

UNIVERSITY OF DERBY

AN EXPLORATION OF HUMAN DIGNITY AS A
FOUNDATION FOR SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP

John Wesley Kyle

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Key Terms

<i>Altruistic love</i>	A desire for another person to flourish, evidenced by genuine care, concern, and appreciation for that person.
<i>Autonomy</i>	Self-determination or self-governance, including the ability to make and pursue plans and to shape our own lives. Relational autonomy is distinguished from isolated or individualist autonomy in that it takes relationships into consideration as a grounding factor in the process of autonomous decision-making.
<i>Calling</i>	The inner sense that one is doing something of significance, that one is making a difference in the world around them, and that one's life has meaning.
<i>Hope/faith</i>	To desire something with expectation of its fulfilment. In the context of spiritual leadership theory, hope/faith is an element of intrinsic motivation involving the expectation that, in alignment with an established shared vision for the organisation, one's actions will positively impact the end state.
<i>Human dignity</i>	A metaphysical expression and lived experience of human value and worth.
<i>Human needs</i>	Something that is required by a human to live a healthy, complete life. Human needs are often distinguished between lower-order needs and higher-order needs. Lower-order needs include basic requirements such as nutrition, safety, and health. Higher-order needs include things such as social interaction, the sense of belonging, and meaning-making.
<i>Inclusive decision-making</i>	The act of intentionally including others in the process of making a decision, especially those most impacted by the decision.
<i>Inner life</i>	The set of inward values and attitudes, along with the set of related practices, that result in outward behaviours.
<i>Instrumental outcomes</i>	Instrumental outcomes are organisational outcomes most highly aligned with first bottom-line results, such as increasing productivity and developing new products and services. In this thesis, instrumental outcomes are primarily distinguished from second bottom-line outcomes which consider benefits for a

broader range of stakeholders, such as employees, customers, suppliers, and those impacted by the environmental footprint of the organisation.

<i>Intrinsic motivation</i>	A situation in which a person is driven by internal rewards, such as the enjoyment of the task. Intrinsic motivation is distinguished from <i>extrinsic motivation</i> , which is a situation in which a person is driven by external rewards, such as compensation or recognition.
<i>Mattering</i>	A person's sense of importance or significance. <i>General or societal mattering</i> refers to one's sense that they are valued and appreciated by the people around them, especially friends and family. <i>Workplace mattering</i> refers to one's sense that they are valued and appreciated by colleagues in their place of employment.
<i>Membership</i>	A higher-order human need defined by a sense of belonging, acceptance, and mattering in community.
<i>Organisational leadership</i>	An influence relationship between leaders and followers who intend real changes and outcomes that reflect their shared purposes (Daft, 2005).
<i>Self-actualisation</i>	A higher-order human need defined by a sense of self-understanding, meaning, and fulfilment.
<i>Self-transcendence</i>	A higher-order human need to be part of something bigger than oneself. For example, self-transcendence can sometimes be achieved through altruistic service to others or participation in activities whose outcomes are intended to benefit the common good.
<i>Shared vision</i>	A future state in which the members of an organisation have agreed to pursue. In the context of spiritual leadership theory, shared vision is an element of intrinsic motivation because leaders and followers are intrinsically compelled to collaboratively strive to create that future state.
<i>Stakeholder</i>	A person with an interest or stake in something. In an organisational sense, this may include investors, employees, customers, suppliers, and other business partners of the organisation. It may also include those that are directly or indirectly impacted by the environmental, economic, and societal impact of the organisation.

<i>Triple bottom-line</i>	A stakeholder-based approach to measuring organisational performance. Stakeholder performance is represented by three areas of measurement: 1) shareholder profit, 2) human benefits to all stakeholders, and 3) environmental benefits. The three bottom-lines are often referred to as “profit, people, and planet.”
<i>Well-being</i>	One’s sense of health, happiness, and prosperity; one’s sense of flourishing. <i>Workplace or employee well-being</i> is a desirable state of being that individuals and organisational leaders desire for both instrumental and altruistic reasons. In the context of spiritual leadership theory, spiritual well-being involves one’s sense of calling and membership in the workplace.
<i>Wholeness</i>	The sense that one’s life is integrated into a discernible, meaningful unit; that all of its elements fit together. Wholeness is distinguished from the sense that one’s life is not integrated or congruent. For example, a person may not experience a sense of wholeness when they are required to engage in workplace activities that are not aligned with their values.

