et al., 2022). Leaders do this by focusing on emotional, social, and ethical details of the leader-follower relationship. Under servant leadership, leaders assist followers to realise their full potential by growing their capabilities (Chaudhry et al., 2022).

Eva et al., (2019) define servant leadership as a leader's outward orientation of prioritising followers' individual interests and needs in an organisation. In the definition by Eva et al. (2019), similar to Chaudhry et al. (2022), the servant leader is considered ethical. However, Eva et al., (2019) also identify that the servant leader is altruistic, prioritising follower well-being and growth as the aspiration of leading. Eva et al., (2019) add that this altruism does not ignore the performance of an organisation but rather that the development of followers gives the organisation sustainable performance over the long run.

Furthermore, Saleem et al., (2020) include morality in their definition and identify the establishment of morality safeguards in servant leadership practice, similar to Canavesi and Minelli (2022), who identify the moral responsibility of a servant leader toward their followers as an important consideration for servant leadership. This study will adopt the SL-7 definition of servant leadership, which outlines that servant leadership entails leaders who enable emotional healing, empower followers, create value for their community, enable followers to succeed and grow, are conceptually skilled, behave ethically, and put followers first (Eva et al., 2019).

2.3.1 Servant Leadership in Comparison to Other Leadership Styles

In the literature, the comparison of the servant leadership style is often compared to the transformational leadership style, the ethical leadership style, the authentic leadership style, and the leader-member exchange (LMX) model. According to Saleem et al. (2020), the differentiating factors are most centred around the foundational philosophy and motivation, the method of influence, the ethical and moral inclination of the leadership style, the primary focus of the leadership style (objective-focus or follower-focus), and the traits of the leader themselves (humanistic with a focus on the welfare of others rather than homo-oeconomicus) (Saleem et al., 2020). Empirical research has also shown that servant leadership is distinctly different from leadership styles such as transformational and LMX.

Servant leadership contrasts with many leadership styles in the literature, as many of the other leadership styles have a strong focus on the ultimate progression of the leader's agenda and ambitions as opposed to those of the followers (Eva et al., 2019). According to Eva et al. (2019), the transformational leadership style, similar to servant leadership, emphasises follower needs, but this is ultimately to achieve the leader's or organisation's ambitions. Servant leaders are more likely to place followers' needs first, the organisation's needs second, and their own needs last. Servant leadership also contrasts with ethical leadership in that servant leadership has a strong focus on stewardship. In contrast, ethical leadership places less emphasis on stewardship and more emphasis on ethically rooted rules such as honesty. Servant leadership differs from authentic leadership in that, under servant leadership, the authenticity from the leader comes from the leader's altruistic inclination to serve others. Schowalter and Volmer (2023) outline the difference between servant leadership and authentic leadership as being that servant leaders are motivated by their inner convictions to make a positive impact on others. This motivation is not present in authentic leadership.

According to Chaudhry et al. (2022), servant leadership is different from transformational leadership as transformational leadership seeks to motivate followers through the vision of the leader, this vision being transformational. Under transformational leadership, the

leader looks to motivate their followers to sacrifice their own needs for the needs of the organisation (Chaudhry et al., 2022). In contrast, servant leaders prioritise their followers' needs over their own. Servant leadership also differs from the LMX model in that, under the LMX model, leaders look to serve followers with the anticipation of social exchange returns. Thus, under LMX, the quality of the relationship between the leader and follower is critical, with a high quality of relationship being more beneficial to the leader as this would yield a higher social exchange return (Chaudhry et al., 2022). Under the LMX model there is differentiation regarding how the leader treats their individual followers (Chaudhry et al., 2022). When comparing servant leadership to charismatic and transformational leadership, Schowalter and Volmer (2023) suggest that servant leadership incorporates the characteristics of humility and forgiveness, which are not explicitly incorporated under transformational and charismatic leadership (Schowalter & Volmer, 2023).

2.3.2 Distinction From Ethical Leadership

Despite servant leadership having foundations in ethics and morality, it is different from ethical leadership (Eva et al., 2019). Servant leadership embraces stewardship and takes into consideration all stakeholders. Ethical leadership is more rules-based, focusing on how one should lead according to intrinsic ethical rules and what is considered good. Moreover, servant leadership is more flexible. Both leadership styles emphasise honesty, integrity, and caring for people; however, ethical leadership lacks the focus on providing direction to followers and being authentic, which are key aspects of servant leadership (Eva et al., 2019). Further, ethical leadership is inclined towards compliance and prevention; it is directive and seeks normative behaviour (Neubert et al., 2022).

2.3.3 Identifying the Dimensions of Servant Leadership

There has been notable growth in empirical research on servant leadership, which was initially framed as a philosophy but is now the subject of much rigorous research (Chaudhry et al., 2022). Despite this growth, a dispute over the clarifying and cohering identifiers of the servant leadership concept has, to some degree, inhibited its theoretical

development (Eva et al., 2019). Chaudhry et al., (2022) adopt three classifications that define servant leadership: the personal characteristics of a leader (i.e., humane), the associated follower-oriented characteristics of the leaders (i.e., stewardship), and the associated relationship-oriented characteristics of a leader (i.e., shared power). Eva et al., (2019) highlight the essential attributes of servant leadership under the three identifiers of motive, mode, and mindset. Motive highlights that under servant leadership, the motivation to lead is not self-oriented around the leader's own personal ambition, but rather by the willingness to serve, requiring the leader to have a strong psychological maturity. Mode is descriptive evidence of the prioritisation of the one-on-one followers' needs and interests above those of the leader. Mindset reflects the ethos of the leader being inclined toward being a trustee for the well-being of the broader organisation and stakeholders, and thus growing both followers' and organisational resources.

Intrinsic characteristics of servant leadership behaviours include the values of integrity and self-awareness (Lamprinou et al., 2014). They include ethics, moral values, and ethical considerations. They include the fostering of trust and humility, tolerance, and selflessness (Canavesi & Minelli, 2022b). Due to the central intentional aim of serving others, servant leadership is communally oriented, placing the needs of employees, customers, and the community ahead of the leader's needs, selflessly (Aryee et al., 2023).

The most widely used dimensions in the literature to frame servant leadership are the seven dimensions of servant leadership that were developed by Liden (2008). These dimensions will be the focus of this study and include: *emotional healing, empowering, assisting followers to grow and be successful, ethical behaviour, placing followers first, building value for the community, and conceptual skills* (Franco & Antunes, 2020). Emotional healing describes the leader's involvement and interest in the follower's challenges and well-being. Empowering involves entrusting followers with responsibility and giving them autonomy. Helping followers succeed and grow involves the leader developing their full potential, enabling them to reach their full capabilities. Ethical behaviour refers to how leaders have integrity, are trustworthy, and honest. Placing subordinates first means the leader is motivated by prioritising the well-being and needs

of followers and serving them accordingly. Building value for the community explains the leader's efforts to uplift the organisation's surrounding community. Conceptual skills define the leader's faculty to guide work challenges within the context of organisational goals (Canavesi & Minelli, 2022).

2.3.3.1 Emotional Healing

Emotional healing refers to how servant leaders support the emotional and psychological welfare of followers (Grobler & Flotman, 2020). Servant leaders demonstrate this by showing concern for the personal challenges their followers may face. Servant leaders exhibit emotional healing by authentically showing an interest in the lives of their followers, thereby gaining a deeper understanding of them. They extend inspiration, kindness, and appreciation to followers, selflessly, to the benefit of followers (Wesevich, 2022). Servant leaders thus attend to the emotional needs of followers to alleviate their emotional challenges and to inspire them. The associated behaviours of emotional healing under servant leadership include support and acceptance, listening and empathy, and holistic engagement (Franco & Antunes, 2020)

2.3.3.2 Empowering

Empowering followers means servant leaders give their followers sufficient responsibility and autonomy so that they are able to engage in adequate problem-solving, task completion, talent development, and self-leadership (Wesevich, 2022). This empowerment generates a sense of ownership and confidence in followers. Servant leaders empower followers by investing in them, sharing information, acknowledging their views, coaching them, and giving them space to execute their capabilities (Wesevich, 2022). Servant leaders also incorporate the views of followers into decision-making.

2.3.3.3 Assisting Followers to Grow and Be Successful

In this dimension, servant leaders demonstrate genuine interest and care for followers' career progression through mentoring and support (Franco & Antunes, 2020). The prioritisation of the follower's development by the servant leaders is to allow the follower to reach their full potential and advance themselves, which is intrinsically valuable for

the follower (Liao et al., 2024a). To achieve this dimension the servant leader engages the follower in providing continual development and growth opportunities, conditions and tools to develop and sharpen the follower's skills; one-on-one focus on followers specific abilities, goals, needs and interests; building competence and effectiveness by stimulating followers to make decisions and make mistakes in the line of sight of the leader, fostering psychological empowerment and self-motivation; and being a role model to followers (Aryee et al., 2023)

2.3.3.4 Placing Followers First

Placing followers first is the primary motivation and intent for a servant leader (Grobler & Flotman, 2020). This describes the orientation of the servant leader in placing the needs of the follower above all else, including that of the leader. This choice is made intentionally by the servant leader (Giambatista et al., 2020). Servant leadership is oriented towards others in a moral and altruistic manner. This directly contrasts with the approach of a leader serving self and self-interest (Hu et al., 2023). This dimension entails a lot of self-sacrifice on the part of the servant leader, as the servant leader endeavours to prioritise the fulfilment of followers' needs (Aryee et al., 2023).

2.3.3.5 Building Value for the Community

Servant leadership is not only concerned about follower employees, but also the other stakeholders of the organisation, such as customers and the community (Aryee et al., 2023). There is a genuine concern about building value for the community on the side of the servant leader, as the servant leader accepts a moral responsibility for the success of not only the organisation, but also the organisation's community (Aryee et al., 2023). This dimension is demonstrated by the servant leader's encouragement of contribution to the community and to society through giving back to the community, volunteering and encouraging volunteering in the community, encouraging prosocial acts, and considering the impacts of the organisation's decisions on its surrounding community and on society (Eva et al., 2019). In the context of South Africa, the African philosophy of *Ubuntu* emphasises the role of a leader being a servant to their community, for the common and greater good (Grobler & Flotman, 2020).

2.3.3.6 Conceptual Skills

The dimension of conceptualisation by the servant leader speaks to the leader's cognitive abilities and requires the servant leader to know the followers' and the organisation's vision, mission, and objectives, and to be able to focus on these while focusing on their daily activities (Wesevich, 2022). Servant leaders use conceptualisation to support their followers, but also to develop their followers' own cognitive abilities. The servant leader needs to have good cognisance of the organisation's environment and operations to have the necessary foresight and acuity to anticipate, enable, and prevent what is to come, what is desired, and what is adverse to the tasks and functioning of their followers (Jonker et al., 2025).

2.3.3.7 Ethical Behaviour

Ethical behaviour is an important part of how servant leaders engage followers and behave in the organisation; it forms part of the moral inclination of servant leadership. Being a moral-based leadership style, servant leadership has a strong foundation in morality and ethics (Grobler & Flotman, 2021). This dimension means that servant leaders engage followers and those in the organisation with honesty, fairness, and transparency (Franco & Antunes, 2020). Servant leaders seek to attain results through trust, collaboration, ethics, and integrity.

2.4 Organisational Culture and Servant Leadership

An organisational culture is regarded as a critical insight component in understanding the dynamics of leadership in an organisation (Al Issa, 2019). This is because an organisational culture is perceived to have a significant impact on leadership style. Thus, for servant leadership to be effective in an organisation, it needs to be supported by the culture of the organisation.

The alignment between leadership style and organisational culture is important (Eva et al., 2019). The practice of servant leadership behaviours is considerably more challenging in organisational cultures that are not congruent with servant leadership behaviours. However, servant leadership thrives in organisational environments that

promote values such as respecting others and serving others (Tadesse Bogale & Debela, 2024). Where servant leadership practices can flourish, a constructive psychological culture is associated with it, along with the aligned behaviours and decision-making (Jonker et al., 2025).

A study conducted in higher education institutes in Asia showed that the leaders recognised the culture in the organisation as one of a clan culture where teamwork and human relations were accentuated, followed by a hierarchy culture with control, a chain of command, and centralised decision-making (Al Issa, 2019). Understanding the relationship between culture and servant leadership enables an organisation's decision-makers to optimise the consistency between organisational culture and servant leadership behaviours, thereby enhancing strategic organisational efficacy (Al Issa, 2019). Therefore this study seeks to answer how organisational culture impacts the practice of servant leadership behaviours in an organisation.

2.4.1 Societal Cultural Dimensions and Servant Leadership

The display and potency of servant leadership behaviours are influenced by wider organisational and societal values conceptualised through cultural dimensions (Eva et al., 2019). One such culture dimension is power distance. Servant leadership behaviours are perceived to be better adapted in nations that have a low power distance between employees and leaders (Eva et al., 2019). A comparative study between Africa and North America established that nations with a high power distance practised servant leadership behaviours less regularly (Canavesi & Minelli, 2022a). Another cultural dimension is collectivism. The same comparative study found that countries with high collectivism experienced servant leadership behaviours less frequently (Canavesi & Minelli, 2022a). Interestingly, this is contrary to Neubert et al. (2022), who found consistency between high institutional collectivism and servant leadership. In the South African context, the *Ubuntu* philosophy is a collectivist culture and philosophy and finds servant leadership very applicable (Grobler & Flotman, 2021).

Another cultural dimension is that of humane orientation. Servant leadership is theoretically humane-oriented and conceptually aligned with cultural environments that

are high in humane orientation (McQuade et al., 2021). Another cultural dimension that has been studied in the context of servant leadership is assertiveness (Neubert et al., 2022). Low assertiveness and low aggressiveness are more congruent with servant leadership, with servant leaders placing others ahead of themselves rather than asserting themselves as precedent, while maintaining social harmony (Neubert et al., 2022).

Additionally, it is worth noting the influence of values congruence in organisations. When there is congruence between specific cultural dimensions and leadership behaviours, in this case, servant leadership behaviours, the constructive impact, embracing, and responsiveness of servant leadership behaviours are enhanced. The distinction is drawn by Neubert et al., (2022) with the values being metaphysical and internal moral judgements, and the practices being specific external behavioural social norms.

Neubert et al., (2022) studied whether servant leadership is a leadership style that is relevant universally or whether its effectiveness is dependent on the cultural context of an organisation. Neubert et al., (2022) studied this using the cultural dimensions included in the GLOBE study project. The findings suggest that servant leadership is widely perceived as beneficial across cultures, but its effectiveness is most pronounced in societies that support its principles. Four key GLOBE cultural dimensions were identified by Neubert et al., (2022) as being particularly relevant for servant leadership: high institutional collectivism (encouraging resource distribution and collective action), high humane orientation (encouraging and rewarding caring and altruism), low assertiveness (encouraging tenderness and non-assertiveness), and low power distance (encouraging egalitarian interaction). Neubert et al., (2022) make an important distinction between cultural practices (descriptive norms of how people behave) and cultural values (injunctive norms of shared aspirations and ideals), proposing that it is the cultural practices that are most impactful on the effectiveness of servant leadership practice. Therefore, servant leadership behaviours are enhanced when aligned to cultural practices and cultural values.

2.4.2 The Link Between Organisational Culture, Servant Leadership and Ubuntu

The main intent of servant leadership is to serve others, which makes it pertinent to the African philosophy of *Ubuntu* (Grobler & Flotman, 2020). *Ubuntu* is a foundational philosophical concept in sub-Saharan Africa that expresses that one is a person through others. It is inherently community-oriented and ascends social relations in sub-Saharan Africa. Values that *Ubuntu* encompasses include tolerance, respect for people, and reciprocity (Grobler & Flotman, 2020). *Ubuntu* accentuates collective strength and relationships, qualifying all individuals for unreserved respect. Every individual in the organisation's contribution is acknowledged; organisations optimise their success by connecting with their moral base and the creation of wealth achieved through interdependence (Grobler & Flotman, 2020). Values associated with both *Ubuntu* and servant leadership, including serving others, compassion, respect for all, and group solidarity, are associated with benefits to organisational performance.

2.4.3 Policies and Practices

Organisations' policies and practices play an important role in guiding the exhibition and potency of servant leadership behaviours (Eva et al., 2019). It is worth noting that the policies and practices related to the organisational structure, as well as those managed by the human resources function, are most influential regarding the efficacy of servant leadership behaviours.

Organisations should allocate resources to train leaders on the benefits of practising servant leadership behaviours and how to create environments that are aligned with servant leadership behaviours (Li et al., 2021). Training should advance humane orientation aspects, including empathy and ethics. Leadership Self-Efficacy has also been noted in the literature as a key factor in enabling servant leadership behaviours in the organisation (Kauppila et al., 2022). Rewards frameworks should also be used to encourage the display of servant leadership behaviours in the organisation.

The formal structures of an organisation, such as the organisation's rules, bureaucracy, and decision-making processes, can create limitations for leaders to practice servant leadership behaviours in the organisation (Oh & Han, 2020). According to Oh and Han

(2020), this indeed can affect whether servant leadership will be successful in an organisation or not.

One of the dimensions of servant leadership is that of empowering followers (Canavesi & Minelli, 2022b). To achieve this empowerment, an adequate amount of autonomy needs to be given to followers. Interestingly, servant leadership may be expressly effective during periods of volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity that require followers to be dynamic in their autonomy, given that all the decisions cannot be made by their leader (Canavesi & Minelli, 2022a)

The shared basic assumption patterns of an organisation's individuals are what the organisation's culture is embedded in (Oh & Han, 2020). These beliefs are deeply rooted in the culture of the organisation, sometimes passively so. These beliefs shape the long-term patterns expected in the organisation through learning and transmission processes. These beliefs must align with the dimensions of servant leadership to sustain servant leadership behaviours over time in the organisation.

2.5 Summary

The literature review chapter provided an overview and discussion of the relevant literature on organisational culture and servant leadership pertinent to this study. The review incorporated a synthesis of the relevant theory, insights, and existing knowledge on organisational culture and servant leadership. The following chapter will include the organisational culture and servant leadership frameworks that will outline the scope of the research in order to answer the research questions of this study and achieve the research aim.

3 Chapter 3: Research Questions

3.1 Introduction

This study sought to explore how each organisational cultural layer in Schein's Organisational Cultural model influences the display and practice of servant leadership behaviours in the organisation. Areas of alignment and misalignment will be explored. The underlying assumptions of the organisational culture will be analysed to understand how these are translated into espoused values and artefacts of the organisation, and thus how these impact the display of servant leadership behaviours in the organisation.

Conceptual Framework

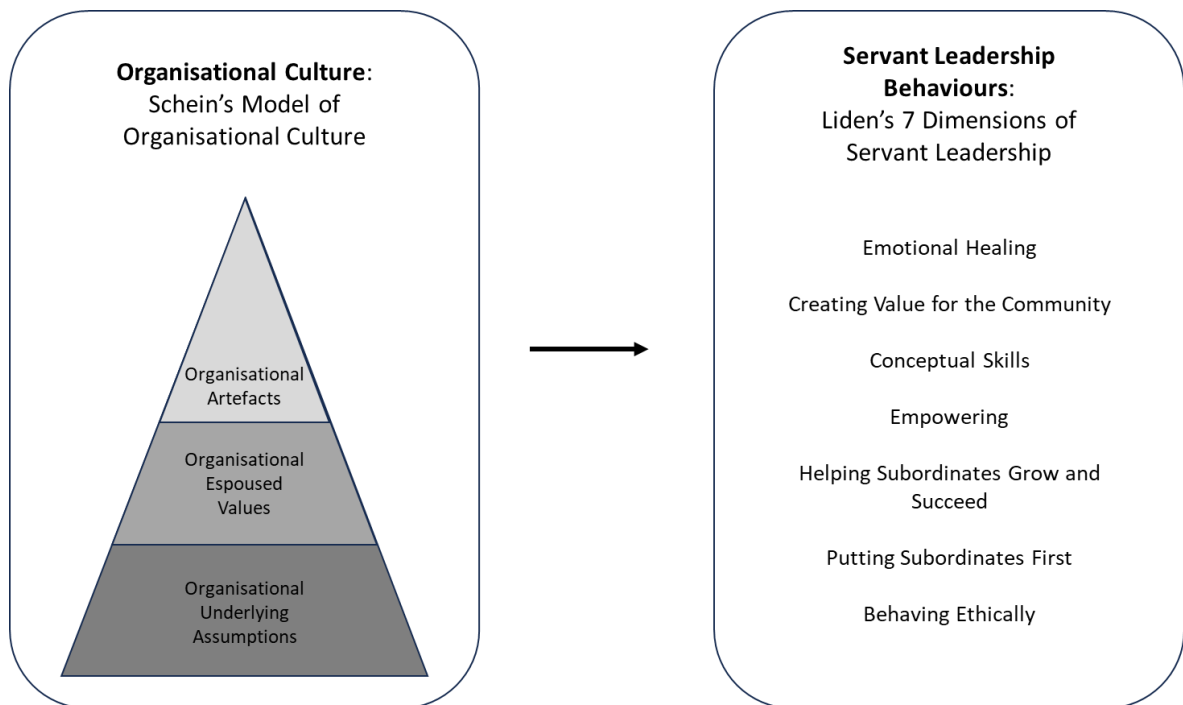


Figure 1: Mapping of Conceptual Framework Pre-Fieldwork

3.1.1 Research Concept 1: Organisational Culture

Organisational culture is the shared norms, values, and beliefs of an organisation's members (Tadesse Bogale & Debela, 2024). It influences behaviours in the organisation and is important for an organisation's success.

3.1.2 Research Concept 2: Servant Leadership

Servant leadership is a leadership approach centred around the prioritisation of followers' and other stakeholders' needs, growth, development, and success over that of the leader (Eva et al., 2019).

3.2 Research Questions

The research questions of this study align with the future research suggestions in existing empirical research gaps stated in systematic literature reviews of servant leadership (Eva et al., 2019).

Central Research Question: *How does organisational culture influence the practice of servant leadership behaviours in an organisation?*

The literature suggests investigations into how organisational culture acts as an antecedent or boundary condition for servant leadership behaviours in the model development phase (Eva et al., 2019). Eva et al. (2019) explicitly call for research into how organisational culture supports servant leadership. For servant leadership to be effective in organisations, it must be supported by the organisational culture. Further, the literature suggests that practising servant leadership within a culture that is not congruent with the servant leadership dimensions would be substantially more challenging (Eva et al., 2019).

This qualitative study will be guided by a main research question and three sub-questions.

Sub Questions

RQ1: *How do shared organisational values impact the expression of servant leadership behaviours in the organisation?*

This research question investigates the second level of Schein's model, the espoused values. Servant leadership is a values-based leadership style, fundamentally in ethics and altruistic values, distinguishing it from other leadership styles (McQuade et al., 2021). Organisational culture can be defined as the learned behaviours that occur within the context of shared values among organisational members (Al Issa, 2019). The literature suggests that the more congruent the organisational culture is with servant leadership behaviours, the more support leaders who practice servant leadership behaviours will receive from the organisation (Eva et al., 2019).

RQ2: *What are the organisational policies and practices that influence the display of servant leadership behaviours in the organisation?*

This question explores the first level of Schein's model, the artefacts. The policies and practices of an organisation include formal elements such as decision-making by leadership in the organisation, as well as human resources processes (Oh & Han, 2020). These policies and practices are captured in the cultural web of an organisation. The literature calls for research into the strategic integration of leadership theory into human resources management practices and policies, such as training, reward, selection, and evaluation (Canavesi & Minelli, 2022a)

RQ3: *How do the organisation's core beliefs influence the practice of servant leadership behaviours?*

This research question investigates the basic underlying assumptions of an organisation, the third level of Schein's model. The literature suggests that the organisation's basic underlying assumptions must be aligned with the dimensions of servant leadership, for servant leadership behaviours to be effectively practised in the organisation (Eva et al., 2019)

Table 2: Research Questions and Literature

RESEARCH QUESTIONS	LITERATURE REVIEW
How does organisational culture influence the practice of servant leadership behaviours in an organisation?	Eva et al. (2019)
Research Question 1: How do shared organisational values impact the expression of servant leadership behaviours in the organisation?	Al Issa (2019); Eva et al. (2019); McQuade et al. (2021)
Research Question 2: What are the organisational policies and practices that influence the display of servant leadership behaviours in the organisation?	Canavesi & Mielli (2022) Oh & Han (2020)
Research Question 3: How do the organisation's passive core beliefs influence the practice of servant leadership behaviours over time?	Eva et al. (2019)

3.3 Summary

This chapter presented the foundational conceptual frameworks of the organisational culture model by Schein (2016), and the S-7 servant leadership framework by Liden et al., (2015). This chapter outlined the reasons why the specified frameworks were employed for this research study and why they are appropriate for this study. The following chapter will outline the research methodology used in this study, describing aspects of the design, method, sample, participant, process, ethics, and limitations.

4 Chapter 4: Research Methodology

4.1 Introduction

This study aims to enhance the understanding and knowledge of how organisational culture influences the demonstration of servant leadership behaviours within an organisation. Chapter 1 identified the research problem, and Chapter 2 reviewed relevant literature, including why organisational culture influences the practice of servant leadership behaviours in an organisation. Chapter 3 outlined the research questions that this study seeks to answer. Chapter 4 presents the methodology used to assess the impact of organisational culture on the display of servant leadership behaviours within an organisation. This study used a qualitative single case study method to answer the research question.

4.1.1 Choice of Methodology

4.1.1.1 Purpose of Research Design

The research design that best answered the research question for this study was the exploratory single case study research design. Yin (2014) proposes a case study research design for in-depth exploration of complex phenomena within context, in this case, in the organisational setting. By using a case study research design, the study allowed for the capture of rich data that captures the detail and complexity of the organisational culture of the organisation under study (Alvesson, 2023). The qualitative case study approach was also appropriate as there was limited research on the topic under exploration (Khan et al., 2019). Multiple sources of data were collected to evidence triangulation of data in this study as well as rigour in the research, these being interviews and direct observations (Saunders & Lewis, 2017). This research design paid due consideration to the complexity and contextual nature of the organisational culture construct and servant leadership behaviour manifestations in the organisation under study (French et al., 2020). This gave rich contextual insights into the enablers and inhibitors of servant leadership behaviours in the organisation. This design provided a flexible but structured approach to exploring the influence of organisational culture on the display of servant leadership behaviours, as well as allowing for deep and detailed descriptions of this phenomenon through in-depth interviews with participants (Roberts

et al., 2021). The case study design sought to investigate phenomena within the associated real-life context, particularly in instances where the boundaries between context and phenomenon were not clear (Yin, 2014). This design allowed for the exploration of complex social phenomena to give insights into organisational processes and behaviours and develop theory (Yin, 2014). It is also the design that is most popular in exploring business research to understand an existing phenomenon and develop a theory.

Case study design may be exploratory, explanatory, or descriptive (Quinlan et al., 2018). The exploratory case study research design is appropriate for exploring the phenomena and processes in the case. It is effective in answering the “what,” “how,” and “why” of the research question in the context of the case (Saunders & Lewis, 2017). This was an appropriate design for the given research question. The explanatory case study research design is effective in explaining causal relationships and providing a detailed explanation of phenomena to develop a theory. This was not the aim of this study; therefore, an explanatory case study research design was not appropriate. The descriptive case study research design is effective in describing causal relationships and their effects. However, since the purpose of this study was not met, this research design was also not appropriate (Saunders & Lewis, 2017).

Case study designs may also be a single-case study design or a multiple-case study design (Quinlan et al., 2018). A single case study design approach is appropriate for this study, as people and client centricity are two core pillars included in the values of the selected case organisation, aligning with servant leadership principles. Furthermore, conducting a multiple-case study research would require more resources and integration time. Given the time constraints for completing this study, it does not allow for the effective research of multiple cases; therefore, this research design is not appropriate for this study.

This research used a holistic design focusing on organisational culture as a whole and its impact on the display of servant leadership behaviours (Alvesson, 2023).

4.1.1.2 Role of the Researcher

Describing the role of the researcher in this research was important for the credibility of the study (Yin, 2014). The researcher designed the case study questions and prepared the research report. Preparing the research report involved recruiting respondents, conducting interviews, and analysing the data to identify codes and themes (Saunders & Lewis, 2017). The researcher, a senior manager of a sizeable team in the organisation under study, has an appropriate understanding of the organisation's environment, as well as which participants are well-suited for the study. Prior knowledge and familiarity of the participants may have caused a loss of objectivity in the research process; thus, stringent ethical requirements were followed to arrive at accurate findings (Yin, 2014). In case study research, knowledge and understanding of the organisation are crucial for comprehending the organisational culture of the selected case.

Pre-determined semi-structured interview questions included in an interview protocol enhance the accurate and unbiased collection of data (Alvesson, 2023). This also enhances the consistency of the study findings, reducing the researcher's bias during the research process.

4.1.1.3 Philosophy

This case study used an interpretivist philosophy that appreciates the subjective reality and acknowledges the contextual experiences of the study (Quinlan et al., 2018). This philosophy was used as it recognises organisational culture and servant leadership as socially constructed phenomena that are experienced and interpreted differently. This philosophy also acknowledges that understanding the relationship between organisational culture and servant leadership needs to be appreciated within a specific context with specific social and historical dynamics. It acknowledges the existence of various realities, perceptions, and interpretations as meaningful data (Quinlan et al., 2018). The interpretivist philosophy acknowledges that knowledge from the study is established through the researcher's understanding and interpretive analysis of the subjective experiences and interpretations of the participants in the study, and this will influence the research process. Thus, frequent and deliberate reflection was required

from the researcher, while complete objectivity was not the goal of this study (Quinlan et al., 2018). The study used empirical enquiry and contextual understanding.

4.1.1.4 Approach Selected

This study used a constructivist approach. This approach was used given the subjective interpretations and experiences the participants of the study would have in sharing their insights (Yin, 2014). This qualitative research was inductive, as it used contextual insights to develop theory. The study employed abductive reasoning, utilising existing theoretical frameworks to guide the research (Quinlan et al., 2018). The approach of this study was exploratory as it sought to establish new and deeper insights, given the limited research on the relationship between organisational culture and servant leadership, particularly in Africa. This study was emergent, as it allowed for adaptability as unexpected insights arose during data collection and analysis phases of the study (Yin, 2014).

4.1.1.5 Methodological Choices

The research method choice for this study was a qualitative multi-method study, which allowed for a deep, interpretive exploration in the study (Quinlan et al., 2018). Qualitative data collection and analysis methods were used. This qualitative exploratory study aimed to investigate how organisational culture influences the display of servant leadership behaviours in an organisation, with the goal of improving the organisation's performance. This qualitative method was appropriate for studying group social behaviour at an organisational level, as it enabled the exploration of experiences, processes, and behaviours required for this study (Yin, 2014). This research method allowed for the analysis of the selected case organisation at multiple levels within a real context (Lwakatare et al., 2019). This approach also fits the purpose of the study, which is to identify and understand the organisational culture of the selected case and how this influences the manifestation of servant leadership behaviours in an organisation. The qualitative research method is often employed in social science studies (Saunders & Lewis, 2017). It allows for the capturing of rich data through open-ended questions to

understand phenomena, experiences, and meanings through exploration (Alvesson, 2023).

4.1.1.6 Strategy

The strategy for this research was a case study strategy using semi-structured, in-depth interviews and thematic analysis (Jones et al., 2019). The study employed purposive sampling to select participants who had experienced the organisational culture and leadership practices of the targeted organisation. Interview engagement with participants was in-depth due to the deep exploration of the research questions of the study. Preconceptions and judgement of the organisational culture and leadership practices from the researcher were acknowledged and set aside where required. Systemic reflection of the influence of the researcher's own inclinations and influence on data collection and analysis was incorporated throughout the study (Quinlan et al., 2018). This case study was guided by theoretical propositions to shape the study's research questions, focus the collection of data, and guide the analysis (Yin, 2014). Alternative explanations were systematically tested for the phenomenon under study to strengthen the study's validity by addressing competing explanations (Yin, 2014).

4.1.1.7 Time Horizon

This single case study research used a cross-sectional design with the collection of data at a single point in time (Quinlan et al., 2018). Participant recruitment was conducted over two weeks and data was collected over a period of four weeks. The cross-sectional research design was appropriate for this study given the time constraints of this research in answering the research questions of this study (Saunders & Lewis, 2017). The cross-sectional research design has been frequently used in the literature on organisation culture. Oh and Han (2018) investigated the influence of organisational culture types using a cross-sectional research design.

4.1.2 Population and Sample

The population for this study is the total set of managers and employees within the selected case organisation. A purposive sampling technique was used for the selection of the case organisation (Quinlan et al., 2018). The selected organisation incorporates elements of servant leadership into its values and has an operating history of more than 10 years. Participants were cross-sectional in the organisation, varying in role (Khan et al., 2019). Participants had been in the respective organisation for a minimum of six months, with leaders having at least one direct report. This study targeted executive leaders, senior managers, and organisational members (followers) in the organisation. This is contrary to most studies, which explore only the view of the manager or the employee (Khan et al., 2019). Participants in the study aimed to provide insights into cultural norms of the specific organisation and the experiences of organisational cultural influence on servant leadership behaviours. Participants were diverse in age, gender, role, and experience. This study used analytical generalisation and replication logic (Yin, 2014).

4.1.3 Unit of Analysis

The primary unit of analysis for this study was the organisation, which was studied to answer the research questions. Given the scope of this study and the time horizon, a single case approach was used for collecting rich descriptive data (Jones et al., 2019). The organisation was studied holistically as a distinct case; to address the research question, and the conclusions of the study were drawn at an organisational level (Saunders & Lewis, 2017).

4.1.4 Sampling Method and Size

Sampling for this study was purposive, involving the intentional selection of a specific organisation relevant to the study's theoretical framework (Yin, 2014). Purposive sampling was consistent and appropriate for the case study approach used in this study. It allowed for the selection of organisations that would be informative in answering the research question (Quinlan et al., 2018). The focus of this research was on one case that gave the relevant insights required for this study (Yin, 2014). The sample came from

the target population of the study, which was executive managers, senior managers, and followers in an organisation in South Africa. The sample was diverse in terms of race, age, tenure in role, and tenure in the organisation.

The sample size was determined by the sample size required to best answer the research question, as well as the availability of access to the relevant and required data (Saunders & Lewis, 2017). Participants were selected for the study based on their understanding of the organisational culture of the research case, enabling the collection of relevant data. Thus, participants aided in answering the central research question and were able to give the relevant insights regarding this (Yin, 2014). Participants were selected in accordance with their functional area and seniority. Executive level participants were included in the study to explore the strategic insights of the organisational culture, senior manager participants were included for their insights on how they use the organisational culture to achieve performance in their respective teams, and followers were included in the study for insights on how they experience servant leadership behaviours from the leadership (and each other) given the organisational culture they operate in.

Table 3: Study Sample Breakdown

Level	Department	Number	Rationale
Executive	Sales, Operations	2 (12%)	Top-level leadership, strategic experience, and perspective
Senior Manager	Sales, Product	5 (29%)	Link between strategy and execution; direct relationship with followers
Followers	Sales, Product	10 (59%)	Follow and experience leadership behaviours

Participants were male and female, ranging from seven months to 31 years of tenure in the bank. They held roles in product, operations, or sales, and identified as Black, Indian, Coloured, Mixed, or White.

Of the total study participants, 12% were executives, 29% were senior managers, 29% were senior followers, and 29% were junior followers. Together, followers constituted 59% of the respondents in total, with 29% management and 12% executive leadership.

Eighteen percent of the respondents were in a product role, and 82% were in a sales role. Forty-one percent of the participants were female, and 59% were male. The racial ratios were: 47% Black, 29% Indian, 12% White, 6% Coloured, and 6% Mixed.

Table 4: Participant Information

Seniority	Team	Gender	Tenure	Race
E1	Sales	Male	Short Term	White
E2	Sales	Male	Short Term	Black
SM1	Sales	Male	Medium Term	Mixed
SM2	Product	Male	Medium Term	Black
SM3	Product	Male	Long Term	Black
SM4	Sales	Male	Long Term	Indian
SM5	Sales	Female	Short Term	Black
SF1	Sales	Female	Short Term	Indian
SF2	Sales	Female	Long Term	Indian
SF3	Sales	Male	Long Term	Indian
SF4	Sales	Male	Long Term	White
SF5	Sales	Male	Short Term	Coloured
JF1	Sales	Female	Short Term	Black
JF2	Product	Female	Medium Term	Black
JF3	Sales	Female	Long Term	Indian
JF4	Sales	Female	Medium Term	Black
JF6	Sales	Male	Short Term	Black

4.1.5 Measurement Instrument

The researcher served as the primary data gathering instrument, utilising relevant and applicable data gathering techniques (Saunders & Lewis, 2017). Thus, the researcher had direct involvement in the data collection process to ensure accurate data gathering. Sufficient access to the data was required for this case study (Yin, 2014). In-depth interviews are a popular technique for data collection used in qualitative research. They are also commonly employed in case study design for in-depth exploration and understanding the specifics of the case at hand (Alvesson, 2023).

The primary measurement instrument was the semi-structured interview guide with open-ended questions (Quinlan et al., 2018). Open-ended questions, combined with probing questions on specific insights, allowed for the collection of relevant data. The

semi-structured interviews were the primary data collection method, required to gather participants' rich experiences of culture and leadership within the organisation (Yin, 2014).

The interview protocol was used in this study to conduct interviews with the participants of the study. This protocol involved purposefully selecting the interview participants, choosing a suitable platform to conduct the interviews, and scheduling an appropriate time for the interview in advance (Yin, 2014). Semi-structured interview questions were prepared in advance of the interviews. Interviews conducted were recorded and transcribed.

Direct observation analysis was also used to assess cultural artefacts of the organisation for contextual data collection (Yin, 2014)

4.1.6 Data Gathering Process

The primary source of data collection involved in-depth semi-structured interviews with selected participants in the organisation, aiming to explore the contextual cultural nuances of the organisation and their relationship with the display of servant leadership behaviours in the organisation (Roberts et al., 2021). The interviews allowed for the capture of rich qualitative data (Alvesson, 2023). An additional source of data collection included observational data. Observational data supplement the study with additional contextual information (Roberts et al., 2021). The case study approach required the ability to maintain a good relationship with the participants for effective collection of data (Yin, 2014). Participants that the researcher had an established and good working relationship and trust were selected for data gathering, as this enabled the participants to be transparent and open in discussion, communication, and conversation when answering the research questions.

The interviews were conducted on a one-on-one basis, scheduled for approximately, but not limited to, an hour. Interviews were conducted using Microsoft Teams. Interviews were scheduled at a mutually suitable time for both participant and researcher. An interview protocol with semi-structured, open-ended questions was used (Yin, 2014). A

semi-structured interview guide, which included a series of semi-structured interview questions, was followed in all interviews to minimise bias during the data collection process (Saunders & Lewis, 2017). The interviews using semi-structure opened-ended question interview allowed for flexibility during the interview, in that probing and follow-up questions were asked by the researcher to get deeper insights from the participants, where additional depth in the participant's responses was required (Saunders & Lewis, 2017). Using in-depth, one-on-one interviews allowed for a deep exploration of the research questions of this study (Yin, 2014). Participants maintained the right to stop the interview at any point without any repercussions and this was also outlined in the consent form shared with participants ahead of the interview. The interviews were recorded and transcribed using Microsoft Teams. Although the interviews were recorded, the researcher was able to take notes during the interview regarding specific insights. The transcripts were kept confidential by the researcher. Data collection involving direct observation in the organisation such as by taking part in meetings and observing artefacts in the organisation gave further insights on the organisational culture and leadership behaviours in the organisation (Yin, 2014)

4.1.6.1 Data Organising

For this study, data were easily accessible and trackable for the researcher, and were well organised. A digital filing system was used for interview transcripts, electronic journals, consent letters, data analysis, and report preparation (Quinlan et al., 2018). Dedicated folders were labelled according to study phase, consent letters, data type, report version number, participant type, and other relevant criteria. Microsoft Excel was used to manage and summarise the data. Data were regularly backed up on cloud storage.

Interview participants were assigned unique numerical and alphabetical identifying numbers during data analysis to ensure participant confidentiality. The grouping of relevant information under a research question began the process of identifying themes during analysis (Yin, 2014). Data were securely stored and will be for a minimum of five years; thereafter, it may be destroyed appropriately where required.

4.1.7 Data Analysis Approach

Data analysis for this study involved reading the interview transcripts, grouping similar concepts, and identifying themes within the data. The six phase process by Braun & Clarke (2006) was used in this study. The first phase included getting familiar with the data by reading and re-reading the data transcripts (Braun & Clarke, 2006). During this phase, cleaning and preparing the data transcripts for analysis was also done. The transcripts were uploaded onto Atlas.ti for coding. Phase two included generating initial codes from the data by systematically going through the data and identifying interesting features in the data that relate to the research question. In this way the data is organised into meaningful groups (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Coding was data-driven in the analysis. In phase three the codes were then organised into themes, by grouping initial codes into sub-themes, and grouping the relevant sub-themes into themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Codes that were not relevant to the sub-themes and themes were discarded. Phase four entailed reviewing the themes to ensure internal homogeneity and external heterogeneity (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Phase five was the naming and defining of the themes and phase six was telling the story through the write-up of the research report (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Transcripts were generated using the recording and transcribing function in Microsoft Teams for electronic transcription, and any handwritten notes taken during the interview were also organised into electronic format for analysis.

Methodological triangulation employs more than one method (or multiple) technique(s) to triangulate data (Quinlan et al., 2018). Investigator triangulation uses more than one (or multiple) researcher(s) to confirm findings of the relevant data (Quinlan et al., 2018). Theory triangulation uses more than one (or multiple) theory (or theories) to confirm findings (Quinlan et al., 2018). Data triangulation uses multiple sources to arrive at similar findings and outcomes (Quinlan et al., 2018). This study employed data triangulation from interviews with multiple participants from different groups, including executive leaders, senior managers, and followers. Data triangulation is often used in case study design to validate the data (Yin, 2014).

Analytical generalisation was used in this study, with this case study seeking to generalise findings toward theoretical propositions and theory development (Yin, 2014).

Research software was utilised to analyse and manage the data for ease of use and reference during analysis, coding, and theme development. Research software assisted with comparing, sorting, amending, and storing codes. This study used a standard qualitative thematic analysis approach using Atlas.ai (Khan et al., 2019). Thematic analysis is a structured method that is used to identify, analyse, and report themes in observed content and interviews (Roberts et al., 2021). Thematic analysis was well-suited for identifying patterns in the data, as it is flexible, given the organisational analysis required in this study. From the transcriptions, the themes from the data were enabled to emerge (Khan et al., 2019). The first round of codes consisted of 234 first-order codes established by the researcher. From these 234 codes, 28 second-order codes were established. Subsequently, from these 28 second-order codes, five themes were established from the data. The relevant organisational culture determinants that impact the expression of servant leadership behaviours were identified and grouped. These groups were developed for narrative and coding purposes. Coding advances from the literature, to interesting insights emanating from the interviews, and ultimately the establishment of concepts in the study (Yin, 2014). The major findings in the data were the themes aligned with Yin's (2014) five themes, which emerged from the case study data for interpretation. Thus, it was the themes that developed into a conceptual theory to explain the role of organisational culture on the practice of servant leadership behaviours in the organisation. Finally, the connection between various themes was established to develop a holistic picture of organisational culture in relation to servant leadership behaviours (Khan et al., 2019). The interpretation of the themes into a narrative discussion was the final step of the data analysis.

4.1.7.1 Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted with one individual who was a follower in the organisation (Yin, 2014). This was done to test the research protocol of the semi-structured open-ended questions to ascertain that the relevant data were being gathered to answer the research questions (Saunders & Lewis, 2017). The research questions were slightly modified after the pilot study to better address the research objectives. The pilot study data were excluded from the analysis to address the research questions of this study .

4.1.8 Research Ethics

Ethical clearance from the organisation under study was obtained, and informed consent from participants was also obtained (Quinlan et al., 2018). Permission to conduct the research in the selected case was acquired, and ethical clearance from the Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS) was obtained before the commencement of data collection for the study. As per Yin (2014), the relevant institutional board approval was obtained for the collection of data from human participants, with the required ethical principles being adhered to during data collection and analysis, these including protecting participants from harm and upholding the confidentiality and privacy of the data for this study.

Confidentiality of the case and participants was preserved in this study to protect them (Yin, 2014). Confidential information included the names of the participants and the name of the organisation under study. Data were stored digitally on the cloud in a secure location, with access requiring security passwords (Quinlan et al., 2018). Recordings and transcripts were coded to keep the data confidential and anonymous. Methodological rigour in this study was supported by ethical conduct, which was maintained through transparency, accuracy, and honesty (Yin, 2014).

Approval for the collection of data in the case organisation was sought from the Head of Human Capital and the Human Resources Department in the organisation, and participation in this study was on a voluntary basis. An informed consent form was shared with participants ahead of the scheduled interview, to be signed and returned before the interview was conducted, together with a copy shared with the participant. Consent was also obtained from participants for the recording. Participants were able to withdraw from the research study at any time, which was clearly indicated on the consent form that was shared with participants ahead of the interview conducted (Yin, 2014).

4.1.9 Quality Controls

Validity involves checking the accuracy of the findings of the study by using different tests, such as the external validity test, the internal validity test, and the construct validity

test (Yin, 2014). The external validity test assesses whether the study's findings are generalisable. The internal validity test assesses the cause-and-effect relationship between variables in the study, whereas construct validity assesses the operational measures in the study (Quinlan et al., 2018). Triangulation is the validity strategy employed in this study. By sourcing data from the executive leadership group, the senior manager group, and the followers group, collecting data from these different groups will enhance data triangulation and the accuracy of the findings, thereby improving its credibility.