Preface

Declarations

This research received ethics approval by the College Research Ethics Committee of the College of Business, Law and Social Sciences in 2018. The request for ethics approval and the corresponding approval are available in Appendix A and B. I conducted the research described herein, wrote the entirety of this thesis, and am responsible for its content.

Statement of Personal Motivation

During my 30-year career in the computing industry, I witnessed many examples of leadership success and failure. Regrettably, some of those failures were my own. In each situation, I learned important things about myself and the others involved. Each of these successes and failures challenged me to explore what I believe about humanity and what it means to live and work together. Through the course of my career, these experiences increased my interest in the theory and craft of leadership. Over time, my desire to develop software eventually gave way to a desire to develop leaders. My interest in this topic and pursuit of an original research programme is part of that journey.

As I reflect on this season of research at the University of Derby, I am reminded of a quote by Richard Levin. In his inaugural commencement address as president of Yale University, he remarked on the role of the academy. He said, “We must help our society become what we aspire to be inside our walls – a place where human potential can be fully realized.” (Levin, 2003). It is a lofty challenge, but not out of reach. Implied in Dr. Levin’s challenge is the notion that humans have value and worth; and that unrealized human potential is somehow a waste. Integrating my experience in the workplace with my research interests, I am inspired by Dr. Levin’s challenge. I am motivated by a desire to help leaders reach their human potential as leaders by knowing something of human dignity and its role in the leader-follower relationship.

Abstract

This research is situated at the nexus of human dignity and spiritual leadership theory. It critically explores human dignity, an expression of human value and worth, for its potential as the basis of an advancement to spiritual leadership, a contemporary organisational leadership theory. Following this critical exploration, the thesis proposes that human dignity is an implied element of spiritual leadership that, if made explicit, represents a valuable advancement to the theory. Based on the findings of the research, specific advancements to the theory are proposed that incorporate the acknowledgement of and respect for human dignity as spiritual leadership behaviours. In the research, these behaviours were seen to contribute positively to the desired outcome of spiritual leadership, namely an increase in the perception of well-being experienced by leaders and followers. The research offers a contribution to the field of organisational leadership by exploring the linkage between human dignity, the elements of spiritual leadership, and higher-order needs associated with well-being in the workplace, such as meaning-making, sense of purpose, and the sense of belonging.

The research involved a qualitative field study of individual contributors, mid-level managers, and executives in a variety of organisations. Through semi-structured interviews, participants were invited to share their ideas and lived experiences regarding human dignity and the elements of spiritual leadership. The primary findings fall into three thematic categories, each of which is explored in detail in the thesis. The first theme is that participants perceived their dignity to be acknowledged and respected when leaders include them in decision-making processes. Inclusive decision-making is a leadership behaviour consistent with the ideals of spiritual leadership practice. Second, participants also reported that leadership behaviours that make them feel seen, known, and trusted, contribute to their sense of dignity as well as their sense of “mattering” in the workplace. Matterings and dignity are two related concepts that are, in turn, closely linked with the sense of calling and sense of membership. Finally, participants expressed that thoughts about human dignity are elements of the “inner life”, consisting of the values and attitudes that inform and motivate outward behaviour. These thematic findings are consistent with the expected outcomes of spiritual leadership and its emphasis on the inner life of the leader. Together, they form the basis for the human dignity advancements proposed to the theory.

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significant time with me, sharing your insights and stories, and honouring me with your willingness to be part of this project. There were many others as well - site hosts and coordinators. This research simply would not exist without your support and participation.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Context, Terms, and Foundational Concepts

Organisations sometimes experience tension between the pursuit of instrumental outcomes and the pursuit of employee well-being. The instrumental objectives of an organisation, such as profitability, scalability, and productivity can seem to be at odds with the human objectives, such as employee well-being, meaning making, and the sense of belonging. In recent years, leadership theories have emerged that challenge the apparent dichotomy between instrumental and people-oriented outcomes in the organisational context (Greenleaf, 1977; Bass, 1998; Fry, 2003; Avolio et al, 2004; Brown et al, 2005; Fairholm, 2011; Blanchard, 2015). One such theory, spiritual leadership, is the focus of this research. Spiritual leadership theory proposes that by fostering a culture of intrinsic motivation, leaders can achieve good instrumental outcomes as well as an increased sense of well-being among employees (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). A foundation of spiritual leadership is “the primacy of people” (Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013, p. 223) from which stems the implication that all employees have value and worth, not only in their contributions to instrumental outcomes, but simply by being human. The idea that humans have transcendent value and worth, is also the foundation of most contemporary thoughts on human dignity (Schachter, 1983; Meyer, 1992; Waldron, 2009; Riley, 2010; Mattson and Clark, 2011; Mea and Sims, 2019). This intersection of human dignity and spiritual leadership is the context for this research.