Reliability is an important measure for the quality of the research design chosen and includes dependability of the study compared to other similar studies (Yin, 2014). Reliability also minimises bias in the research process. A good test for reliability is whether other researchers arrive at the same findings as the researcher when using the same data and procedures (Yin, 2014). For reliability, not only executive leaders and senior managers were interviewed, but also followers (Khan et al., 2019). For confirmability, the researcher maintained a reflexive journal, noting biases that may influence interpretation in the study. Disconfirming evidence was sought for alternative meaning analysis, and direct quotes by the participants were used (Jones et al., 2019). Transferability of this study's findings will result in the implementation of the findings from observed cases to similar unobserved cases. Furthermore, regarding transferability, the findings will be related to theoretical frameworks, and researchers may use this study's findings to support other study findings.

4.1.10 Limitations

The participants' experiences and perceptions are subjective, which introduces interpretation bias by the participants and researcher; however, this is mitigated by reflexivity and triangulation (Yin, 2014). The sample was small and purposive, limiting generalisability; however, this was a study about rich qualitative depth (Yin, 2014). The frameworks that will be used originated in the Western context and may not capture all the cultural elements present in the African context. The experiences of the participants included in this study were captured at a point in time (cross-sectional) rather than over a period of time (longitudinal) (Quinlan et al., 2018). Given this, this study does not

capture how the relationship between organisational culture and servant leadership evolves over time. Also, participants were at times wary of truly reflecting their experiences, especially negative ones, due to perceived potential repercussions despite the knowledge of the confidentiality of the study. The qualitative case study method may be perceived to lack rigour, but this was addressed in the research by using a systematic method approach (Yin, 2014).

4.2 Summary

This chapter detailed the research design, data collection method, the role of the researcher, and the data analysis technique. The qualitative case study research method was suitable for this study, as it enabled the conduction of in-depth interviews and the collection of the required data to answer the research questions. The next chapter presents the findings from the collected data.

5 Chapter 5: Findings/Results

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results of interviews that were conducted with participants. The coding of the recorded interview transcripts was performed using Atlas.ti software and was done by the researcher. The case study included 17 participants, all employed at the same banking organisation under study. Participants included executives, senior managers, and junior followers from the product, operations, and sales teams within the organisation. Codes were given to each participant to maintain anonymity.

The central research question of this study is: How does organisational culture influence the practice of servant leadership behaviours in an organisation? The central research question was answered through collecting data from open-ended research interview questions from participants (Saunders & Lewis, 2017). The research questions were aligned to Schein's model of organisational culture, Liden's seven dimensions of servant leadership. Saturation was reached after eight interviews, after which no new significant themes emerged from the data. To achieve saturation, purposive sampling was conducted through the selection of one banking organisation to obtain rich perspectives and data (Quinlan et al., 2018). Purposive sampling was employed, given the criteria required to answer the research question. Strategic selection of the case and individual participants was employed to collect relevant data that would answer the research question (Quinlan et al., 2018). Thematic analysis was conducted on the rich data to identify the recurring patterns and themes.

Participants understood the constructs of organisational culture and leadership, enabling them to answer the questions included in the interview protocol (Yin, 2014). Participants were also familiar with these constructs in practice. It is worth noting that some participants asked clarifying questions about whether the values in question being asked referred to the stated organisational values or the values being practised, which may be different from those stated. Some participants asked clarifying questions about whether a positive or negative example was being discussed when discussing leadership behaviour. Respondents were given their choice to provide a positive or

negative example; this did not impede the congruence or specificity of the examples given.

The five main themes that emerged from the data of this study include: 1) The Divergence Between Stated Shared Values and Values in Practice, 2) Hierarchical Authority and Systems Despite a Flat Organisational Structure, 3) The Importance of Employee Empowerment Together with Investment in Employee Development, 4) The Challenge of Interdepartmental Collaboration and Consistent Communication, and 5) The Tension Between High Performance and People-Centric Leadership

5.2 Findings

This section presents some of the responses that informed the five major themes that emerged from the data analysis. The data was collected from the questions listed in the interview protocols. The remainder of the findings section highlights the specific responses that informed the five themes that emerged.

5.2.1 Theme 1: The Divergence Between Stated Shared Values and Values in Practice

Theme one explains the perceived gap between the articulated values of the organisation and the actual lived and observed values of the individuals in the organisation, particularly the leadership. Four sub-themes emerged, these being: the importance of shared values in the organisation, the importance of aligning organisational values with personal values, the stated values often differ to the practiced values and values are developed top-down.

Table 5: Theme 1: Sub-Themes Discussed by Participants

The Divergence Between Stated Shared Values and Values in Practice	E1	E2	SM1	SM2	SM3	SM4	SM5	SF1	SF2	SF3	SF4	SF5	JF1	JF2	JF3	JF4	JF6
The Importance of Shared Values	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Stated Values often Differ from Practiced Values	x	x					x				x			x			x
The Importance of Aligning Organisational Values with Personal Values		x		x	x	x	x				x						
Values are Developed Top-Down	x					x			x	x		x	x				

Source: Data- secondary codes

5.2.1.1 The Importance of Shared Values

Sixteen of the 17 study participants acknowledged the importance of values in setting the foundation for work practices and how colleagues engage with each other and the bank's stakeholders. This indicates that almost all the participants recognise the importance of shared values in the organisation. Participants recognise the importance of the shared values because they give guidance on behaviour and ethics in the organisation. Participants expressed that the values represent the DNA of the organisation and they are intended to indicate how employees show up at work. For leaders, participants expressed that the values set the standard of how they treat their followers, how they operate in the bank and how they collaborate cross-functionally. Despite the importance of the values in the organisation, observational data shows that the values are not adequately displayed within the organisation, such as on the walls, in collateral like desktop calendars, or on equipment like laptop screensavers, backgrounds, or the bank's website. The service standards of the bank are, however, displayed on the organisation's desktop calendars and thus easy to reference.

An interesting finding from this study is the lack of awareness about the bank's exact declared organisational values. Codes indicating that the exact values of the organisation were not well known appeared often in the data. This suggests that the bank's values have not been effectively communicated and embedded within the organisation. The stated organisational values of the bank include: energy, honesty, innovation, listening, quality, and respect.

Respondents were unable to identify all the values of the organisation clearly, but were able to identify two or three of these values, which often included respect and honesty. They often identified the strategic pillars and service standards of the bank as the bank's core values. The strategic pillars of the bank include client centricity, revenue/profit/performance, processes/procedures, digital, and people. The service standards encompass consistency, communicative, accessible, responsive, empathetic, and simple. The bank is part of a broader organisational group, but it has a different set of specified values from this group. The group's values include respect, honesty and integrity, accountability, and transparency. These are also the values that were most articulated by respondents too. This lack of clarity was common across executives, senior managers, senior followers, and junior followers.

The data indicate a general lack of reinforcement of the values within the organisation. There is some evidence of efforts to embed the values in the organisation; however, these efforts appear insufficient due to the lack of clarity surrounding the organisation's values. What appears to have been well embedded in the organisation is the service standards of the bank.

Table 6: Key Relevant Quotes: The Importance of Shared Values

Participant	Related Quote
SM1	<i>So, they represent how we show up on a daily basis, how we do business, what we stand for, and our DNA in the bank.</i>
SM3	<i>Well, they represent a way of working. They represent a guiding force that directs us toward our goals. It's more about wanting to obtain profits; however, to achieve them, you need to have empathy, care, and respect, and you work around those things to get where you want to go.</i>
SM2	<i>These values must also guide our principles of leadership. Can you also reference back? Is this aligned with the organisation's values?</i>

Source: Data - Transcripts

5.2.1.2 Stated Values Often Differ from Practised Values

Six participants acknowledged a discrepancy between the bank's stated values and the actual values experienced in reality. In fact, it is the values exhibited in reality that colleagues consider more valuable and important. It is crucial not only to talk about the values but also to live them. One senior manager suggested that one reason the stated values were not practised in reality is that the organisation is not able to measure the values, particularly in the context of the individual's values or team values. This is illustrated in the table below. Where gaps exist between the bank's values and those of the team or individual, it will be challenging for the bank's values to be practised in reality. The result is that the values are not effectively applied within the organisation. A respondent expressed that it has been challenging to practice certain values in their current role, as these values do not align with their personal values. Another important insight from a respondent was that the leadership played a crucial role in implementing the stated values in the bank. The sub theme of the values is practice differing from the stated values was present in both managers and followers

Table 7: Key Relevant Quotes: Stated Values Often Differ from Practised Values

Participant	Related Quote
E2	<i>I mean, they might say it on paper and not live it, because for me, values aren't about what's on paper; it's about what's left.</i>
E2	<i>Because it's one thing to write them, you know, on the board by the reception or to send them via e-mail or to put them wherever, but it's another to leave them, you know, because they don't see them in action.</i>
SM5	<i>The values have a significant influence, but obviously, the organisational values must be measurable to align with the individual's overall goals as a whole. You find that if you only have the values that exist in the organisation, but you're not able to measure those values or even embed those values into the goals of the individuals and teams. You find discrepancies between the organisational values, as well as when drilling down to the individuals and even to the team. So, if there is a gap in terms of measuring these values, being part of the goals of</i>

	<i>the organisation or the goals of the team, even for us as individuals, it's quite complex to actually live according to the values of the organisation. Currently, I don't see how our current goals, both individually and as a staff, align with the bank's existing values.</i>
SM5	<i>Some of them have made me somewhat uncomfortable in my leadership role. I've been very uncomfortable, to the point where I've reached a stage where I'll accept it, even though it doesn't really resonate with me as an individual. It's not part of my values as an individual. However, it is now expected of me in terms of leadership and success. So yeah, I had to act in a certain way to fulfil what was brought out there.</i>

Source: Data - Transcripts

5.2.1.3 The Importance of Aligning Organisational Values with Personal Values

Clarity of the bank's values is vital for guiding colleagues and the leadership of the bank. According to the data, the values guide employees in terms of how they should show up to work, how they engage people, and how they collaborate in the organisation. Most respondents lacked clarity on the bank-specific values. However, the values they did respond to were an expression of personal alignment with those values by some respondents. Thus, if the organisation's values are aligned to the personal values of individuals in the bank, this helps individuals to practice the organisation's values. Six respondents expressed that the bank's stated values resonated with them because these are values that were instilled in them when growing up, thus they relate to them. One respondent noted that if the values do not align with theirs, then they were likely to feel unhappy or leave the organisation. This is illustrated in the table of relevant quotes below. Another respondent noted that the bank's values are easier to accept if one lives them daily, as seen in the table of quotes below. One respondent also expressed that the leadership in the organisation should be driven and principled by the organisation's values, as highlighted in the table of quotes below. This is interesting as the importance of aligning organisational values with personal values was not indicated by the junior follower respondents. Thus, according to the data, personal alignment to the organisation's values is important for managers in the organisation.

Table 8: Key Relevant Quotes: The Importance of Aligning Organisational Values with Personal Values

Participant	Related Quote
SM4	<i>So, again, I think that as a person, you grow up with a set of values, and if those values don't align with a company's values, you're going to be unhappy. There is going to be that almost internal sort of fight for you and I've seen it before.</i>
SF5	<i>Well, firstly, my personal values are aligned with those values. So as a starting point, it represents some of the values that I live by on a day-to-day basis, and I instil in my family and everyday life.</i>

Source: Data - Transcripts

5.2.1.4 Values are Developed Top-Down

All respondents indicated that they were not included in the process of creating the values, and as a result, do not know the process that was undertaken to establish the bank's values. This was evident across executives, senior managers, senior followers, and junior followers, as well as individuals with short, medium, and long tenures in the bank. It is noted that the executives have been in the bank for a brief tenure. Respondents assume that the values were established, if not approved, at a very senior level in the bank, and these were subsequently filtered down to the lower levels in the bank. One way to embed and filter down these values throughout the bank was through online training for all staff members. One respondent noted that the bank's values seemed intended for colleagues to share with customers, rather than for stakeholders to share with colleagues.

Table 9: Key Relevant Quotes: Values are Developed Top-Down

Participant	Related Quote
SF1	<i>To be quite honest, I have no idea. I just came here. I have a comprehensive list detailing their values and service standards.</i>

SF2	<i>I'm not entirely sure about the process that was involved. You join an organisation and hear about its values. So, in terms of how it was developed, I cannot elaborate on that.</i>
JF6	<i>I would say they are very instructional.</i>
E1	<i>They have tried to embed them through the provision of online training to all staff. So, there was a recent communication, I'm sure, which was previously mentioned.</i>
JF2	<i>The same view I had in the previous question, I think, affects us from the leadership down; it permeates down to us, who are just supporters. And I still think that we could really, um, work on it.</i>

Source: Data - Transcripts

Almost all the participants acknowledged the importance of the shared values in the organisation. Despite only six participants indicating that the stated values often differed from the values in practice, this sub-theme was expressed across both followers and managers. The values of the organisation have clearly been developed and shared top-down in the organisation and this could be the reason that there is a divergence in the stated and practiced values in the organisation. It is therefore interesting that the data indicates that personal alignment to the values is important among managers in the organisations, given that the values are developed top-down in the organisation.

5.2.2 Theme 2: Hierarchical Authority and Systems Despite a Flat Organisational Structure

Theme two describes the paradox of the formally flat structure of the organisation, yet hierarchical practices within this structure. The sub-themes that emerged from this theme include: the organisational structure that is formally flat but hierarchical in practice and the slow rate of implementation in the organisation.

Table 10: Theme 2: Sub-Themes Discussed by Participants

Hierarchical Authority and Systems Despite a Flat Organisational Structure	E1	E2	SM1	SM2	SM3	SM4	SM5	SF1	SF2	SF3	SF4	SF5	JF1	JF2	JF3	JF4	JF6
Organisational Structure is Formally Flat but Hierarchical in Practice	x	x			x				x								x
A Slow Rate of Implementation in the Organisation	x		x	x					x	x		x		x			x

Source: Data- secondary codes

5.2.2.1 The Organisational Structure is Formally Flat but Hierarchical in Practice

Being a small tier 2 bank, the bank has a relatively flat structure with not many layers. The observed data indicates that the layers in the organisation include the CEO, executive leadership, senior managers, and direct reports (both senior and junior). However, the data reflect that despite its small size and flat structure, the bank takes a long time to respond, make decisions, and implement them. This sub-theme was discussed by all groups of participants in the study. There is not a lot of debate encouraged by the leadership, which ultimately creates an instructional environment. This sentiment was more pronounced in the managers, compared to the followers. One executive expressed a fear of challenging authority, stemming from a fear of criticism or retribution. This quote is captured in the table of quotes below. Another senior manager noted that a fear of failing within the organisation hindered decision-making and execution, leading to delays. I believe this suggests a lack of psychological safety. As a result, much of the good feedback and suggestions on improvements from the broader group are lost, this was according to one executive. It also appears that some departments in the bank are more hierarchical than others. One executive noted that people often invite others to challenge them, which can become problematic when they do.

The decision-making in the bank is also described as hierarchical by three respondents in the data, through using a top-down approach for decision-making. Decisions must be made at various specified forums through various specified channels.

Table 11: Key Quotes: The Organisational Structure is Formally Flat but Hierarchical in Practice

Participant	Related Quote
E1	<i>So, it's a very hierarchical and authoritative culture, which is quite interesting because FFF has a relatively flat hierarchical structure. Much flatter than most other banks. My second comment is that I find it somewhat authoritarian, as I mentioned earlier.</i>
E1	<i>I think another challenge we face is psychological safety. I sense that many teams and individuals struggle with this.</i>
SM3	<i>Well, it varies. It varies when you look at the structure. It's hierarchical. Some would say in some departments it's flat, but how do you describe flat? Because if there is someone who, in terms of, let's just say, in terms of the outlay of the office, it is flat because you are able to walk towards a manager's desk or towards a head of division's desk. However, when it comes to your C-suite, you need to gain access to them.</i>
E2	<i>You know, people often invite others to challenge them, and when they do, there's a problem.</i>
SF2	<i>It is, to a degree, an open culture, but there's a lot of hierarchical leadership involved in terms of decisions that are made, especially from a top-down perspective.</i>
SM3	<i>However, if the capex is of a certain amount, where you will see over xxx, I need to establish the proper structures for a decision to be made. For instance, my request will go from my manager, a divisional manager, and lobby managers who may be affected by the changes I propose. It will then be approved or declined. If it's something we're looking to get into, you'll be advised on areas for improvement, and then you'll come back and present in that space. If the committee finds it great in terms of CapEx, it might go to exco or the board. So, you see, it is very dependent on the decision.</i>
SM5	<i>Decisions get made at the top. When they get down, they just get cascaded down, and once the decisions are made from the top, it's not</i>

	<i>a matter of you adding or wanting it to be a bit different from how it has been projected to you. That's exactly how you're going to execute on it.</i>
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Source: Data - Transcripts

5.2.2.2 A Slow Rate of Implementation in the Organisation

Despite the formally flat structure of the organisation, a slow rate of implementation in the organisation is noted by eight participants across both managers and followers. This sentiment was however more prevalent in the followers, than in the managers. The formally flat structure is expected to make the bank more agile and nimbler in its decision-making and implementation by these participants. Another reason outside hierarchy, attributed to slow decision-making in the bank is the fear of the unknown, the fear of failing, and the repercussions, according to the data. This suggests that the bank does not embrace risk-taking or learning through failure. This slow response means that tasks are slow to be actioned.

Simple systems that solve the customer and the bank's problems and require minimal capital still take a long time to develop and implement in the bank. Resource constraints hinder the bank's ability to operationalise certain offerings. To deliver actions within a specified time, resources are required; their absence makes it very challenging to deliver.

Two respondents noted that the absence of clear processes not only hinders the implementation of required actions but also makes them very challenging, thereby slowing down the implementation process. Although the bank has policies in place to enable certain processes, there is limited awareness of these policies.

Table 12: Key Quotes: A Slow Rate of Implementation in the Organisation

Participant	Related Quote
SM2	<i>Because of the fear of failing or the fear of doing things, then, there are always conflicting emotions in terms of the decisions. However, overall, the theories suggest that when an organisation's structure is lean,</i>

	<i>decisions should be made faster. But you'll probably find it still takes a long time because of the fear of the unknown or the fear of failing.</i>
JF6	<i>I think it's one very simple trait, just responding immediately. So, you'll gain fresh insights and new perspectives that will really help you move faster.</i>
SF3	<i>And I've tried to get involved with yyy, zzz. Yes, it is a huge task from a bank perspective to inject a lot of working capital. However, when considering the bigger picture, it becomes clear that these are the products generating the most revenue in the market today. Instead of doing your vanilla trade, I always tell them we're a one trick pony. Trade encompasses more than just trade finance; it includes LCs, invoice discounting, debtor finance, and structured trade commodity type funding. We were leaving, and you know we took one part of the basket, but we left out 90% of the items that could have generated more money. So, we've tried, and I think I just want to say, OK, if you can do it better or differently, it's fine by me. You know, it's something that I'm passionate about, something that I have great knowledge about because I've done it and I think it's something that can work in the bank and yes, it might take a year, year and a half to get it up and running, but once it's up and running, we'll see the revenue gain from those types of products.</i>
JF2	<i>And sometimes, not having the capacity can also derail the entire process, causing things to not be met on time. So, the pressure of having to do things at a certain time without enough resources does have an impact on us.</i>
SM1	<i>Yeah, it's difficult to say because I sometimes find myself in a space where, you know, from a practice point of view, there's no clear process in place, which makes it a bit difficult.</i>
SF3	<i>What I found coming into AA Bank was that the culture was somewhat different compared to what I'm used to, because I worked for a large organisation, a tier one bank. I believe the structure, per se, was in</i>

	<i>place. You knew where your place was. When I entered AA Bank, I basically had to start from scratch.</i>
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Source: Data - Transcripts

There is a slow rate of implementation in the organisation, despite its formally flat structure and this may be because of the hierarchical practices and systems in the organisation that impede quicker implementation in the organisation despite its flat nature.

5.2.3 Theme 3: The Importance of Employee Empowerment Together with Investment in Employee Development

This theme describes the importance of employee empowerment and the investment in employee development by the organisation while acknowledging that full empowerment of the individuals within the organisation has remained restricted. The emerging sub-themes from this theme included: empowering individuals by giving them autonomy, empowering individuals by listening to them and including them in decision-making, empowering individuals through recognition and validation, empowering individuals through supporting their development, the importance of structured personal development plans and regular check-ins, the importance of colleague support and the importance of employee well-being.

Table 13: Theme 3: Sub-Themes Discussed by Participants

Employee Empowerment Together with Investment in Employee Development	E1	E2	SM1	SM2	SM3	SM4	SM5	SF1	SF2	SF3	SF4	SF5	JF1	JF2	JF3	JF4	JF6
Empowering Individuals by Giving Them Autonomy		x			x		x				x	x					x
Empowering Individuals by Listening to Them and Including Them in Decision Making	x	x		x			x					x	x				
Empowering Individuals Through Recognition and Validation	x						x		x	x			x		x		
Empowering Individuals Through Supporting Their Development	x	x	x		x		x		x			x		x		x	
The Importance of Structured Personal Development Plans and Regular Check-Ins	x	x		x				x								x	x
The Importance of Structured and Unstructured Learning and Growth Opportunities					x			x	x	x						x	
The Importance of Colleague Support		x	x									x				x	
The Importance of Employee Well-Being		x		x						x		x	x		x		

Source: Data- secondary codes

5.2.3.1 The Importance of Empowering Individuals by Giving Them Autonomy

Individuals in the bank have experienced empowerment. One such manner, discussed by six respondents, is the autonomy to initiate and implement projects and changes in the bank, aiming to improve efficiencies and client experiences. This sentiment was evenly expressed between managers and followers, comparatively. The ability to act independently to resolve issues has also been empowering for individuals. In fact, one respondent expressed that they have been given too much power to carry out what they are required to do; this quote is included in the table below. The freedom to act autonomously in achieving the bank's goals allows for growth through effective execution, according to these respondents. During the period under investigation, the case bank was undergoing the process of being acquired by another bank. This notably introduced volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity into the organisational environment.

Table 14: Key Quotes: The Importance of Empowering Individuals by Giving Them Autonomy

Participant	Related Quote
E2	<i>Since I joined, I've been able to do what I need to do. I've been able to initiate projects that previously didn't exist. I've been able to implement changes even on systems or processes that have been here for years, maybe 20 years. I mean, I came here to replace someone who was here for over 23 years, but I've found myself in a space where I've made changes. If I believe the change I'm introducing will improve efficiencies and create a positive client experience, I take action, and I feel empowered. I'm being given space to implement those things, and that's what I cascade down to my team as well.</i>
SM5	<i>I think the practices that really make it easier for me as a leader to even perform better is you know, being empowered. Yeah, it's being empowered. I do want to say that in a bank we have different elements that obviously we touch into different BUs and you find that there's quite a lot of gaps that you would see, but the bank does provide. I'm unsure whether I should mention the bank or if it depends on the type of leader one reports to, or the heads of departments and executives. I'm not sure if it's actually based on a personal decision of the executive, but I do want to say that I've experienced empowerment, being able to act and resolve issues independently.</i>
SF4	<i>My role, absolutely. In actual fact, I've probably got too much power to make decisions in my role, right? So yes, absolutely. There, I've got no squabble there. I mean, I'll do what I have to do, and I've complete freedom to do it right, obviously, staying within the procedures and rules.</i>

Source: Data - Transcripts

5.2.3.2 The Importance of Empowering Individuals Through Listening and Inclusive Decision-Making

5.2.3.2.1 Empowerment Through Listening

Another form of empowerment expressed by respondents was that of their views being heard at an organisational level and being incorporated into decision-making in the organisation. Six respondents discussed this in their interviews. The bank conducts a survey called The Voice of the Employee (VOE), which allows staff to share their views on the organisation, including views regarding the bank's culture and leadership. The purpose of this survey is to make these views visible at an organisational level and to put action plans behind the items that necessitate change in the organisation. This practice allows the voice of each individual to be valued in the organisation, regardless of their position. It was noted that the change items from the survey may not have been fully actioned, and the survey needs to be conducted consistently and regularly. The data indicates that it is the managers that have placed the most confidence in the VOE initiative artefact but the followers who place more desire on their voices being heard at an organisational level and those ideas and plans being included in decisions.

Table 15: Key Quotes: The Importance of Empowering Individuals Through Listening

Participant	Related Quote
E1	<i>The bank conducts a Voice of Employee survey, which staff are asked to complete, providing their views on the leadership and culture of the organisation. The feedback is shared with leadership teams across various units, and the outcomes inform the documentation of an action plan.</i>

Source: Data - Transcripts

5.2.3.2.2 Empowerment Through Inclusive Decision Making

Being equipped with the necessary tools to make decisions within the individual's respective role, and thus being able to make certain decisions without having to rely on the respective line manager, particularly if the decision is important in their core role, was also deemed empowering. Even with this kind of empowerment, one respondent shared that they remain cautious when making decisions independent of their manager. This was because of concern that their manager would not be aligned with the specific decision made that they had made. It is also noted that some respondents felt limited

empowerment regarding decision-making, as their decision-making power was confined to their specific role rather and tasks they needed to execute rather than at an organisational level. In this regard, individuals had limited power in challenging the status quo. This sentiment was expressed at a management level as well as a follower level.

Table 16: Key Quotes: The Importance of Empowering Individuals Through Inclusive Decision-Making

Participant	Related Quote
SM5	<i>So, without relying on your line manager for assistance, you are being empowered with the necessary tools to make decisions independently, eliminating the need to seek your line manager's approval. Hence, I'm saying that empowerment really works for me.</i>
SM5	<i>So yeah, you do have the mandate, obviously, to make decisions, but at the back of your head, you'd also have that little bit of fear that I've made this decision. What if it's not aligned with my line? Then you start to worry about the repercussions of your actions.</i>
SF2	<i>There's very limited or very restrictive decision-making at both middle management and junior levels. So, a lot of the decisions are driven by the greater shareholding team or Exco team, which in turn affects the bottom line.</i>
JF1	<i>I lost part of that empowerment. Yes, I did. I think I know this because when I first started, I had many ideas and shared them with the senior management present at the time. And everything was shut down. No, we can't do that. No, we can't do this.</i>
E1	<i>No, I think one of the challenges in DDD is actually empowering employees. I think employees often don't feel empowered to speak up and challenge the status quo.</i>

Source: Data - Transcripts

5.2.3.3 The Importance of Empowering Individuals Through Recognition and Validation

The recognition of employees by colleagues, customers, leadership, and the bank in general was both empowering and value-validated for some respondents; six respondents discussed this. It is noted that this sub-theme emerged more prominently among the followers of the organisation. This recognition is evident in various forms, including verbal recognition, awards, the ringing of the bell for significant deals, achievements, bonus incentives, tokens, or emails of appreciation from clients, and trips awarded to employees for performance. The data indicates that this recognition and reward energised individuals.

Table 17: Key Quotes: The Importance of Empowering Individuals Through Recognition and Validation

Participant	Related Quote
SF3	<i>And for them to come out of the meetings and say, "Well done, we didn't think of it that way, it means a lot to me."</i>
JF1	<i>Recognition. It would definitely be that we do have what we call ring the bell when there's some sort of achievement that happens when a client has been signed on, or so they do encourage that you inform them of any big signing, any big trade. Then there's an opportunity to ring the bell, which serves as the recognition.</i>
SF3	<i>I recall a time two years ago when they took all the top performers overseas. I've seen the pictures. Unfortunately, I couldn't go because I got ill at that stage. But in saying that, they do. I mean, they give recognition where it is due, and holidays are a great incentive.</i>

Source: Data - Transcripts

5.2.3.4 The Importance of Empowering Individuals Through Supporting Their Development

The need to develop employees in the bank is well recognised by the study's participants, with nine respondents discussing this, across the managers and followers.

The development of individuals is crucial for them to achieve their personal goals and for the bank to meet its objectives. The data indicates that the bank also prioritises internal promotion, particularly for junior-level positions, where opportunities arise. The bank also has a focus on developing its leaders. One manner identified in the data as a mechanism for development was to give followers initiatives that they are accountable for.

Table 18: Key Quotes: The Importance of Empowering Individuals Through Supporting Their Development

Participant	Related Quote
SM5	<i>Employees' growth and development, apart from the initiatives put in place by human resources, are driven by the human resource development. But I do want to say that even though I've never seen the existing policy that talks directly to that, I believe it's worth noting. But I can attest that the human resource department has great initiatives that I know they promote internally, where they focus on growing people who are already at a lower level, to give them a little bit of growth. I've seen similar initiatives, and I must say that in the years of my working experience, I've seen growth in other organisations, but I really have to give it to the bank in terms of growth and developing people.</i>
SM1	<i>Yeah, they are quite impressive, I must say, from a learning and development perspective. The organisation has done a lot of work in developing leaders. I've personally been on a development journey and started off last year with a management practice degree that the bank offered. We had around 16 delegates participating in the event. It was an eye-opener, and we really gained some valuable insights from that.</i>
E2	<i>I need them to own that leadership because they will execute on whatever it is</i>

Source: Data - Transcripts

5.2.3.5 The Importance of Personal and Development Plan and Regular Check-Ins

One framework that is used to structure the conversations and processes regarding the personal development of individuals is the personal development plan, which is used to detail the goals of the individual, in line with the goals of the specific team, as well as the steps on how to achieve these goals and the timeframes by which these goals should be achieved. These plans are discussed during regular monthly one-on-ones between managers and followers. The importance of the personal development plan and regular check-ins was discussed by seven respondents across all groups, however there was more emphasis of these personal development plans from managers in the organisation compared to followers.

Table 19: Key Quotes: The Importance of Personal and Development Plan and Regular Check-ins

Participant	Related Quote
E1	<i>It is partly to review performance, but also to discuss the individual's personal development and ensure the existence of personal development plans. We have a place for each of our team members, and we work with them to execute their personal development plans, ensuring our people grow and improve their skills over time.</i>

Source: Data - Transcripts

5.2.3.6 The Importance of Structured Learning, Unstructured Learning, and Growth Opportunities

The data shows that the bank offers funding resources for courses and qualifications to individuals who meet certain selection criteria. Some of these courses and qualifications are offered through partnerships between the bank and universities and learning institutions. Another mechanism of learning used in the bank was having individuals' team up with experienced bankers and accompany them to client meetings. Another learning practice observed in the bank was the Lunch and Learns, where different subject matter experts shared knowledge of the various products and portfolios that exist in the bank, for the benefit of the broader bank. Another learning initiative carried out

within the bank is the sales boot camps, designed to help sales individuals understand the bank's products and learn how to effectively cross-sell them to clients.

Where individuals demonstrate commitment, hard work, and long-term aspirations, the bank will look to invest resources in these individuals to foster growth, according to one respondent. While the bank conducts various support and development practices, one respondent noted a perceived lack of individual mentoring. The importance of structured and unstructured learning and growth opportunities was highlighted by five of the respondents; notably, none of the executives addressed this in their interview. These learning and growth opportunities appear more important for followers included in the sample.

Table 20: Key Quotes: The Importance of Structured Learning, Unstructured Learning, and Growth Opportunities

Participant	Related Quote
SM3	<i>HC would always have courses or business with universities, and they would come back to encourage us to encourage staff to take part in these developments. So, I think that by going to find these opportunities and then saying these are open to staff as people who are in leadership, let's talk to our direct reports or anyone who is interested in saying there is an opportunity like this and encourage them. When we conduct KPIs, we hold staff accountable for their self-development and ask them to reflect on their contributions to the next person's growth. You then need to be explicit about the specific actions you've taken to encourage your team members, staff, and everyone to take your expertise to the next level by implementing certain actions. I think KPIs and HR drive it more in that regard.</i>
JF4	<i>Yes, I do attend training sessions. I was assigned to complete a short course. It was called Finance for Non-Financial Managers. I completed that short course earlier this year, around February. So it really helps. It really helps.</i>

SF5	<i>For instance, the Global Scholarship programme that AA introduced about two months ago offers staff an opportunity for personal and educational growth, as well as a long-term, rewarding experience from a business perspective. I mean that creates opportunities and growth opportunities, not just from a local business presence, but also from an international perspective, and those aren't really opportunities that are sort of readily available in each organisation that does the same thing like us.</i>
SF5	<i>I think from an executive perspective if they believe in that individual you know the exposure that they're willing to give the staff member and the opportunities that they're willing to give the staff member by saying, you know what, here is an opportunity, run with it, make, make the most of it, because it's like almost like your time to shine and run with it.</i>
SF5	<i>That's one thing that I can say that ultimately shows that, from a leadership and executive perspective, they're willing to invest in people where they see that there's potential and where the staff member also shows the willingness to want to grow and achieve great things within the organisation.</i>
SF3	<i>We found it easier than giving someone a booklet and saying, "Read through it." You know, I'm not suggesting this is how you should chat with your client. We took them to our meetings and had one-on-one interactions with them. We would guide them, you know.</i>
JF2	<i>I think we do that quite well, thanks to the various programs and sessions we offer internally to enrich our employees. So things like your lunch and learns are quite exposing as far as personal development is concerned.</i>
JF4	<i>The monthly trainings we have with our product team, sales, and boot camps are really helpful and insightful. Then you'll understand how the bank's products work, and if you need to cross-sell them, you'll be able to do so. So those really help. The trainings really help.</i>
SF2	<i>I do, however, feel we fall short in terms of mentoring. There's not much collaboration in terms of shadowing or mentoring that I see.</i>

Source: Data - Transcripts

5.2.3.7 The Importance of Colleague Support

According to the data, one aspect that contributes to a positive environment in the bank is the support individuals receive from their colleagues. This was discussed by four respondents in their interviews. There is a sense that colleagues should support each other and offer insights into ways to execute initiatives optimally and efficiently, especially if they possess relevant knowledge. Where there is experience and knowledge in the bank, colleagues can build upon that. This sentiment was evenly shared across both management and followers.

Table 21: Key Quotes: The Importance of Colleague Support

Participant	Related Quote
E2	<i>We need to support each other. You know you don't watch colleagues suffer when you have a solution. If a colleague is trying to do something and you know a better or the most efficient way, you reach out quickly, share your idea, and say, "I think I have a better way." I've done this before, and this is how we need to do it. You share, you know, without imposing yourself.</i>
E2	<i>let's support one another. We all go through a lot. I think it's a really supportive environment. It's a high-performance environment, but it's also a positive one. If you are struggling with something, you can reach out to a colleague for or to a leader.</i>
SF5	<i>Overall, everybody is very welcoming and accommodating, with a wealth of experience and knowledge within the business that you can leverage. People are helpful and open-minded, and I think the company has an open-door policy to a certain extent, which makes things easier in the workplace.</i>

Source: Data - Transcripts

5.2.3.8 The Importance of Employee Well-being

In addition to the development and growth of individuals in the bank, the well-being of colleagues is an important part of the support within the bank, according to the data. Six respondents specified the regular one-on-one check-ins that they have with their manager as important for maintaining support for well-being. While these one-on-one check-ins often include discussions about individual performance, they should also be used to check in on the well-being of the individual. The regular check-ins provide an opportunity for both followers and managers to reflect on the performance in the follower's role. According to respondents, well-being support plays a crucial role when personal life issues affect colleagues' work performance. This support is highly valued and important for individuals, as its absence can significantly impact their work. The importance of well-being has most pronouncedly expressed by the follower participants of the study.

Table 22:Key Quotes: The Importance of Employee Well-being

Participant	Related Quote
SM2	<i>The most common practice is probably to check in with your direct line of report. I think that would probably be the most effective way, but not only to check in on the work, but also to check in on the well-being of the people that basically report to you to understand what's going on in their space before you even tap into the work environment, because in most cases what happened in their space also influence the output of their work. I think those are interrelated.</i>
SF3	<i>During my time, of where I got really ill, you know, she basically told me, you know, work from home. You know, your health is more important. And that meant a lot to me. There are very few people that will say that to you. She says, you know, do what you can. If your tired, go home. You understand? Because like I said, I went through a really, really difficult time. For the last 1 1/2 years, so uh. Having leadership without those types of calls, who understands you not only from a business perspective or supports you from a business perspective, but can also</i>

	<i>support you in your personal life that came up strong, and I give thanks for that.</i>
JF3	<i>Supporting your staff. Listening to your staff and understanding how their personal life affects their work. It's not always just work, work, work.</i>

Source: Data - Transcripts

Individuals have experienced empowerment through autonomy to execute in their respective roles, however this autonomy is in implementation (rather than decision making at a higher level). Individuals value their voices being heard at an organisational level, however, this needs to be a regular engagement and the implementation of their sentiments is equally as important. The followers in the organisation value recognition for their efforts and achievements. It appears it is the managers who place emphasis on personal development plans compared to followers, however, similarly to the Voice of Employee survey, followers require these plans to be implemented. Further, structured and unstructured learning and growth opportunities are most valued by the followers in the bank. It is clear that the well-being of individuals is important for the follower group of individuals in the organisation

5.2.4 Theme 4: The Challenge of Interdepartmental Collaboration and Consistent Communication

This theme details the importance of collaboration and communication in the organisation, while appreciating the challenges and gaps that exist in these within the organisation. The sub-themes of this theme include: the importance of collaboration within the organisation, the importance of accessibility to leadership and the importance of adequate communication in the organisation.

Table 23: Theme 4: Sub-Themes Discussed by Participants

The Challenge of Interdepartmental Collaboration and Consistent Communication	E1	E2	SM1	SM2	SM3	SM4	SM5	SF1	SF2	SF3	SF4	SF5	JF1	JF2	JF3	JF4	JF6
The Importance of Collaboration Within the Organisation	x	x			x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		
The Importance of Accessibility to Leadership	x	x	x		x				x	x		x	x				x
The Importance of Adequate Communication in the Organisation		x				x		x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x

Source: Data- secondary codes

5.2.4.1 The Importance of Collaboration within the Organisation

The data indicate that respondents perceive the bank's values as being centred around people and fostering collaboration and teamwork. The importance of collaboration emerged as a strong sub-theme in the data, with 12 respondents highlighting its importance. While expressed by all groups in the study, the importance of collaboration was most emphasised by the executives and followers of the organisation. It is interesting that the management layer between the executives and followers, these being the senior managers, did not express the importance as pronouncedly. Respondents appreciate the benefits of cross-functional collaboration in the bank. While this appreciation of the benefits of collaboration was widely expressed among the respondents, some respondents felt there was indeed interdepartmental collaboration among the various teams in the bank. In contrast, others felt that teams continued to work in a siloed fashion. Collaboration is perceived as a strategic approach for the bank to achieve its strategic initiatives, objectives, and common goals. Thus, collaboration is perceived as important for the performance of the bank. Further, one executive highlighted that collaboration is not limited to the bank but also extends to the bank's collaboration with communities, customers, and stakeholders.

Collaboration between teams is also encouraged from an early stage to identify early opportunities, according to the data. Sales teams are also encouraged to hunt in packs, with specialists in various subject matters, collectively going together to see clients. The collaboration between teams is also evident in areas where communication is necessary, particularly in terms of growing people or specific businesses. Collaboration

in the bank is also necessary due to the numerous dependencies between teams, making it challenging to execute tasks without engaging and involving other departments.

The need for collaboration arises when leaders must work effectively with their teams to achieve the team's goals, as these goals cannot be accomplished by the leader alone; instead, they must be achieved collaboratively, according to one respondent. Shared ownership and co-creation of performance goals and KPIs are important ways in which leaders and managers need to collaborate with their teams, as well as facilitate collaboration within their teams, to achieve the desired outcomes.

According to the data, another form of collaboration required in the bank is within the specific teams, when, for example, one team member is out of the office and another team member needs to step into the role for an interim period. For this to be possible and seamless to stakeholders, a certain amount of collaboration needs to take place beforehand. This also gives the team a sense that they can rely on each other.

One benefit of regular collaborations, as specified by a respondent, is that colleagues can regularly share and discuss their successes, failures, and lessons learnt with the broader team, which motivates some colleagues.

Table 24: Key Quotes: The Importance of Collaboration within the Organisation

Participant	Related Quote
E1	<i>Yeah, I think one point I wanted to make earlier was about collaboration in the current culture. I believe there's a growing consensus that we need to collaborate more across functional areas.</i>
E1	<i>The leadership message for the past six months has emphasised the need for greater collaboration among various functional areas.</i>
E2	<i>I mean, there shouldn't be a PPB or a risk department. It is there, but I mean, there's collaboration. Vision must be bigger than our respective departments, and we must all be drawn to it to ensure we achieve it. It's a common goal for all of us.</i>

JF6	<i>But she's incredibly passionate about the bank, you know, and I think the bankers might have their own, their own, their own flaws as well, but if her vision was to really come to fruition in terms of collaboration in the bank, I think that would really help grow the numbers.</i>
E2	<i>I'm referring to our communities, customers, and other stakeholders. Drawing from the values we live by, for instance, as Africans, I would cite Ubuntu as an example.</i>
SF1	<i>In terms of teamwork, they would always encourage the bankers to include us as specialists to identify opportunities.</i>
SF3	<i>So, we've started by collaborating with the CVCA as a team. So, remember, we've got bankers, we've got merchant services, and we've got guys in fleet. So, what the bank has decided is that we should actually go as a team hunting in packs</i>
SM3	<i>For instance, it's easier to talk to other divisions about growing a person or an issue that you might have in terms of growing their business. So the openness within departments is there.</i>
E2	<i>The collaboration again. We need each other to make it happen and achieve what we need to achieve. I believe these are some of the factors that form the crux of how we should approach it, really. I believe so. It might sometimes lose its meaning, you know, with some in the team, but right from the beginning, you get a sense that you know the only way we can do this is to do it together.</i>
E2	<i>Let's go back to where we started with our contracts, specifically with performance contracts that include KPIs. In other organisations, discussions like that would be one way. Here it is a two-way. There's co-creation of KPIs, and there's co-ownership of KPIs. As leaders, we shouldn't wait for employees to take action. Instead, I encourage employees to schedule meetings to discuss their performance. An employee can initiate a discussion by saying, "I need a one-on-one," "I need a coffee," "a coffee session," or "I want to talk about my performance." For me, I believe that co-creating key performance indicators and co-owning those KPIs indicates that the employee is</i>

	<i>being brought in to own the process, not just to be a spectator and receive feedback on underperformance.</i>
SM4	<i>As a small team, we often rely on each other when someone takes leave or needs to step into another team. We've tried to create an environment where we can do that seamlessly, and my own experience now with the new team is that we have a good repertoire in terms of how we fill in.</i>
SF2	<i>In terms of team goals, I think how they've made an impact is with the sales boot camp for example whereby you know on a on a Friday for most Fridays the team gets together to discuss their highs and lows, what is working, what is their points, where they're winning, where they're not making it through the day or the week. And to a certain degree, you know, employees do feel motivated with the structure of these boot camps to say, you know, these are our collaborations for the week.</i>

Source: Data - Transcripts

5.2.4.2 The Importance of Accessibility to Leadership

Due to the bank's small size and the relatively flat structure, employees and customers have direct access to the CEO, executives, and senior managers of the bank. This was evident in the data. According to one executive, some leaders prefer to sit alongside their team when in the office, while others prefer to sit on different floors from their teams. Regardless of whether the leader sits near their team or on a different floor, the data suggests that the more important aspect was whether or not the leader was approachable and accessible. The bank's open-door policy, which allows individuals to speak directly to executive heads and the CEO, makes everyone's presence appreciated, according to the data. This type of accessibility was indicated to be less common in much larger banks and organisations. According to the data, this accessibility increases work efficacy by enabling quicker decision-making. However, despite the open-door policy and accessibility to very senior leadership, it took a long time to get a hold of the executives, which slows progression. Nine respondents discussed the importance of accessibility to leadership, most of these were the follower participants in the sample.

Table 25: Key Quotes: The Importance of Accessibility to Leadership

Participant	Related Quote
E1	<i>...direct access to sort of regional head level or PBB head level or even to some extent the CEO level.</i>
E2	<i>I guess it depends on the leadership side that one decides to implement. But I don't believe that sitting on different floors is an issue either. If you can sit on a different floor and still be approachable by your direct reports, I think for me that's very important.</i>
SF2	<i>We are a smaller organisation. There is not much of a closed-door policy. You can speak directly to an executive head. And speak to your CEO, for example. So, for that, the presence of everyone is appreciated.</i>
SF3	<i>You know, there's an open-door policy to them, which you very, very rarely get in other organisations, and you can have a one-on-one with them, which is good. You know you don't always want to go to execs, but you must refer to this one, this one, this one before you can actually get to the exec. They tell you in the gathering that I have an open-door policy. If you're not satisfied with anything, escalate the issue. If you're not getting joy, open door policy</i>
SF5	<i>But most of all, I think from an open-door policy perspective, I mean. I mean, I think they've shown great qualities when it comes to that.</i>
JF6	<i>I wouldn't say they're accessible if I had to get a hold of them; it'll take four weeks.</i>

Source: Data - Transcripts

5.2.4.3 The Importance of Adequate Communication in the Organisation

Communication plays an important role in the organisation, according to the data. Clear and concise communication is expected from the leadership in the organisation, as one of the respondents noted, with their quote highlighted below. The data shows that individuals in the organisation also expect transparency when it comes to engagements and expectations from the colleagues in the organisation. Further, one respondent emphasised that while honesty in communication is crucial within the organisation, also

important is the ability to listen and provide feedback during interactions with colleagues in the organisation. This involves being honest to each other about what is being communicated and what action is intended next. Honesty is also perceived as a tool that can make leading easier in the organisation, which has the potential to break barriers when leading teams, according to the data.

According to the data, the bank's culture encouraged open communication and transparency in its dealings, and the teams in the bank were receptive to this approach. Being honest with each other is also seen to bring the team together and build relationships with people. This transparency also extends to the clients of the bank. One example given by a respondent was that if the bank was not able to do a deal with a client, a fair conversation would be had with the client in a simple, open, and honest manner. The pace at which communication is shared in the bank has been identified by one respondent as not efficient enough, which sometimes impacts the client as well.

Honesty was also highlighted by one respondent as crucial, as it ensured their work environment was safe, given that the bank handles large amounts of money belonging to both the bank and its customers.

According to the data, the bank's communication was valued and inclusive, with everyone receiving updates. However, it would also be helpful to know the communication that takes place at a higher executive leadership level, too. The strategic inclusion of individuals was crucial when discussing strategic decisions, as various leaders may have ideas on how a department should function. However, the valuable insights and input of department members, as well as their feedback, may be overlooked.

Direct openness and transparency from the executive leadership level are important to colleagues, as evidenced by the data. This kind of transparency gives reassurance to individuals in continuing their day-to-day activities. Furthermore, this communication is more effective and better received when delivered face-to-face with bank colleagues, who prefer regular sharing of communications with the bank. One manner observed in which these face-to-face communications are shared with the wider bank is through

annual off-site gatherings for the entire bank and quarterly gatherings for specific departments within the bank. It is also important that the communication is not surface-level; individuals find value in actioned communication, and the results are seen in the numbers and performance of the bank.

One hindrance to individuals in the bank speaking freely is the fear of being judged or victimised, and the potential actions that may be taken against them for being too outspoken, particularly if there are such historic examples that can be referred to.

The open-door policy, often referenced by the bank's leadership, allows colleagues to communicate with them about problems and suggested solutions. Maintaining open lines of communication in this manner enables problem-solving and work efficacy in the bank.

The manner in which communication is carried out is also important to colleagues, according to the data, and respect was often articulated as a common and important requirement for communication engagements in the bank. When colleagues communicate respectfully and raise their concerns, people are more receptive to the message and more willing to seize aligned opportunities. Respect, coupled with attentive listening and honesty, is important in the communications engagements that take place in the bank.

Table 26: Key Quotes: The Importance of Adequate Communication in the Organisation

Participant	Related Quote
SM1	<i>I think they could be quite transparent in terms of engagement, quite transparent in terms of expectations,</i>
SM2	<i>I think the underlying belief is that people should engage honestly, as per the values of the organisations, as we have conversations, but we are need to be true to ourselves in terms of what we are talking about and what exactly we want to do next.</i>

SM2	<i>I believe that practising honesty amongst ourselves in an organisation can make things easier in terms of how we lead. But if we're not being honest with ourselves, we'll likely encounter red tape in managing team dynamics or people if we lack honesty. I believe that practising honesty can help break down barriers and red lines, ultimately improving how we lead the team.</i>
SF2	<i>It is an organisation that tends to be more transparent in its dealings.</i>
JF3	<i>I think that being honest with each other and collaborating actually brings the team together, and that's especially true when you communicate openly. You're honest with stuff; that's when you can build relationships with people.</i>
SF3	<i>Be available, be transparent. If you can't do a deal, you should be able to have an open, honest, and a fair conversation with the client about whether you proceed. You should also appreciate the values that the bank upholds.</i>
JF6	<i>I think it's one very simple trait, just responding immediately, so you have fresh information and then fresh positions that will, yeah, really help you move faster.</i>
SF4	<i>Well, once again, working in a bank and working with people, honesty is paramount, which represents that my working environment is safe, because if you're going to deal with dishonest people, and we deal with what hundreds of millions of rands and stuff like that, it can be a problem. So that value is very important.</i>
SF3	<i>But when they have a chance, even at night we'll get an e-mail saying, "Thank you, we've done well for the quarter," we need to do a bit better. So, you're always involved. I wouldn't say so much, not only about the numbers, but also about the people, where it's just by e-mail.</i>
JF3	<i>I expect them not to dictate to staff, to their staff, to actually communicate better, to keep us in the loop of what's going on at higher management.</i>
SM5	<i>I'll make an example. It's just a typical example of how, if we really cared about people, as leaders at my level, I know what's happening. People</i>

	<i>cannot be in wonder. Their minds are likely preoccupied with the status of the bank's sale. There's been silence. There's been silence. So, we know that during the enclaves, the executives often mentioned that there is no status, and that status hasn't changed.</i>
JF1	<i>I think the key aspect is participating in any strategic discussions they wish to implement. I say this because it's one thing for a manager to have an idea of what the department is supposed to look like, but they don't come back and inform the people who make up the department.</i>
SF5	<i>I mean, if you look at the transparency and the ongoing commitment from an executive perspective, reassurance gives me the comfort I need on a day-to-day basis to get on with what I need to do. But yeah, like overall, I mean, you can't talk for everybody else, but from me personally, I mean, that's key.</i>
SF4	<i>Once again, I'm going to separate it, right? They should be more present. They should show more care, right? Especially this time. I mean, yes, I'm sure we all get a little message that says we must swim through waters and climb mountains, and that's inspiration. I'd rather have more open communication. Maybe at the head office, she calls a quick 10-minute meeting to say, "Listen guys, swim through rivers, climb through boat, be positive face-to-face.</i>
JF6	<i>I see never never-ending strategy session. I see, you know, all these things that are communicated. We have a big show where we communicate all these things, and afterwards, we all have a drink before life goes on. Yeah, otherwise the numbers would show.</i>
SM5	<i>Well, you know, when you're a leader, you are more at ease in an environment that encourages open communication.</i>
SF5	<i>You're not working in isolation. You can bring things to their attention. And I mean, it helps with the cause because it makes it more sticky for one to sort of explore other opportunities in the sense that you work in an organisation where leadership executives are open to hearing what your day-to-day issues or problems are. They're open to suggestions</i>

	<i>and changes, et cetera. And that's what makes it, I think, more favourable in the long run.</i>
SF5	<i>I think the way you speak to and engage with people goes a long way. And I found that, here with the leadership team, the respect component does go a long way.</i>
SM2	<i>And then I think respect plays a huge role in terms of how I do engage people around me.</i>

Source: Data - Transcripts

The need and benefit of collaboration is clearly an important feature in the organisation within teams, between teams and with the organisation's stakeholders. The challenge is with some teams being more collaborative than others, which stifle the benefits intended from this collaboration. Where followers need to co-create and co-own the key performance indicators of the team, they require access to their leadership, particularly given the small size and flat structure of the organisation. Transparent regular communication in the organisation has the potential to break the collaborative barriers within the organisation, particularly when it involves communication about the strategic elements of the organisation.

5.2.5 Theme 5: The Tension Between High Performance and Accountability and People-Centric Leadership

This theme describes the conflict experienced in the organisation between the results driven pressure in the organisation and people-centred leadership practices in the organisation. The sub-themes within this theme include: the prioritisation of high performance, the inadequate prioritisation of employees, the lack of inclusion of followers in decision making, the prioritisation of customers, the importance of leadership presence and the importance of leadership modelling.

Table 27: Theme 5: Sub-Themes Discussed by Participants

The Tension Between High Performance and Accountability and People-Centric Leadership	E1	E2	SM1	SM2	SM3	SM4	SM5	SF1	SF2	SF3	SF4	SF5	JF1	JF2	JF3	JF4	JF6
Th Prioritization of High Performance	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x		x			x
The Inadequate Prioritisation of Employees	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x		x	x	
The Lack of Inclusion in Decision Making Processes	x	x	x	x					x			x	x	x			
The Prioritisation of Customers	x	x				x	x	x		x				x		x	
The Importance of Leadership Presence	x						x	x	x		x				x		
The Importance of Leadership Modelling	x	x		x		x	x				x		x				

Source: Data- secondary codes

5.2.5.1 The Prioritisation of High Performance

High-performance pressure in the bank was noted by 12 of the respondents of this study and was the most recurring sub-them that was referenced in the study. It was acknowledged across all the groups interviewed that the environment was a high-performance environment. Performance in the bank is defined as the financial performance targets for both the bank and its various departments were met, as outlined. One respondent noted a significant difference in the pace and performance expectations in the bank, which were distinctly different from those in previous places of work and the banks and organisations they had been at before. Performance was assertively driven by the bank's leadership, with one respondent noting that the targets were sometimes aggressive, pushing them hard to achieve them. As a result, one respondent thought it best that the performance of individuals be managed proactively rather than reactively.

Additionally, the bank faces high pressure and fails to perform as well as it should according to the targets that have been set out, according to the data. As a result, performance is at times placed as a priority above other things within the bank, including people and values. One respondent noted that the bank's leaders have been entrusted to deliver the assigned performance targets to grow the bank. Individuals reporting to the leaders are there to help the leader and organisation succeed in their respective roles. The performance results hold great value for leaders seeking positive outcomes.

Any impediment to these performance results numbers is something they want to eliminate, as it represents a blockage to achieving the desired performance results and ultimately growing the business. This quote is included in the table below. Subsequently, there is fear about the consequences if the desired results are not achieved.

One respondent raised an important point regarding performance and people in the bank. They noted that, while there was a significant focus on numbers and targets, it is the people and the activities conducted by these people that are required to achieve these targets, and this was not adequately considered in the bank.

Along with the performance pressure in the bank comes the expectation that individuals will take accountability and ownership of carrying out certain tasks to support the performance of the business. In the data, accountability was associated with execution within individuals' respective roles, meeting targets, and acting in accordance with the values of the bank. According to the data, holding each other accountable within the organisation was encouraged; however, there are gaps in this area in that some individuals or teams are not accountable or held accountable in the organisation. One respondent suggested that if the culture in the organisation was one of performance, execution, and delivery, and individuals did not deliver, there should be consequences for this.

Table 28: Key Quotes: The Prioritisation of High Performance

Participant	Related Quote
SM4	<i>Currently, I think the overall culture is very fast-paced and high-performance. What's distinctly different from my previous life at SSS is that it's one of the bigger banks.</i>
E2	<i>One that prioritises the bottom line as well, you know, from a financial performance perspective. In terms of staff performance, I would say it's a high-performance environment. If you look at our KPIs, they're quite ambitious, reflecting what we aim to achieve, and also quite aggressive. We get push and we push our direct reports as well, you know, to achieve those targets, which may seem unrealistic, unachievable, but</i>

	<i>yeah, we will drive a culture of, you know, high performance in this environment</i>
E1	<i>Their performance is managed on a proactive basis, rather than a reactive one.</i>
SM3	<i>It's not entirely like that. I think we've shifted towards more of wanting to achieve what we talk to our personal contracts than starting with values and ensuring that those are the cornerstone of everything else that needs to follow.</i>
SM5	<i>Let me say, first of all, that based on my knowledge and studies, I believe leadership is a role where you are entrusted by the organisation you will deliver and you will help them grow the organisation. You are being entrusted, and the people under your leadership are also entrusted by the organisation to help support your organisation to succeed. As leaders who drive performance, we are deeply invested in it. We focus on the results. We needed the results. We want to see the numbers. And as leaders, numbers talk value to us. Numbers mean a lot. As leaders, we focus on that and any impediment to the numbers. We want to get rid of whatever block. That's actually an impediment to growth.</i>
SF1	<i>I'm aware that leadership faces extreme pressure to achieve a year-on-year income increase. So, you know they're being pressured by shareholders, who share this pressure with the people, including management, who have to pressure their staff to understand what's going on and why there's no increase in our income. Why are there no clients being onboarded? I do understand that. But sometimes I feel like they throw you in the deep end without showing you the ropes, which is what happened to me.</i>
E1	<i>...but there's no culture that holds each other accountable to these values.</i>
E2	<i>Let's say, you know, holding each other accountable. I'll make an example. I've been in meetings where a deal failed due to delays within the credit department. In this company, it is OK to point out those</i>

inefficiencies. We could have landed this deal, but your processes prevented us from securing it. And it's something that's being encouraged, as I've mentioned earlier, that we hold each other accountable. Someone is supposed to do something because we are a value chain. We are part of the value chain. If someone is not playing their role in that value chain, the chain breaks. So, it is always emphasised to know your role. Understand the impact of not playing a role in that value chain. We don't need a JJJ. We don't need the board to hold us accountable. We do so ourselves. We call each other if something fails in my space. The payment didn't go through due to either a system issue or human error. The employee failed to release a payment, which has left the customer unhappy. I'm being held accountable for that. And it's allowed. It's being encouraged. It's being forced upon us as a culture that we need to do this. So, I feel, you know, that understanding that I come to work where I can be held accountable when I don't do what I'm supposed to do, I think shapes how I approach my leadership or the leadership of my team or even how I carry myself outside this building as well, I think.

Source: Data - Transcripts

5.2.5.2 The Inadequate Prioritisation of People

According to the data, the bank's values are people-oriented, encompassing both colleagues and customers, which should be the bank's priority. To achieve the goals of the bank, leaders must ensure that their teams have the required support from an enablement and resource provision perspective, and managers should be focused on managing upwards to their line manager as well as downwards to their teams, ensuring that the team remains engaged and committed, according to one executive. The support needed may be in the form of a degree of empathy, quick responsiveness, or hands-on assistance extended from leaders to their teams, to name two examples shared by respondents. The data indicate that consistent support from leaders is necessary to keep employees motivated. Currently, the data indicate that the environment in which individuals operate is one of self-reliance, where individuals are expected to take full

responsibility from start to finish. The inability to do this by individuals may result in them struggling to achieve their required goals and performance or taking them significantly longer to achieve, according to one respondent. Leadership's support and openness to individual ideation are also valued; however, the bank's top-down decision-making appears to be a challenge according to the data.

High pressure in the environment can lead to specific dynamics in an attempt to achieve certain tasks in the organisation. Harsh leadership approaches are noted to demotivate individuals over time, as indicated by the data. Another insight shared by a respondent was that those in positions of power should act according to principle, not according to the power they possess in relation to others. The data show that individuals also believed that leaders in the bank should be humanely-oriented through prioritising people, engaging staff, and understanding where they are and how they are feeling. This was a sub-theme that was discussed by 13 of the participants across all the groups and was interestingly prominent in the management groups

Table 29: Key Quotes: The Inadequate Prioritisation of People

Participant	Related Quote
E2	<i>So yeah, in my space, that's what I do. I prioritise people. I prioritise human beings. When it comes to dealing with people, I don't really think about what the company values or what it stands for. I believe in supporting others in a way that I would want to be supported myself.</i>
E1	<i>... in terms of making sure that they receive the necessary support from an enablement perspective.</i>
SM2	<i>Given the current environment, you probably need to apply some sympathy in your leadership role. The current state of the environment helps us understand what people are going through, and it also prompts us to ask, "How can I help?"</i>
SF3	<i>But yes, if you're not used to doing things on your own, you're going to struggle, and you're going to find that the organisation is not for you. You're not spoon-fed. You basically run end-to-end.</i>

SF1	<i>But sometimes I feel like they throw you in the deep end without showing you the ropes, which is what happened to me.</i>
SF2	<i>As a small bank, we need our leaders to support our ideas in order to adapt to the bigger ones.</i>
JF6	<i>I think the sort of harsh approach by the executive in my mind sort of demotivates you over time.</i>
SM3	<i>Because everything that one would do should be based on principle, not the power that the next person holds.</i>
SM2	<i>I think the most important part is engaging the staff, getting to understand where they are, how they're feeling, what the sentiment in the environment is, and where they're standing. I think it's a key principle for a leader, because without it, you won't get direct feedback or understand how people feel. And it becomes very painful when it comes through the survey because you start to be surprised, like, "Oh, this is how people are feeling." I think people probably miss the opportunity to get to know their staff and engage with them. I think leadership is centred more around that.</i>

Source: Data - Transcripts

5.2.5.3 The Lack of Inclusion in Decision-Making Processes

Eight respondents discussed the exclusivity of decision-making in the organisation and the value that individuals placed on their leaders including their involvement in decision-making from an early stage. This makes them feel part of the team, it helps them buy-in and commit to the ownership of the execution of certain strategies and KPIs, as they were part of their formulation.

Table 30: Key Quotes: The Lack of Inclusion in Decision-Making Processes

Participant	Related Quote
E2	<i>Let me speak for myself, so with me, the decisions that I make as a leader are decisions where I feel like, before I make them, I need my team's buy-in.</i>

Source: Data - Transcripts

5.2.5.4 The Prioritisation of Customers

Customer centricity is not explicitly outlined as one of the bank's values; however, customer centricity was well recognised and expressed by eight respondents as an important part of their roles. This gap was recognised by one of the respondents, who further shared that customers should be central to the bank's declared values. One respondent emphasised that the customer is the most important part of their job, essentially at the forefront of everything the bank does. Thus, building and maintaining relationships with the customer is important for the bank, and servicing these customers with excellence. While customer centricity was discussed in each of the groups in the study, customer centricity was important for the executives of the organisation

Table 31: Key Quotes: The Prioritisation of Customers

Participant	Related Quote
E1	<i>As I mentioned, the only gap I see is that the terms "client," "client centricity," or "client focus" are not mentioned. In my view, for a financial services organisation, the client should be central to its values, as it is about building trust with clients and establishing a reputation in the market. So I think that's probably the gap in terms of the stated values.</i>
SF1	<i>The client is always the most important part of our job because, ultimately, their business pays our salaries.</i>
SF3	<i>I think they're very customer-driven, putting customers at the forefront of everything.</i>

Source: Data - Transcripts

5.2.5.5 The Importance of Leadership Presence

Leadership needs to be present, rather than keeping to themselves, particularly in smaller banks or organisations where this can be practically achieved, as one respondent noted. This goes a long way in showing interest in the bank's employees. Leadership presence was discussed by six respondents in the data.

Table 32: Key Quote: The Importance of Leadership Presence

Participant	Related Quote
SF4	<i>Presently, and once again, top leadership here is not particularly present. You know what I'm saying?</i>

5.2.5.6 The Importance of Leadership Modelling

Bank leaders must model the bank's values, as many colleagues tend to mirror their leader's behaviour, sometimes despite the values the bank has declared, according to the data. Thus, leadership behaviour can set the standard for how people behave in the bank. According to the data, leaders are expected to set the example of the values and how individuals should conduct themselves in the bank, as people also learn by observing. Employees observe how leaders interact with each other and how they engage with employees, too. This also influences how employees perceive the bank's values and may shape their mindset about the values in action within the bank. Leaders often lead their team the way they are being led or the way the person they believe should be their leader leads, according to one respondent. This can also lead to emotional contagion, where leaders can bring either a positive or negative atmosphere to the environment, according to another respondent. One respondent emphasised the importance of respectful leadership behaviours in leadership modelling, as leaders often struggle to ask employees to respect each other when they themselves do not respect their peers or colleagues, which can come across as sanctimonious. The importance of leadership modelling appears to be more pronounced among the management group in the study

Table 33: Key Quotes: The Importance of Leadership Modelling

Participant	Related Quote
E1	<i>... you know you can put values on a wall and you know in training courses, but ultimately the organisation's culture is determined by the way the leaders exhibit what the values are, you know how they live the values and that then becomes, in a lot of cases, people then would copy or imitate that in their own behaviour. So, irrespective of what's in</i>

	<i>manuals and what's, you know, what's being communicated. I believe leadership behaviour ultimately sets the tone for how people behave.</i>
SM2	<i>My style of leadership is, in most instances, more about being the leader, being the mirror image of the person that I believe should be my leader in terms of leading people.</i>
E2	<i>The expectation is that if you are in a leadership position, you should set an example by giving those values. So people tend to learn more by observing, by seeing how people conduct themselves as opposed to what they're being told.</i>
E2	<i>I know it's something that I need to do as a leader. I need to be the first person who lives the values.</i>
SM5	<i>And you lead your staff in a manner consistent with your line manager's approach.</i>
JF1	<i>I once had a very bubbly leader, and from the onset, when they arrived, even if it was just a few of them, maybe even where I am now, who I can think about, but already with their presence, as soon as they walk in, you know they'll light the room.</i>
JF1	<i>I think it's one of those situations where you know they are in the doghouse. We'll see it, and by seeing it, it kinda depends on how it is, ends up being demotivating, if I can put it that way. Yes, they also have their own people to report to, and it obviously filters all the way down. But we have seen instances where they can literally come from their meeting and give it to us as they received it, you know?</i>
E2	<i>I mean, you can tell people to respect each other, but if you, as a leader, don't respect each other or if the leadership team doesn't know the different spheres or different tiers of leadership.</i>

Source: Data - Transcripts

Given the high-performance pressure existing in the bank, achieving this often takes precedence above all other things in the bank, including people and values. The result is that followers are not adequately prioritised. When these followers are not adequately prioritise they are challenged in development, motivation and achieving performance.

The prioritisation of followers includes their inclusion in decision making in the organisation. The customer was not explicitly included in the values of the organisation, however, the customer is recognised a very important by the participants of the study. This needs to be noted together with the fact that the customer is very important for the business's performance. Finally, there is an important role that leaders play in modelling the values of the organisation and followers mirror this.

5.3 Summary

Findings from the inductive coding of the 17 interviews reveal five key themes from the data. Notably, the bank's declared values do not always align with the values exhibited in the environment. Given the small size of the bank, the organisational structure is flat. However, despite its hierarchical nature and practice, there is a strong presence of employee development and empowerment in the bank. As far as the human resources policies and practices are concerned, the perceptions on collaboration and communication vary among the respondents, and there exists a predominant high-performance pressure in the organisation. The following chapter discusses the findings of this study, in line with the supporting literature. When comparing the perceptions of the themes and sub-themes across the four distinct seniority roles in the organisation (executive, senior manager, senior follower, junior follower), the result is that all themes and sub-themes are highly consistent across these distinct groups.

6 Chapter 6: Discussion of Results

6.1 Introduction

Organisational culture encompasses the expectations, behaviours, beliefs, and shared values and norms of an organisation, which influence how individuals feel and act in relation to one another in the organisation (Billstein & Hamasdi, 2023). It can be considered the personality of the organisation. Organisational culture substantially impacts the dynamics in the workplace, employee interactions, and management tendencies (Tadesse Bogale & Debela, 2024).

Servant leadership is a leadership style in which leaders prioritise the needs of followers toward their personal development and growth, over the leader's individual needs (Canavesi & Minelli, 2022b). Given the positive outcomes associated with servant leadership, understanding the organisational culture elements that support or hinder servant leadership behaviours in the organisation is important for achieving organisational commitment from employees toward enhanced performance of the organisation (Canavesi & Minelli, 2022a).

6.2 Discussion of Results

The findings confirm that organisational culture is an important contextual determinant for the display of servant leadership behaviours in an organisation. The organisational culture also plays an important role in determining how effective the practices of servant leadership behaviours are in the organisation (Eva et al., 2019). The data confirms that an organisational culture that is congruent and thus supportive of the dimensions of servant leadership is required for servant leadership behaviours to be displayed and to be effective in an organisation.

6.2.1 Research Question 1: How do shared organisational values impact the expression of servant leadership behaviours in the organisation?

This section discusses the middle layer of Shein's Model of organisational culture and how the espoused values enable or inhibit servant leadership behaviours. The values of

an organisation lay the foundation for the display of servant leadership behaviours within it.

6.2.1.1 Theme 1: Divergence Between Stated Shared Values and Values in Practice

6.2.1.1.1 The Importance of Shared Values

Well-defined and communicated values help guide employees of the organisation in concept and practice, and are thus important for maintaining an effective organisational culture. A well-understood shared reference point is important for consistency and the demonstration of the values in the organisation (Lemoine et al., 2019). The shared values of an organisation are identified as the basis of organisational culture (Oh & Han, 2020). The shared values describe the pattern of behaviour among the individuals of an organisation and outline the common traits that individuals of an organisation should concentrate their efforts towards. The shared values give the model of understanding for the standard of conduct of individuals in the organisation and the how the organisation functions (Gorzalany et al., 2021).

The data indicates that almost all participants understood the importance of the shared values to represent how individuals showed up in the organisation and guidance of how to achieve the goals of the organisation. The literature indicates that shared values are important for guiding behaviour of individuals in the organisation and coordinating actions (Billstein & Hamasdi, 2023). The importance of shared values is that they give clarity on the explanation of the actions of individuals in the organisation.

Servant leadership is a values-based leadership approach that depends on the alignment of certain ethical and moral shared values in order to be successful (Giambatista et al., 2020). Servant leadership encourages relationships between leaders and followers that are characterised by shared values. An organisational culture that is aligned to servant leadership principles is most likely to attract and develop such servant leadership behaviours.

Effective reinforcement of the organisation's values are crucial, such that the values do not become distant ideas but rather practical displays of behaviour in the organisation, as was observed in the case (Asatiani et al., 2021b). The values can be reinforced through recognition systems, and role modelling by leadership

6.2.1.1.2 Stated Values Often Differ from Practiced Values

The data revealed an interesting paradox: The stated values are aspirational rather than operative, and a friction exists between intention and what is really practised in the organisation. This insight was indicated by six participants. This gap between stated and practised values creates an ambiguity for individuals in the organisation (Asatiani et al., 2021b).

Servant leadership behaviours prosper in organisational cultures whose core principles are aligned with the dimensions of servant leadership. Thus, organisational cultures whose core principles are centred around prioritising the requirements of followers, customers, and stakeholders, rather than personal requirements, are organisational environments where servant leadership behaviours are more likely to flourish (Canavesi & Minelli, 2022a). Practising servant leadership in organisational environments that incorporate cultural principles inconsistent with servant leadership principles, such as the disempowerment of followers through negation or dictatorial leadership practices, does not give support for servant leadership behaviours to be impactful. The expectation of followers for leaders to have a humane orientation within an organisational environment means that to be effective, leaders would need to responsibly prioritise and invest in employees, from a service perspective, and to make them feel valued (Canavesi & Minelli, 2022a). This prioritisation needs to be recognised as a moral responsibility by a leader, aligning with servant leadership, and can extend beyond employees to customers, communities, and stakeholders (Aryee et al., 2023).

The values indicated in the data that align with servant leadership behaviours include:

1. Integrity, Transparency and Honesty: Personal integrity and role modelling are servant leadership elements from the data that describe the virtues that leaders live by, setting the tone for behaviour in the organisation, despite these not being the explicit stated values of the organisation (Saleem et al., 2020). The expectation for

leaders is for them to lead by example and act as role models in the organisation (Canavesi & Minelli, 2022b). In this specific case, the expectation was for leaders to role model the perceived values of the bank. The values of integrity, honesty, and transparency are important values associated with ethical behaviour, one of the seven dimensions of servant leadership (Saleem et al., 2020). Integrity is a core value that supports servant leadership behaviours, which involve behaving ethically.

2. **Service Orientation:** Serving and creating value for internal and external stakeholders is an important principle of servant leadership (Canavesi & Minelli, 2022b). The assumption here is that “I am the leader; therefore, I serve” (Saleem et al., 2020). An entire service standard was established within the organisation to guide how customers should be served. This standard, which says customers should be served with care, communication, accessibility, responsiveness, empathy, and simplicity, was intended for both internal and external customers. However, the data show that this standard is primarily considered by individuals in the organisation when dealing with external customers.
3. **People-Centred Focus:** Servant leadership behaviours are interested in the relational and emotional spectrums of their followers in order to realise the full potential of their followers (Canavesi & Minelli, 2022b). The bank’s values, which include energy, honesty, innovation, listening, quality, and respect, are people-focused. The data indicate that individuals in the bank desire the prioritisation of their needs and well-being. Values such as respect, accessibility, empathy, and responsiveness were often referred to by leaders and followers in their interviews. These values enable an environment that prioritises followers, focuses on emotional healing, and empowers them, which was lacking for followers in this case. The data also shows, however, that performance is currently the bank’s priority, ahead of people.

It is important that the leadership of an organisation demonstrates the values of the organisation in behaviour, and that there is no gap between these two (Shakeel et al., 2019). The data reveals a gap between the organisation’s declared values and the values enacted by its leadership. This is important because the stated values indicate what the organisation declares to value, and the leadership values displayed indicate what the leadership actually values.

The result of such gaps in the organisation can be that followers feel unsupported, while leaders perceive that they are supporting followers. This is particularly distinct in the junior followers, as per the data. Leaders may perceive themselves as embodying the values of the organisation; however, followers may perceive these values differently. This gap is important to note as servant leadership requires leaders to put followers and their needs first, as a priority, even ahead of their own needs (Eva et al., 2020).

6.2.1.1.3 The Importance of Aligning Organisational Values with Personal Values

Despite the lack of clarity in the organisation's stated values, participants in the study expressed a strong personal alignment with the values they were able to identify, as these were values they were taught during their upbringing or practised in their daily lives. The participants who were managers resonated most with this sub - theme. This personal alignment is important as it relates to authenticity as a leader, which is strongly associated with the ethical behaviour dimension of servant leadership (Franco & Antunes, 2020). Leaders and individuals who align their personal values with those of the organisation are likely to display more authentic servant leadership acts, as these values align with the principles of servant leadership. This is an interesting finding because it suggests that leaders and followers do not have to know, with absolute clarity and precision, the values of the organisation in order to enact servant leadership behaviours. Instead, where leadership and individuals find personal resonance with the values they perceive and acknowledge, values that are people-oriented, these leaders and individuals are more likely to display behaviours associated with servant leadership, despite what the declared organisational values are (Shakeel et al., 2019)

6.2.1.1.4 Values are Developed Top-Down

The data also shows that individuals in the organisation were not included in the process of developing the values of the bank. This included both managers and employees. This does not align with the behaviours of servant leadership, in particular, the dimensions of the empowerment of followers and placing followers first (Grobler & Flotman, 2021). This suggests that the values were established and handed down to the employees of the

bank rather than being co-created with them. Under servant leadership, decision-making power is shared with followers, and they are included in processes that establish value.

The consequences of excluding employees from the establishment of values are evident in the organisation in several ways. One manifestation is that it results in the individuals of the organisation not adequately and thoroughly knowing the values of the organisation (Asatiani et al., 2021b). Another manifestation is that the diverse perspectives and inputs of the organisation's employees are not adequately captured. This risks followers' being misaligned with the values and not displaying, communicating, and practising them regularly and accordingly.

For servant leader behaviours to thrive, followers must be able to establish an ownership of these values, those that align with servant leadership, through the process of inclusion. In the absence of this, the values may be perceived as instructional rather than innately motivating. The approach of not including employees in the establishment of values creates an inhibiting factor on the practice of servant leadership behaviours.

6.2.1.2 Theme 2: Hierarchical Authority and Systems Despite a Flat Organisational Structure

6.2.1.2.1 Organisational Structure is Formally Flat but Hierarchical in Practice

The data reveals a tension within the case organisation related to its structure. Due to its size, the organisation has a relatively flat structure with few layers. However, the data show that the bank itself is hierarchical in nature and in practice, with some respondents even describing it as a flattened hierarchy. A flat organisational structure should enhance accessibility within the organisation, thereby enabling servant leadership behaviours in the organisation, such as empowering followers and assisting them to grow and be successful in their careers (Giambatista et al., 2020). There exists a formal flatness in structure, but an informal hierarchy within it, in the organisation studied. The informal hierarchy inhibits the practice of servant leadership behaviours. Further, hierarchy is associated with high power distance (Liao et al., 2024a).

Core beliefs rooted in hierarchical structures are not consistent with servant leadership behaviours (Liao et al., 2024b). The core beliefs about hierarchy, power, and authority have an important influence on the viability of servant leadership in the long run. The data show evidence of assumptions of some distributed power; however, it also shows evidence of more hierarchical power that is centralised. The data indicate that the bank employs a top-down leadership approach in several aspects of the organisation, which constrains the empowerment servant leadership dimension (Aryee et al., 2023). With the top-down decision-making in the bank, followers have limited decision-making authority. This belief constrains leaders from fully empowering followers in the bank (Canavesi & Minelli, 2022b).

Power distance also constrains the practice of servant leadership behaviours (Eva et al., 2019). Furthermore, the organisation's top-down decision-making approach prevents leaders from effectively engaging followers in the bank's decision-making processes, as decisions are made at the top rather than through decentralised decision-making, thereby constraining the servant leadership practice of empowering followers (Eva et al., 2019). There is also a belief in maintaining the status quo in the data, stemming from discomfort with challenging authority. Despite the appearance of openness and accessibility in the bank, core beliefs may maintain authority and power distance practices. These beliefs inhibit the practice of servant leadership behaviours through constraining the empowerment of followers and the sharing of power and decision-making

High power distance is an inhibitor of the practice of servant leadership behaviours (Neubert et al., 2022). At a surface level, the organisation is advanced as an accessible and egalitarian one; these principles would enhance the practice of servant leadership behaviours within the organisation. However, beneath this advance exist traditional power dynamics and structures that constrain the practice of servant leadership behaviours. This presents a consequential challenge for leaders in the organisation: empowering followers and placing them first while continuing an authoritative hierarchical system of control.

The organisational cultural element of High Power Distance has a significant influence on how effective servant leadership is in an organisation (Neubert et al., 2022). Low

power distance promotes the servant leadership dimensions of empowerment and shared decision-making and thus servant leadership is challenged by high power distance in an organisation (Canavesi & Minelli, 2022a). While the data suggests that the bank has a relatively flat hierarchical structure given its size, the power distance is high in the organisation, nonetheless. This power distance is evident in the data on decision-making within the organisation. Power distance is also evident in dictatorial and instructional dispositions in the organisation.

6.2.1.2.2 A Slow Rate of Implementation in the Organisation

According to the literature, a slow rate of implementation in an organisation can be a result of rigidity and conservatism in the organisational culture. Conservative cultures are often slow to take up new innovations (Roberts et al., 2021). Further, rigid organisational cultures often accentuate authority, predictability, order and maintenance of the status quo (Tadesse Bogale & Debela, 2024).

The slow rate of implementation sub-theme was most prevalent in the followers of the organisation; this is likely because it is the followers who are most tasked with execution and implementation of initiatives within the organisation and not the strategic decision-making in the case organisation. A hierarchical organisational culture places emphasis on control, order and rules (Oh & Han, 2020). This can repress the sharing of relevant information within the organisation. This type of culture may result in the subduedness of individuals' voices in the organisation due to the potency of more senior positions and rigid structures. Further, the centralisation of decision-making in hierarchical structures, often slows decision-making in the organisation and thus hampers performance (Billstein & Hamasdi, 2023). Organisational environments where decisions are made quickly, often favour bottom-up approaches as opposed to top-down decision-making approaches (Canavesi & Minelli, 2022a). The bottom-up approach is more akin to servant leadership. Organisations with high power distance and hierarchy are often also challenged not only with information sharing, but with coordination too, with individuals that are not senior feeling disempowered and disinclined (Reddy, 2019). The structural hierarchy often also stifles the communication between individuals of different levels in the organisation.

Clear systems and processes can also hamper and obstruct implementation in the organisation through miscommunication, inconsistency and the inhibition of knowledge sharing (Swart et al., 2021). A clear understanding of roles, tasks and goals is required for a successful collective effort. While excessive processes and rigidity would render the organisation inflexible, a clear lack of systems and process can result in chaos. This can be most evident where there is low supervision of followers who are expected to take on the accountability of initiatives (Canavesi & Minelli, 2022b)

6.2.1.3 Summary of Research Question 1

Shared values guide the behaviour and expected consistency of followers in the organisation, and to achieve servant leadership behaviours in the organisation these values need to enable and be aligned to the dimensions of servant leadership. The case studied indicates that the stated organisational values were aspirational rather than practiced. However, the personal alignment that individuals had with some of the organisational values, enabled them to resonate and demonstrate the specified values accordingly. It is important to include followers in the establishing of these values to avoid such ambiguity. The organisational structure influences the values that are exhibited in the organisation. Hierarchical practices and high power-distance slow implementation in practice and inhibit servant leadership behaviours in the organisation.

6.2.2 Research Question 2: What are the organisational policies and practices that influence the display of servant leadership behaviours in the organisation?

This section discusses the artefacts that influence the display of servant leadership behaviours in the organisation. The organisational policies and practices established and maintained as a result of organisational design, operational requirements, and human resource functions establish the support or inhibition of the display of servant leadership behaviours (Canavesi & Minelli, 2022a).

6.2.2.1 Theme 3: Employee Empowerment Together with Investment in Employee Development

6.2.2.1.1 Empowering Individuals by Giving Them Autonomy

Followers must be entrusted with responsibility and autonomy by leaders, and must be empowered to be able to act autonomously to fulfil their obligations (Canavesi & Minelli, 2022b). Although there is recognition and acknowledgement of the importance of empowering followers in the organisation, this empowerment is not omnipresent in the bank. From the data, it appears that the opinions of followers are lacking from a decision-making view in the bank; however, autonomy is given to followers, within the bounds of their roles, to fulfil and execute their responsibilities.

The data indicated a period of volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity. Autonomy and empowerment are important in an environment and during periods of volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity (Grobler & Flotman, 2021). Particularly during periods of volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity, leaders cannot make all decisions on their own; thus, entrusting followers with responsibility and autonomy in acting positively on behalf of the organisation is very important (Canavesi & Minelli, 2022a). Despite the intent to empower followers in the bank, any limited empowerment of followers is misaligned with the empowering dimension of servant leadership

6.2.2.1.2 Empowering Individuals by Listening to Them and Including Them in Decision Making

The structure of an organisation influences the effectiveness of the practice of servant leadership behaviours in the organisation (Adams et al., 2025). The data indicate that the organisation employs a top-down structural approach to decision-making and the creation of its values, rather than a bottom-up approach. The voice of the employee was missing at a strategic high-level decision-making level in the organisation. This limited the decision-making ability of followers in the organisation, as evident in the data. Limited decision-making ability counters the practice of servant leadership in the organisation, as servant leaders are expected to include followers in decision-making, and appreciate their contributions (Chaudhry et al., 2022). Limited decision-making

ability limits the empowerment of employees in the organisation (Canavesi & Minelli, 2022b).

The establishment of centralised decision-making creates structural barriers that limit practices of servant leadership (Eva et al., 2019). The data, however, indicates that while autonomy and responsibility are given to individuals within their respective roles, the decision-making processes of the bank constrain rather than enable servant leadership behaviours. The data indicate a desire for followers to be included in strategic decisions and the business's future direction, especially since they will be executing on those decisions and can contribute to optimising these decisions, given the experiences they have in their daily roles. This inclusion should be effected at the beginning of the decision-making process (Franco & Antunes, 2020) the end (Franco & Antunes, 2020).

6.2.2.1.3 Empowering Individuals Through Recognition and Validation

Recognition for work achievements and work contributions is important for keeping followers engaged (Canavesi & Minelli, 2022b). Recognition builds the confidence of followers and ratifies their contributions. Participants appreciated recognition for their contributions at work through various forms, such as incentive bonuses, verbal recognition, written recognition, recognition awards, and travel trips. Recognition and validation was most important for the followers of the organisation in the data. This kind of recognition made individuals feel valued in the organisation.

The appreciation of others is a servant leadership behaviour and contributes toward the empowerment of followers (Grobler & Flotman, 2020). The acknowledgement and recognition of individuals abilities and contributions indicates value, validates followers value and aligns with putting followers first as a servant leadership behaviour (Aryee et al., 2023).

Recognition and validation was received through verbal recognition, the awarding of incentives, the communication of achievements to a wider audience and the investment in followers in the data. The literature indicates that verbal encouragement by their leaders makes followers feel engaged (Canavesi & Minelli, 2022b) les (Canavesi &

Minelli, 2022b). Rewards should be intended to motivate followers to do their best (Khan et al., 2019). An important psychological outcome of recognition and validation is the psychological safety and emotional healing that this brings to followers (Giambatista et al., 2020). It also reduces the fear of failure

6.2.2.1.4 Empowering Individuals Through Supporting Their Development

Empowering individuals by supporting their development is a pivotal characteristic within the framework of servant leadership (Liden et al., 2008). This development allows followers to realise their full potential and in turn benefits the organisation. This development usually requires the allocation of resources toward the capacity building and growth of individuals (Adams et al., 2025). Given that the foundations of servant leadership lie within developing and empowering individuals, servant leadership behaviours in an organisation would result in follower development and growth and organisational efficacy co-existing harmoniously (Giambatista et al., 2020).

Nine participants discussed this sub-theme in the data and one of the ways in which development is supported is the pairing of individuals with experienced bankers, to develop their skills. Also noted in the data, was the lack of mentoring in the organisation. The provision of work experiences to develop followers' skills and help followers grow (in their careers) and succeed, is a servant leadership behaviour principle (Liden et al., 2008). Providing the necessary mentoring also aids followers in achieving career goals and is congruent with servant leadership (Arain et al., 2019).

According to the literature, accountability supports development of followers by holding them accountable for performance (van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2011). This accountability is a powerful way to show confidence in followers. However, in the case under study, it appears followers are held accountable for the performance items within the organisation that they do not have control over, such as certain higher-level decisions, and therein lies the friction experienced by followers in the organisation studied (Swart et al., 2021).

6.2.2.1.5 The Importance of Structured Personal Development Plans and Regular Check-Ins

Frequent individualised interactions are a fundamental mechanism for supporting the development of followers (Canavesi & Minelli, 2022b). These engagements are important for the giving of guidance, the tracking of performance and the maintenance of accountability. The regular one-on-one check-ins and personal development plans appear to be valued according to the data, particularly by the executives that participated. Feedback systems, and customised guidance are important for addressing the individual needs of followers (Canavesi & Minelli, 2022b). Mentorship is also a servant leadership behaviour and the lack of mentorship indicated by a participant in the data means that there could be a lack of focus toward the fulfilment of followers career goals in the organisation (Lerutla & Steyn, 2022).

6.2.2.1.6 The Importance of Structured and Unstructured Learning and Growth Opportunities

Training interventions that are aimed at empowering individuals in the organisation are congruent with the empowering of followers under the dimensions of servant leadership (Aryee et al., 2023). The structured learning, learning programmes, initiatives, and knowledge share sessions for employees contribute to the development, growth, and empowerment of employees in the bank (Canavesi & Minelli, 2022b). The support that followers require from their leaders in the organisation often requires resources, and organisational culture can influence this provision of resources (Eva et al., 2019). When an organisation's culture aligns with servant leadership behaviours, resources are allocated to support individuals in reaching their full potential.

The data show the provision of resources by the organisation for employees in the form of funding for training, courses, and structured learning programmes. The perceived organisational support is high in this regard, with resources being allocated to invest in and develop employees, aligning with helping followers reach their full potential, one of the servant leadership dimensions (Adams et al., 2025). However, the resources available to leaders to serve their followers' needs in their day-to-day roles and tasks appear limited. One respondent noted that their leaders attempted to assist, despite

capacity constraints; however, this does not seem to be an organisation-wide practice. Resource scarcity affects the capacity of servant leaders to meet their followers' needs (Eva et al., 2019).

6.2.2.1.7 The Importance of Colleague Support

Colleague support plays an important role in individual well-being of followers in the organisation as well as collaboration within the organisation (Khan et al., 2019). The benefit of colleagues support was discussed by both managers and followers in the data. Peer-to-peer support is an important source of guarding against poor performance in an organisation. The support given by colleagues and management enhances the collective capacity building of individuals in the organisation (Grobler & Flotman, 2021). Through this, colleagues can work together to achieve desired tasks and succeed.

In organisations where there exists a high power distance, such as the case at hand, colleague support can be an important factor for implementation and performance (Reddy, 2019). Collectivism in the form of sharing of information, cooperation and coordination among colleagues becomes important. Through colleagues support, knowledge is shared and learning is enhanced (Oh & Han, 2020). As such, an outcome of servant leadership behaviours in an organisation is followers that support each other.

6.2.2.1.8 The Importance of Employee Well-Being

Prioritising followers' well-being is an ethical responsibility of servant leaders (Grobler & Flotman, 2021). The servant leadership behaviour that encapsulates prioritising the well-being of employees is the emotional healing dimension. The data indicates that there exists a gap in the prioritisation of the well-being of employees in the organisation, this is contra to servant leadership behaviours given, under servant leadership, the well-being of followers is prioritised above all, even that of the leader (Eva et al., 2019). This gap can be closed using the mechanism of the regular check-ins adequately with followers, and it is the followers that value this most among groups studied. When this well-being is prioritised, followers are more effective in their roles (Eva et al., 2019).

The emotional healing behaviour of followers by servant leaders is demonstrated by leaders showing concern for the personal and professional problems of followers and attending to their needs in this regard (Grobler & Flotman, 2020).

6.2.2.2 Theme 4: The Challenge of Interdepartmental Collaboration and Consistent Communication

6.2.2.2.1 The Importance of Collaboration Within the Organisation

While teamwork and collaboration are not explicitly declared in the values or service standards of the bank, collaboration was declared frequently in the data. Collaboration is aligned with the foundations of servant leadership as it encourages shared problem-solving and decision-making as well as builds relational connections (Canavesi & Minelli, 2022b). Despite the intention of collaboration, it appears constrained by cultural factors such as a silo work culture, which conflicts with the servant leadership dimension of building value for the collective (Eva et al., 2019). A siloed culture is also in conflict with the cultural dimension of high institutional collectivism that.

Many participants acknowledged the importance of collaboration in the data. Collaboration was most pronounced among the follower participants of the study, this is likely due to the collaboration required in the implementation that the followers need to conduct in their roles. Thus collaboration is important for the organisation to attain its strategic goals (Reddy, 2019). This collaboration spans widely regarding the organisation, this being between colleagues, within teams and with organisational stakeholders too (Chen & Sriphon, 2022).

6.2.2.2.2 The Importance of Accessibility to Leadership

Accessibility to leadership in the form of individual access and attention is important for the establishment of trust toward positive outcomes in a servant leader and follower relationship (Chaudhry et al., 2022). This need was slightly more pronounced for the follower participants in the data. This accessibility is contra to traditional hierarchy structures where accessibility is not adequately available (Canavesi & Minelli, 2022b).

The one-on-one communication that this accessibility allows for, opens up lines for communication such that the desires and needs of followers are shared and understood. This also allows leaders to empathise with the problems of their followers. Together with this, the ability of servant leaders to listen and communicate well with their followers in this regard, is imperative (Chen & Sriphon, 2022).

An important aspect that accessibility to leadership establishes, is the shared and perceived responsibility for positive change (Arain et al., 2019). This motivates followers through empathy and support.

6.2.2.2.3 The Importance of Adequate Communication in the Organisation

Leaders who promote an environment of inclusion and open communication are likely to have followers who are more devoted to their roles and organisation (Canavesi & Minelli, 2022b). Participants in the data appreciated the open communication that was shared regarding the changes occurring in the organisation. The appreciation of open communication was most evident in the follower participants in this study. The open-door policies stated and practised in the organisation contribute to an environment of open communication (Kumari et al., 2022). The communication practices of organisations are crucial for servant leadership behaviours, as effective communication is a key requirement for servant leadership. The data indicate a general appreciation for communication within the organisation; however, the communication seemed to lack the establishment of a deep relational connection and understanding required in servant leadership practice. Despite the open communication given by the leaders in the organisation, leadership presence is apparent in the data, and leaders appear to be tangibly distant from followers.

6.2.2.3 Summary of Research Question 2

The artefacts of the organisation can enable or inhibit servant leadership through how they develop employees in the organisation. A top-down hierarchy structure and decision-making exclusivity stifles servant leadership behaviours in an organisation, while recognition, development support, learning opportunities, colleague support and well-being prioritisation enable servant leadership behaviours in an organisational

environment. Collaboration is critical to achieve strategic goals and accessibility to leadership and open communication is important for the followers of an organisation.

The data present varied evidence supporting employee well-being and development, key dimensions of servant leadership under empowerment, which enables followers to grow, succeed, and experience emotional healing. The data, however, indicates a formal commitment by the organisation to the development of people. Formal policies and practices, including structured learning, leadership development support, and employee development policies and support, are consistently executed by the organisation. However, informal well-being and development practices, such as the provision of guidance and the management of resource constraints, indicate a gap in the implementation of informal practices in the organisation. This suggests that the organisation may prioritise performance over people, which is incongruent with the prioritisation of people under servant leadership (Grobler & Flotman, 2020).

6.2.3 Research Question 3: How do the organisation's passive core beliefs influence the practice of servant leadership behaviours over time?

This section discusses the underlying assumptions of the organisation's culture. The organisation's core beliefs, which are the deeply held and unconscious assumptions that guide behaviour, have an important influence on the long-term sustainability of the practice of servant leadership behaviours in the organisation (Reddy, 2019). The organisation's orientation towards its people and followers indicates whether the practice of servant leadership behaviours is sustainable in the long-term.

6.2.3.1 Theme 5: The Tension Between High Performance and Accountability and People-Centric Leadership

6.2.3.1.1 Th Prioritization of High Performance

There is evidence in the data of a desire for collective prosperity among individuals in the organisation, which is aligned with servant leadership and being humane-oriented (Grobler & Flotman, 2021). However, there exists strong evidence in the data of the focus on business performance expectations and high-performance pressure

embedded in the organisation's underlying assumptions. High performance pressure is not inherently misaligned with servant leadership; however, as the organisation's highest priority, it appears to be a source of tension in the bank, conflicting with the servant leadership dimension of prioritising followers above all (Neubert et al., 2022).

People's focus on performance is an important underlying assumption in the organisation that impacts the practice of servant leadership behaviours. A clear and strong tension between people-focused and performance-focused approaches is evident in the data. When the performance pressure and focus begin to outweigh the people focus in the organisation, the organisation is likely to revert to traditional leadership mechanisms such as directorship, rather than continuing with servant leadership practices (Eva et al., 2019). Servant leadership has been critiqued for prioritising the growth of followers as opposed to focusing on the performance of the organisation (Canavesi & Minelli, 2022a). However, it is important to recognise that it is the people and followers in the organisation that drive its performance. In this way, servant leadership practices of employee empowerment, well-being, prioritisation, and assisting followers to grow and succeed are validated as catalysts for performance drivers. The core beliefs about whether performance takes priority over people will impact whether prioritising followers as per the servant dimensions will be sustainable in the long-term for the organisation. People-centred beliefs may be vulnerable and forsaken when there is performance pressure in the bank. This also informs whether service is practised in the organisation to achieve the desired performance, or whether service is practised in the organisation to grow and develop followers to reach their full potential (Canavesi & Minelli, 2022a). There exists a high-performance pressure from leaders in the bank, along with the expectation of sizable responsibility, expeditious execution, and notable accountability on followers.

High work pressure adversely affects the follower-leader relationship (Canavesi & Minelli, 2022b). An intense working environment can also lead to decreased engagement and motivation among followers over time. This is not consistent with the servant leadership dimension of putting subordinates and their well-being first (Canavesi & Minelli, 2022b). High performance pressure in the bank was prominent in the data, with the performance of the bank appearing to be prioritised over the people in the bank.

Management should seek to reduce the pressure in the teams and environment by setting clear and realistic goals, introducing flexibility into the environment, and providing employees with the support they need to achieve their required goals (Canavesi & Minelli, 2022b).

6.2.3.1.2 The Inadequate Prioritization of Employees

The prioritisation of followers is a central servant leadership behaviour and the inadequate prioritisation of employees is often associated with hierarchy, a lack of support and self-interest of a leader (Grobler & Flotman, 2020). This can ultimately manifest in the form of reduced performance, adverse attitudes by followers in the organisation which can result in further challenges in the organisation. The inadequate prioritisation of employees often results from a preoccupation and focus by leaders on internal or external goals above the needs of individual staff (Eva et al., 2019). It is important that employees in the organisation not be perceived by leaders as mere inputs and resources to achieve the desired organisational outcomes. Servant leadership behaviours require that the leaders prioritise followers first and the organisation subsequent to that.

In the case studied, the data shows that decision-making in the organisation has been focussed around the financial performance results of the organisation. According to the literature, where decisions in an organisation are focussed on results, other assessment mechanisms of employees become insignificant (Morris, 2020). In this case, the prioritisation of the financial performance of the business has resulted in the assessment of employees in the organisation being based on the financial performance of the organisation. This can result in the perception that the employees in the organisation are resources toward a means to an end. This mechanism of decision-making may discourage employee-centric approaches in implementation required in line with servant leadership behaviours (Eva et al., 2019)

6.2.3.1.3 The Lack of Inclusion in Decision Making Processes

The lack of inclusion of followers in decision-making in the organisation is likely a product of the hierarchy structures within the organisation (Tadesse Bogale & Debela, 2024).

Organisational cultures characterised by authority, control, strict rules and stability tend to not accommodate broad participation within the organisation. The top-down, hierarchical structure of the case influences the inclusivity of decision-making in the organisation and limits or discourages the inputs of followers (Morris, 2020).

Servant leadership requires the empowerment of followers' voices and the sharing of power and decisions (Liao et al., 2024a). Thus, a key factor in the organisation that influences the enablement of servant leadership behaviours in the organisation is the degree to which employees can participate in the decision-making processes of the organisation (Tadesse Bogale & Debela, 2024). The views of followers should actively be sought and the decision-making power shared under the principles of servant leadership.

6.2.3.1.4 The Prioritisation of Customers

Servant leadership behaviours are primarily anchored around the needs of followers, however, extended beyond this, servant leadership behaviours are also concerned with the needs of stakeholders such as customers (Aryee et al., 2023). The servicing of customers by followers is a primary focus for followers as indicated in the data, however, the focus of customers in the values of the organisation is lacking. The data indicates that the importance of customers to the organisation's success is understood well across followers and leaders, still the organisational focus around customers is lacking. The organisation needs to gear itself toward customers requirements as a core requirement for success (Eva et al., 2019).

An important consideration when observing the prioritisation of the customer needs in the organisation is that the internal organisational needs and support of followers should be prioritised in order for these followers to prioritise the needs of customers (Oh & Han, 2020). This fulfilment is in line with the core mechanism of servant leadership. When managers exhibit this behaviour, followers emulate this orientation towards customers (Franco & Antunes, 2020).

6.2.3.1.5 The Importance of Leadership Presence

The importance of leadership presence is important for building leader-follower relationship through authenticity, trust, driving outcomes and role modelling (Liao et al., 2024a). Not only does this preserve the perception of integrity and effectiveness of the leader by followers but it also enhances the leader's connection with followers and the leader's awareness of the dynamics that followers are faced with (Lamprinou et al., 2014). This is nurtured by face-to-face engagements (Grobler & Flotman, 2020). The presence of leadership re-enforces behavioural norms and sets the tone for communication and actions to influence the expectations and conduct of followers (Tadesse Bogale & Debela, 2024).

Because of the emotional and relational needs of followers that are met through leadership presence, leadership presence is particularly important in a hierarchical organisation (Eva et al., 2019). According to the literature organisational outcomes and leader-follower relationships are stronger when there is enhanced leadership presence and where followers are able to interact more frequently with leaders (Hu et al., 2023).

6.2.3.1.6 The Importance of Leadership Modelling

The leadership in an organisation can inspire and influence others toward the success of the organisation (Reddy, 2019). Once organisational values and practices have been established, they should guide leaders in their behaviour. Thus, leadership integrity necessitates that leaders should live the organisation's values and not just say them (Franco & Antunes, 2020). This consistency is important; leaders must consistently live the servant leadership behaviours. The data reveals a discrepancy between the stated values and those exhibited by its leaders, suggesting that the stated values may not be consistently upheld. Further, what is more important, is the values exhibited by leaders, even if these differ from the organisation's stated values. This is the behaviour that employees often emulate. As leaders hold positions of influence, they are expected to embody the organisation's values. Since employees learn more by observing, leaders serve as role models in this regard, embodying the values (Eva et al., 2019). The social learning theory says that employees emulate the behaviours and attitudes of leaders they perceive as credible (Eva et al., 2019). Leaders who seek to serve others are often

perceived as credible role models. Additionally, the data show that followers expect leaders to be respectful. This expectation creates pressure on the leader to exhibit this behaviours, regardless of their own personal inclination, for the benefit of followers. This, too, aligns with servant leadership. This implies that leaders who display these elements are saluted, while those who do not align with followers' expectations of leaders risk being unsung (Chaudhry et al., 2022).

For servant leadership behaviours to be displayed and practised effectively in the organisation, leaders must demonstrate these servant leadership behaviours consistently over time so that these behaviours become the underly core assumptions and beliefs of the organisation (Lerutla & Steyn, 2022).

6.2.3.2 Summary of Research Question 3

The underlying assumptions of the organisation indicate whether servant leadership behaviours will be sustainable in the organisation. High performance prioritisation is the dominant core belief of the organisation and this creates pressure and a tension regarding servant leadership foundation belief of the prioritisation of followers above all. With this high performance focus, leaders are easily able to revert to more traditional forms of leadership which may result in adverse outcomes. The hierarchy in the organisation also excludes followers form strategic decision making in the organisation. Given the understanding of the importance of the customer by employees, this should form part of the stated values of the organisation. Leadership presence and leadership role modelling of values are important for authenticity, trust-building and awareness raising. These need to be consistently conducted for these to be successfully embedded in the core assumptions of the organisation.

Table 34: Summary of Research Questions and Themes

Research Question	Theme
Research Question 1: How do shared organisational values impact the expression of servant leadership behaviours in the organisation?	Theme 1: Divergence Between Stated Shared Values and Values in Practice

	Theme 2: Hierarchical Authority and Systems Despite a Flat Organisational Structure
Research Question 2: What are the organisational policies and practices that influence the display of servant leadership behaviours in the organisation?	Theme 3: The Importance of Employee Empowerment Together with Investment in Employee Development Theme 4: The Challenge of Interdepartmental Collaboration and Consistent Communication
Research Question 3: How do the organisation's passive core beliefs influence the practice of servant leadership behaviours over time?	Theme 5: The Tension Between High Performance and Accountability and People-Centric Leadership

6.3 Conceptual Framework

The relationship between organisational culture, and the practice of servant leadership behaviours in an organisation has been further detailed from the pre-fieldwork suggestion, after conducting the research and analysing the findings of the case studied.

Table 35: Conceptual Framework Post-Fieldwork

RQ1: Theme 1: The Divergence Between Stated Shared Values and Values in Practice	Servant Leadership Behaviours: <i>Behaving Ethically; Putting Followers First; Empowering</i>	
The Importance of Shared Values	Behaving Ethically	Putting Followers First
Stated Values often Differ from Practiced Values	Behaving Ethically	Putting Followers First
The Importance of Aligning Organisational Values with Personal Values	Behaving Ethically	Empowering

Values are Developed Top-Down	Empowering	Putting Followers First
RQ1: Theme 2: Hierarchical Authority and Systems Despite a Flat Organisational Structure	Servant Leadership Behaviours: <i>Empowering; Putting Followers First</i>	
Organisational Structure is Formally Flat but Hierarchical in Practice	Empowering	Putting Followers First
A Slow Rate of Implementation in the Organisation	Empowering	
RQ2: Theme3: The Importance of Employee Empowerment Together with Investment in Employee Development	Servant Leadership Behaviours: <i>Empowering; Emotional Healing; Helping Followers Grow and Succeed; Creating Value for the Community</i>	
The Importance of Empowering Individuals by Giving Them Autonomy	Empowering	
The Importance of Empowering Individuals by Listening to Them and Including Them in Decision Making	Empowering	
The Importance of Empowering Individuals Through Recognition and Validation	Emotional Healing	
The Importance of Empowering Individuals Through Supporting Their Development	Helping Followers Grow and Succeed	
The Importance of Structured Personal Development Plans and Regular Check-Ins	Helping Followers Grow and Succeed	
The Importance of Structured and Unstructured Learning and Growth Opportunities	Helping Followers Grow and Succeed	
The Importance of Colleague Support	Creating Value for the Community	

The Importance of Employee Well-Being	Emotional Healing	
RQ2: Theme 4: The Challenge of Interdepartmental Collaboration and Consistent Communication	Servant Leadership Behaviours: <i>Creating Value for the Community; Emotional Healing; Empowering</i>	
The Importance of Collaboration Within the Organisation	Creating Value for the Community	
The Importance of Accessibility to Leadership	Emotional Healing	Empowering
The Importance of Adequate Communication in the Organisation	Emotional Healing	Empowering
RQ3: Theme 5: The Tension Between High Performance and Accountability and People-Centric Leadership	Servant Leadership Behaviours: <i>Putting Followers First; Emotional Healing</i>	
Th Prioritization of High Performance	Putting Followers First	Emotional Healing
The Inadequate Prioritisation of Employees	Putting Followers First	
The Lack of Inclusion in Decision Making Processes	Empowering	
The Prioritisation of Customers	Creating Value for the Community	
The Importance of Leadership Presence	Emotional Healing	Behaving Ethically
The Importance of Leadership Modelling	Behaving Ethically	

	Espoused Values
	Artefacts
	Underlying Assumptions

6.3.1 Research Concept 1: Organisational Culture

Organisational culture provides the context in which servant leadership behaviours can be exhibited (Giambatista et al., 2020). The organisational culture can provide the right environment for servant leadership behaviours to flourish or inhibit them. Culture has been described as high-performance, rigid, fast-paced, and hierarchical. Although collaboration is promoted as a value, cross-functional collaboration remains a challenge within the organisation. Values such as respect, accountability, integrity, transparency, and customer centricity are recognised by employees within the organisation; however, there is a lack of psychological safety and responsibility for living the values.

6.3.2 Research Concept 2: Servant Leadership

Servant leadership behaviours involve a people-centred approach. This entails the prioritisation of people, including their empowerment, support, and development (Eva et al., 2019). Followers expect leaders to make sure they are given the support they require as well as prioritise their development. They expect leaders to be inclusive and people-centred. Followers expect leaders to empower them in decision-making, as well as challenge the current way things are done without denunciation or penalty.

6.3.3 Research Theory 1: Organisational Culture

For servant leader behaviours to be effectively practised in an organisation, the organisational culture must support the practice of servant leadership behaviours (Eva et al., 2019). The organisational culture is the norms, assumptions, and behaviours that guide how leaders behave and how they engage their staff.

6.3.4 Research Theory 2: Servant Leadership

Servant leadership is a prosocial, ethical, and moral leadership and behavioural approach that prioritises the followers and people's long-term development, empowerment, growth and success, and emotional healing (Eva et al., 2019). Leaders should prioritise followers who actually deliver the required work, ensuring that prioritising them yields the desired outcomes. Leaders should empower their people.

Behaviours such as engaging and understanding their followers, honesty, and listening are key servant leadership behaviours that leaders need to practice.

6.3.5 Research Theory 3: Impact of Organisational Culture on Servant Leadership Behaviours

The data shows that organisational culture is important in the ability of leaders to practice servant leadership behaviours in the organisation. A culture that is open, transparent, and supportive establishes an environment that enables servant leadership behaviours. The leader's ability to display servant leadership behaviours can be inhibited by a strong centralised authority influence. A hierarchical organisational culture inhibits servant leadership behaviours by inhibiting the discussion and challenge of issues. The way leaders demonstrate the organisation's values shapes its culture, with followers imitating this behaviour despite the organisation's declared values and behaviours.

6.4 Summary

Organisational culture influences the practice of servant leadership behaviours through shared values, organisational practices, and evolving core beliefs. The shared organisational values that support a humane orientation support the practice of servant leadership behaviour (Canavesi & Minelli, 2022a). Values that are associated with high power distance and aggression inhibit the practice of servant leadership behaviours (Eva et al., 2019). Organisational policies and practices influence the practice of servant leadership behaviours in the organisation by providing tangible mechanisms that support the practice of servant leadership. These mechanisms include the provision of resources and the establishment and implementation of programmes for the empowerment, growth, and development of individuals, for example (Canavesi & Minelli, 2022a). The organisation's core beliefs substantiate the long-term viability of servant leadership behaviours, which are practised through beliefs aligned with the dimensions of servant leadership and consistently lived by leaders in the organisation.

7 Chapter 7: Conclusion

7.1 Introduction

This chapter gives a summary and reflection of the research that was undertaken. In this chapter, the study's contributions are highlighted and this chapter gives a summary of the findings, the limitations and the recommendations of this study. The limitations included herein, provide a comprehensive overview of the constraints of this research. The reflections discuss insights related to the research questions and findings, and consider how these can be applied within an organisational context on a continuous basis.

7.2 Summary of Key Findings

From the literature, it became evident that organisational culture is vital for the effective practice of servant leadership (Al Issa, 2019). We also know that the broader societal culture influences the effectiveness of the practice of servant leadership (Neubert et al., 2022). The study aimed to explore how organisational culture influences the display of servant leadership behaviours in the banking sector in South Africa. To answer the study's research question, a conceptual framework was developed to include Schein's organisational culture model and Liden's Seven Dimensions of Servant Leadership Model (Schein, 2016; Liden et al., 2008). The model was enhanced by specifying which themes and sub-themes within Schein's three level Organisational Culture Model influence which dimensions of servant leadership of Liden et al.'s seven leaders seven-dimension framework. The purpose of this research was to provide detailed insights of the complex relationship between organisational culture and servant leadership behaviours.

This research contributes to knowledge in the field of organisational culture by answering the central research question:

- How Does Organisational Culture Influence the Practice of Servant Leadership Behaviours in an Organisation?

The following sub-questions further guided the study:

- How do shared organisational values impact the expression of servant leadership behaviours in the organisation?
- What are the organisational policies and practices that influence the display of servant leadership behaviours in the organisation?
- How do the organisation's passive core beliefs influence the practice of servant leadership behaviours?

7.2.1 Theoretical Contributions

This study contextually integrated organisational culture using Schein's organisational culture model, with a focus on servant leadership behaviours as per Liden et al.'s S-7 model. This study also showed how organisational culture enables or suppresses which servant leadership behaviours in the context of a single organisation case. This research shows that effective servant leadership in an organisation requires a culture where the core underlying belief, in accordance with Schein's model, is to prioritise, support, develop, and grow its people. This becomes evident in the organisation's espoused and practiced values and is made tangible in the organisation's artefacts that develop and empower people (Asatiani et al., 2021b). This research confirms the suggestion to integrate servant leadership behaviours into the organisational culture of organisations in South Africa for enhanced performance of organisations (Lerutla & Steyn, 2022).

7.2.2 Empirical Contributions

1) This research focuses on the banking industry in South Africa, highlighting how servant leadership behaviours are displayed in such an organisation. The rich qualitative data attained through this research adds to the limited research on organisational culture and servant leadership in the African context and banking context, where most research relating to the topic is in Western and Eastern contexts. Despite servant leadership being related to Ubuntu in the South African context, the performance pressure in the banking sector have the ability to limit the practice of servant leadership behaviours in such organisations (Lerutla & Steyn, 2022)

2) Secondly, this research gives evidence of a structural contradiction that likely occurs in many organisations, an organisation that is flat in structure but hierarchical in nature (Giambatista et al., 2020). This finding challenges the presumption that formal flat organisational structures lower power distances, and that core beliefs about power need to be addressed to achieve the desired outcomes

3) This research also provides evidence of the tension between the declared values of an organisation and the exhibited values (Asatiani et al., 2021b). This shows the challenge of practising servant leadership in organisations, and that servant leadership may not be universally relevant, but rather relevant to certain cultural contexts

7.2.3 Practical Contributions

This study gives insights into how organisational culture influences servant leadership behaviours, by describing how organisational culture enables or inhibits servant leadership behaviours within an organisation. With this knowledge, the organisational culture can be changed to create an environment that encourages and enables servant leadership behaviours.

1. Leadership and Management Focus When Defining the Organisation's Values: The leadership of the organisation should focus on incorporating servant leadership behaviours and dimensions into the values of the organisation when they are being established or amended. This will enable the practice and effectiveness of the servant leadership dimensions in the organisation (Giambatista et al., 2020). Furthermore, the aligned stated values should be practiced and displayed regularly within the organisation at all times. The values should be co-created between leadership and followers, regularly reinforced, and modelled by the leadership. The divergence of state organisational values and practiced values and the degree of hierarchy in an organisation influence the dimensions of empowerment, putting followers first and ethical behaviour in an organisation.

2. Formal Systemic Support on Servant Leadership Dimensions and Behaviours: Servant leadership behaviours are both intrinsic characteristics and learned behaviours (Canavesi & Minelli, 2022b). Dedicated resources and support should be prioritised in the organisation for the servant leadership dimensions and behaviours and the

development of these. This support should be given to both leaders and followers. This will enable leaders to create environments that foster the practice of these servant leadership behaviours within their teams and in the organisation. This will enable leaders to create team environments that empower followers to grow, be successful, and reach their full potential. Policies and practices should systematically and consistently commit to people-oriented behaviours, aligning with the organisation's underlying core beliefs rather than the disposition and preference of the leadership. Investing in, and empowering, followers as well as collaboration and communication in the organisation influences the emotional healing, empowerment, creation of value for the community and the help that followers need to grow and succeed in an organisation.

3. Sustaining Servant Leadership Practices Over the Long-Term: For the practice of servant leadership behaviours to be sustained in the long-term in organisations, these behaviours need to be part of the underlying core beliefs and assumptions of the organisation (Giambatista et al., 2020). The leadership of the organisation must exhibit the values and behaviours aligned with servant leadership consistently over time. Followers will need to be prioritised above all, in this regard. Servant leadership behaviours should also be reinforced through repetition and rewarded when displayed. Core beliefs about decision-making, performance predominance, and power hierarchy suppress the practice of servant leadership behaviours, and should be transformed at the core, basic, underlying assumptions level. Placing performance above people as a priority impacts the emotional healing and putting followers first in the organisation.

7.3 Limitations of the Study

7.3.1 The limitations of this qualitative case study research using interview transcripts as the main source of data are as follows:

1. Respondents' Bias: Critique of the reliance on interviews and interview transcripts as the primary data source includes that the interview data is self-reported, and respondents may be motivated by a specific agenda in their responses (Quinlan et al., 2018).

2. Interpretation Subjectivity of the Researcher: The definition of organisational culture is complex and varies in the literature. Respondents described organisational culture through their perceptions, experiences, and observations. The research may be subjective in interpretation of the study's descriptions, together with the meanings. This may have introduced researcher bias into the study (Quinlan et al., 2018).

3. Challenges in Accurately Capturing Reality: Respondents may be challenged in accurately representing the phenomenon under study during interviews, for a number of reasons, which would impact the study's validity (Quinlan et al., 2018). Reasons for this could include:

- a. Apprehension: respondents may feel apprehension when responding to interview questions from fear of adverse consequences, particularly if they were engaged by an internal individual.
- b. Recall Bias: Respondents may be unable to recall examples or the events specified accurately.

4. Reliability: Given that semi-structured open-ended questions were used in the interview process, follow-up questions could be posed to the respondent. Follow-up questions differed from participant to participant, and differing follow-up questions were asked to different respondents (Quinlan et al., 2018) .

7.3.2 The limitations of this qualitative case study research in generalisability and scope:

1. Limited sample size: The sample size of this research was 17 respondents, all from one case organisation (Saunders & Lewis, 2017).

2. External validity and generalisability: The findings of this research are specific to the context, case organisation, and country of the research. It is challenging to generalise the findings to all organisations. The sample is small, with a single case, sector, and country (Saunders & Lewis, 2017).

3. Context: This study was carried out in a specific organisation, sector, and country. Thus, a similar study in a different context may yield different results (Saunders & Lewis, 2017).

7.3.3 The limitations of this qualitative case study research are associated with the methodological design:

1. Cross-sectional research: This study was conducted at a single point in time, and thus, the understanding of organisational culture influence on servant leadership behaviours over time cannot be established (Quinlan et al., 2018).
2. Triangulation in the data: The data primarily emanates from interview transcript data. Given that organisational culture is an intangible construct, using only the interview transcripts as data results in the study lacking triangulation (Quinlan et al., 2018).

7.3.4 The limitations of this qualitative case study research during a transition period

This study was undertaken during a period when the case study was undergoing a transition. This may have notably impacted the findings, and organisational dynamics may differ compared to periods of stability and may be amplified during this period of transition. As such, organisational cultural challenges may have been overstated (Quinlan et al., 2018).

7.4 Future Research Directions and Recommendations

This research highlights a number of directions for research in the future on organisational culture and servant leadership:

7.4.1 Methodological Recommendations

1. This research focused on a single case study. A multi-case comparative research study across multiple organisations provides insights that are not context-specific (Quinlan et al., 2018).
2. This is a cross-sectional research study. This research was carried out at a specific point in time. A longitudinal study would capture how the relationship between organisational culture and servant leadership evolves over time (Quinlan et al., 2018).

3. A mixed methods research study would allow for the quantitative testing of relationships between organisational culture and servant leadership behaviours, while qualitative data would provide an in-depth explanation of the relationships (Saunders & Lewis, 2017).

7.4.2 Theoretical Recommendations

Several interesting research questions emerge from the findings of this study and are worth exploring:

1. How do followers and/or leaders manage the occurrence of the misalignment of personal values and organisational values? How does this impact their well-being?
2. How do relational and/or cultural practices increase or decrease power distance in formally flat organisational structures? How is this perceived by individuals at different levels in the organisation?

7.5 Reflections

This research has been valuable in a personal capacity, providing me with insights on how to be a better leader by applying the philosophy of servant leadership within an organisation, with consideration of the cultural context of baking organisations in South Africa. Having explored a more modern leadership style, such as servant leadership in this study, comparing it to more traditional leadership models, such as authoritative leadership models, convinces me that it is a viable leadership model within the context of the private sector, particularly where these traditional leadership models have not yielded the desired results in an organisation. I do think, however, that the wide acceptance, practice, and incorporation of such a leadership style into the fabric of organisational cultures in the private sector still has a long way to go. This is a very complex task to achieve in an organisation. My focus has expanded from leading my immediate team to encompassing the broader organisational culture. Understanding these concepts helps me create a fertile ground for practising servant leadership, where I can share my leadership influence.

I currently work in a sales environment, which often, and perhaps expectedly, displays many behaviours that are not congruent with servant leadership. Having explored organisational culture and servant leadership, my goal is to consider how I can effectively integrate the principles of servant leadership in my organisational environment while achieve the kind of performance that is sought by the business. This would be a personal challenge and reward.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Research Instrument

Research Instrument: Executive Leadership

Background Questions

- What is your current role in the organisation?
- How long have you been in the organisation?
- How would you describe the overall culture of the organisation?

RQ1: How do shared organisational values impact the expression of servant leadership behaviours in the organisation?

- What values does the organisation promote?
- How were these values developed? (e.g. were employees, involved in the process etc)
- How do the organisational values align with empowering employees?
- How are these values reinforced in leadership practices?
- Can you give an example of how the organisation's values shaped leadership behaviours in a way that serves employees or teams?
- What do you believe informed these values- what are the underlying assumptions?

RQ2: What are the organisational policies and practices that influence the display of servant leadership behaviours in the organisation?

- What are the organisational policies and practices that are implemented that demonstrate a focus on valuing people? Give examples
- How do these contribute to employee development and wellbeing??
- How is the organisation structured?
- How does this inform decision-making and efficient implementation?
- How are decisions made at different levels in the organisation?
- Can you give an example of an organisational practice that supports leaders in prioritizing employee's development or wellbeing?

RQ3: How do the organisation's passive core beliefs influence the practice of servant leadership behaviours over time?

- How would you describe the organisation's underlying beliefs on how people should engage?
- How has the organisation's core assumptions shaped how leaders approach their roles, over time?
- Can you share an example of how the organisation's culture has influenced leadership behaviours over time?

Research Instrument – Senior Managers

Background Questions

- What is your current role in the organisation?
- How long have you been in the organisation?
- How would you describe the overall culture of the organisation?

RQ1: How do shared organisational values impact the expression of servant leadership behaviours in the organisation?

- What are the values of the organisation?
- What do you believe they represent?
- How do the organisation's values influence the way you lead your team?
- How do the organisational values influence individual and team goals and achievements?
- Can you give an example of how the organisation's values influenced your leadership behaviours or decisions toward teamwork?

RQ2: How do visible organisational features influence the display of servant leadership behaviours in the organisation?

- What specific policies do you think promote employee support, development and empowerment?
- What organisational practices make it easier for you to practice certain leadership behaviours?
- Can you give an example of an organisational practice that influenced your ability to lead in a certain way?
- How is the organisation structured?
- How does this inform decision-making and implementation?
- How are decisions made at different levels in the organisation?
- How does the organisation's approach on power dynamics influence your leadership style?
- Can you give an example of an organisational practice that supports leaders in prioritizing employee's development or wellbeing?

RQ3: How do the organisation's passive core beliefs influence the practice of servant leadership behaviours over time?

- How would you describe the organisation's underlying beliefs on how people should engage?
- How have the organisation's core beliefs shape your approach to leadership over time?
- Can you share an example of how the organisation's culture has influenced your leadership approach over time?

Research Instrument – Employee Followers

Background Questions

- What is your current role in the organisation?
- How long have you been in the organisation?
- How would you describe the overall culture of the organisation?

RQ1: How do shared organisational values impact the expression of servant leadership behaviours in the organisation?

- What are the values of the organisation?
- What do you believe these values represent?
- What process was followed in developing the organisation's values (where you part of this process?)
- To what extent do you believe that the organisational values promote teamwork and collective success?
- To what extent do you believe that the leadership of the organisation lives these values. Give examples
- Can you give an example of how a leader(s) focus on teamwork and collective goals impacted how they supported you or your team?

RQ2: What are the organisational policies and practices that influence the display of servant leadership behaviours in the organisation?

- What specific policies do you think promote employee support, development and empowerment?
- What are some of the practices in the organisation that support people-centred leadership
- What are the leadership behaviours/practices that show that employees are valued?
- Do you feel empowered to contribute to ideas and make decisions in your role?
- Can you give an example of an organisational practice that made you feel supported by a leader?

RQ3: How do the organisation's passive core beliefs influence the practice of servant leadership behaviours over time?

- What do you think leaders are expected to be like in this organisation?
- What leadership behaviours have you seen leaders consistently demonstrate over time in the organisation?
- Can you share an example of how a leader's behaviour has impacted you or your team over time?

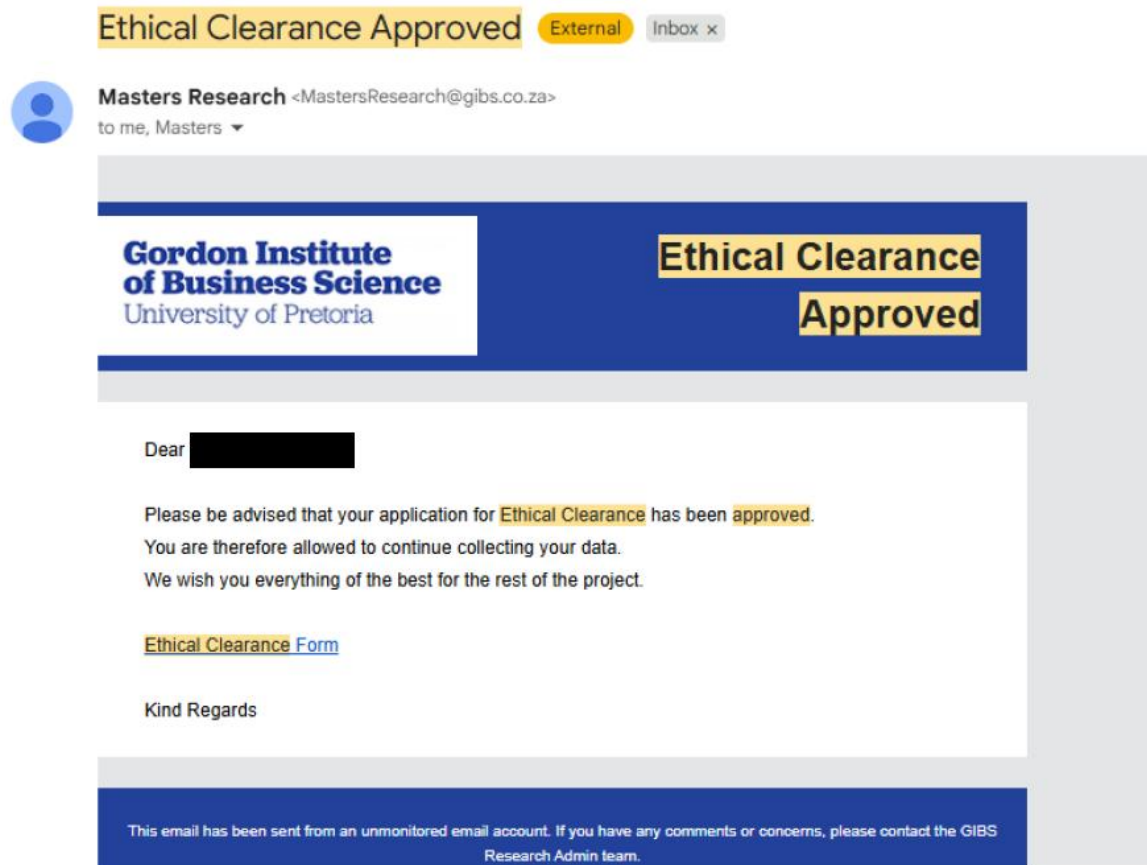
Closing Questions

- Do you have any additional thoughts or experiences related to how the organization's culture influences leadership behaviours?
- Can you share a specific example where the organisation's culture influenced a leader's ability to display certain leadership behaviours?

Appendix 2: Consistency Matrix

RESEARCH QUESTIONS	LITERATURE REVIEW	Data Collection Tool	Data Analysis
How does organisational culture influence the practice of servant leadership behaviours in an organisation?	Eva et al. (2019)	Semi-structured interviews with Executives, Senior Manager, Employee Followers	Thematic analysis on interview transcript data to identify themes of research question
Research Question 1: How do shared organisational values impact the expression of servant leadership behaviours in the organisation?	Al Issa (2019); Eva et al. (2019); McQuade et al. (2021)	Semi-structured interviews with Executives, Senior Manager, Employee Followers	Thematic analysis on interview transcript data to identify themes of research question
Research Question 2: What are the organisational policies and practices that influence the display of servant leadership behaviours in the organisation?	Canavesi & Minelli (2022) Oh & Han (2020)	Semi-structured interviews with Executives, Senior Manager, Employee Followers	Thematic analysis on interview transcript data to identify themes of research question
Research Question 3: How do the organisation's passive core beliefs influence the practice of servant leadership behaviours over time?	Eva et al. (2019)	Semi-structured interviews with Executives, Senior Manager, Employee Followers	Thematic analysis on interview transcript data to identify themes of research question

Appendix 3: Ethical Clearance



Appendix 4: Permission Letter



Dear 

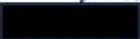
RE: Approval to Conduct Qualitative Research Study at 

We hereby grant approval for the conduct of the qualitative case study research on,

“Evaluating the Impact of Organisational Culture on Servant Leadership Behaviours” within 
 as requested.

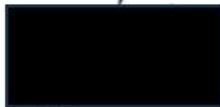
We understand that:

- The name of the bank will not be disclosed in any part of the research.
- All interviews will be conducted confidentially.
- Participation will be voluntary and scheduled to minimise disruption.
- The study is for academic purposes only and will not be used for commercial use.

Please ensure that you comply with any further internal policies or confidentiality agreements as required by  Should you need further assistance or clarifications, feel free to contact us.

We wish you success with your MBA research.

Kind regards,



Executive Head: Human Capital & Human Resources Department



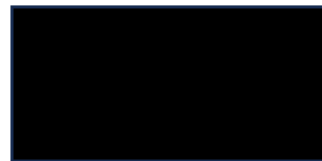
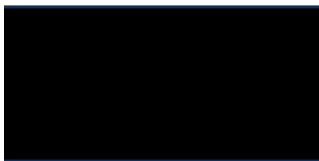


Appendix 5: Informed Consent Letter

Informed Consent Letter

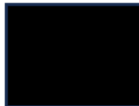
I am currently a student at the University of Pretoria's Gordon Institute of Business Science and completing my research in partial fulfilment of an MBA.

*I am conducting research about the impact of organisational culture on leadership in an organisation. Our interview is expected to last about an hour and will help us understand how organisations can improve performance through organisational culture and leadership. **Your participation is voluntary, and you can withdraw at any time without penalty.** All data will be reported without identifiers. If you have any concerns, please contact my supervisor or me. Our details are provided below*



Signature of participant: _____

Date: _____



Signature of researcher: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 6: Online Meeting Invitation

Research Interview - Meeting

File Meeting **Scheduling Assistant** Tracking Insert Format Text Review Help

Skype Meeting Join Teams Meeting Meeting Options Setup Busy None

Attendee responses: 1 accepted, 0 tentatively accepted, 0 declined.

Send Update

Title **Research Interview** **Meeting Insights**

Required [Redacted]

Optional

Start time Tue 2025/08/05 14:00 ☐ All day ☐ Time zones

End time Tue 2025/08/05 14:45 [Make Recurring](#)

Location Microsoft Teams Meeting [Room Finder](#)

Microsoft Teams [Need help?](#)

[Join the meeting now](#)

[Redacted]

For organizers: [Meeting options](#)

Download Share

Appendix 7: Certificate of Data Analysis Support

CERTIFICATION OF DATA/ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

(Additional support retained or not - to be **completed by all students**)

Please note that failure to comply and report on this honestly will result in disciplinary action

I hereby certify that (please indicate which statement applies):

- ***I DID NOT RECEIVE*** any additional/outside assistance (i.e. statistical, transcriptional, and/or editorial services) on my research report:
.....

- ☒ ***I RECEIVED*** additional/outside assistance (i.e. statistical, transcriptional, and/or editorial services) on my research report Editorial Services.....

If any additional services were retained— ***please indicate below which:***

☐ ***Statistician***

☐ ***Transcriber***

☒ ***Editor***

☐ ***Other (please specify:.....)***

Please provide the name(s) and contact details of all retained:

NAME:

EMAIL ADDRESS:

CONTACT NUMBER:

TYPE OF SERVICE: Editorial Services.....

Appendix 8: Code Book

- accessibility enables teamwork
- accessibility to leadership
- accessible leadership enables work efficacy
- accountability culture
- achievement recognition
- adaptability to competition
- adaptive leadership
- approachable leader
- aspirational values
- calm leadership for results
- CARES service standards
- challenges given change
- challenging portfolio
- change management
- clarity through clear communication
- client engagement
- client relationship value
- collaboration barrier tools/technology
- collaboration encouragement
- collaboration need
- collaborative leadership
- colleague recognition by clients
- colleague recognition by company
- collective expertise
- community centred service & responsibility
- communication enables collaboration
- communication enables work efficacy
- communication gap
- communication improves trust
- communication, transparency, accessibility (core values)
- community integration & alignment

- competence alignment
- conflict resolution focus
- consistent support
- context gap
- core beliefs
- culture boost
- culture drives behaviour
- culture guides leadership
- culture performance link
- culture reinforcement
- culture shift
- culture through training
- customer centricity
- customer first value
- customer outreach practices
- declined motivation
- despondent leadership
- disempowerment through negation
- diverse organisation
- driving quality
- dynamic culture
- easy to adopt values
- emotional contagion
- empathy for individuals
- employee development policy
- employee development support
- employee value gap
- employees excluded in value creation
- employment equity policy
- empowering delegation through projects
- empowerment evolved over time
- empowerment through autonomy
- empowerment through decision making

- empowerment through involvement
- empowerment through listening
- empowerment through solution presentation and implementation
- encourage assertiveness
- end to end responsibility/self reliance
- ethics policy noted
- executive role
- executive sales role
- experience gap
- experienced hires
- fear of challenging authority
- fear of failing
- flat structure
- flattened hierarchy
- growth opportunities
- guidance through teaching
- hands-on leadership
- harsh leadership demotivates
- hidden power games/political & power dynamics
- high performance pressure
- high turnover
- honesty fosters teamwork, collaboration & trust
- honesty, respect, integrity (core values), client centricity, enery (work ethic)
- human centred leadership
- ignored ideas
- inclusive communication
- inclusive culture
- inclusive decision making
- inconsistent communication
- individual variation in beliefs
- individualised leadership
- ineffective HR initiatives
- instructional leadership

- interdepartmental collaboration
- introvert recognition challenge
- investment in people
- job satisfaction
- junior product role
- junior sales role
- lack of consistency
- lack of expertise
- lack of guidance
- lack of implementation
- lack of leadership presence
- lack of mentoring
- lack of reciprocity
- lack of structure
- late employee inclusion
- late leadership intervention - reactive leadership
- leadership constraints
- leadership development support
- leadership distance
- leadership driven culture
- leadership gap
- leadership instability
- leadership modelling
- leadership presence and communication
- leadership uncertainty
- leadership values gap
- leadership-driven positivity
- learning culture practices
- learning through failure
- limited employee voice
- limited empowerment
- limited policy awareness
- long tenure in organisation

- lost talent
- low commitment
- low responsiveness
- management advocacy support
- medium tenure in organisation
- mixed culture
- mixed values
- motivate staff
- motivational communication
- motivational leadership
- need for transparency
- negative spillover
- non-dictorial approach
- OC & leadership mutually re-enforcing
- OC influence how leaders engage employees & vice versa
- OC influence leadership through values, behaviours, expectations
- one-way values
- open communication culture
- open to change
- open yet hierarchical
- open, supportive, transparent leadership expectation
- openness enables problem solving
- openness enables work efficacy
- openness to innovation
- operational constraints
- organisational change
- organisational opportunity given change
- organisational uncertainty
- people-centred culture
- people-centred practices
- people-centred values
- personal alignment
- poorly applied values

- positive culture perception
- positive presence
- power hierarchy
- pride in excellence
- profit and purpose
- psychological
- psychological safety
- recognition through incentive
- regular check ins
- resource constraint stress
- resource provision by leadership
- respectful engagement
- respectful leader behaviour
- responsible leadership
- responsive problem solving from leadership
- rigid leadership
- rigid organisational culture
- role/influence of human resources
- sales focus
- self reflective leadership
- senior follower sales role
- senior manager product role
- senior manager sales role
- shared goals
- shared performance ownership
- short tenure in organisation
- silenced input
- silo work culture
- situational leadership & decision making
- slow implementation
- slow response
- small frontline force
- social cohesion

- solution driven
- stakeholder engagement
- stated vs exhibited values
- stewardship
- strategic inclusion
- structured decision making
- structured learning
- supportive culture (colleagues & leaders)
- supportive immediate leaders
- supportive leadership
- surface level communication
- system limitations
- team collaboration
- team oriented leadership
- team unity strengthened
- top-down decision making
- top-down values
- transparency and honesty
- transparent empowering leadership
- trust and openness
- trust-based leadership
- ubuntu philosophy
- unclear values
- unity building culture
- unrealistic planning
- values alignment
- values gap
- values reinforcement
- values shape team
- values-driven leadership
- verbal recognition value
- verification seeking
- vision and mission clarity

- ways of work (mis)alignment
- weak team collaboration
- well-being neglected
- well-being support
- women empowerment