Situated at the nexus of human dignity, employee well-being, and spiritual leadership theory, this research explores the role of human dignity as an element of one’s sense of well-being in the workplace, and specifically in the leader-follower relationship. *Human dignity* is a metaphysical expression and lived experience of human value and worth. *Workplace well-being* is a state of being that individuals and organisational leaders desire for both instrumental and altruistic reasons. Well-being is a complex concept that involves health, happiness, prosperity, and sense of purpose. In the context of spiritual leadership theory, *spiritual well-being* involves one’s sense of calling and membership in the workplace. *Spiritual leadership theory* is an approach to leadership that is focused on intrinsic

motivation and the sense of spiritual well-being. Spiritual leadership proposes that certain leadership behaviours contribute to spiritual well-being and desirable outcomes for the organisation (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). Each of these foundational ideas is briefly introduced in the following sub-sections and explained in detail in Chapter 2.

1.1.1 Human Dignity

Human dignity is a metaphysical expression of human value and an aspect of lived experience that has normative implications for the manner in which one person treats another (Riley, 2010). While there is debate about the meaning and significance of human dignity, it is a widely accepted social construct and basis for behavioural norms (Schachter, 1983; Riley, 2010). The leading concepts of human dignity that have been explored over the centuries will be outlined in Chapter 2. While there is widespread agreement that humans have dignity, there is debate about why they have it (Meyer, 1992; Waldron, 2009; Mattson and Clark, 2011). Human dignity is not generally a front-of-mind idea for most people. Instead, as will be explored in this research, it tends to be a deeply personal idea that is not often discussed in the workplace. As a result, an important aspect of this research is to understand each participant's experience with the concept of human dignity, specifically in the leader-follower relationship.

1.1.2 Spiritual Leadership

Spiritual leadership is an emerging organisational leadership theory developed by Louis (Jody) Fry of the Texas A&M University System (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). The theory proposes that leaders can establish workplace cultures and communities in which leaders and followers are intrinsically motivated by shared objectives, hope/faith in the effort and work itself, and the opportunity to serve others. After its initial publication in 2003, the theory has undergone two major revisions, first in 2008, and again in 2017 (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). Although the name may suggest otherwise, spiritual leadership theory is not about religious leadership. It is not tied to any specific religious traditions, nor is it limited to leadership in the context of a religious organisation. It is a general theory of organisational leadership that incorporates the closely held beliefs of

leaders and followers in its model of intrinsic motivation and well-being. Rather than seeing spiritual leadership theory as an element or outgrowth of religious thought, it is more accurate to see it as part of the “spirituality at work” movement, which seeks to foster personal fulfilment, wholeness of the individual, and healthy interpersonal relationships in the workplace (Mitroff and Denton, 1999; Quatro et al, 2007; Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, 2010; Sweeney and Fry, 2012; Benefiel et al, 2014; Neal, 2014; Fairholm and Gronau, 2015).

1.1.3 Workplace Well-Being

Workplace well-being is a desirable state of being that involves one’s sense of purpose, health, happiness, and prosperity in the workplace (Paloutzian et al, 2010; Seligman 2011; Kelloway et al, 2012; Pirson, 2017; Matera et al, 2019). The perception of dignity in the workplace, that is one’s sense of worth and value, is an element of workplace well-being. While human dignity as an element of the leader-follower relationship is a growing area of interest for the leadership research community, most of the established research on workplace dignity has focused on lower-order needs, such as safety, compensation, clean work, and fair treatment (Hodson, 2001; Bolton, 2007; Gomberg, 2007; Hamel, 2007; Sayer, 2007; Barrett and Thomson, 2012; Vettori, 2012). There is not a large body of published research focusing on higher-order needs, such as the sense of calling and membership, in the intersection of human dignity and workplace well-being. This research explores this intersection with a focus on the higher-order needs aspect of spiritual well-being in spiritual leadership theory.

1.2 Research Justification

1.2.1 Extant Research on the State of Workplace Dignity

Acknowledgement or denial of human dignity is a factor in every human relationship, including those found in the workplace (Moxnes, 1993; Anderson, 2009; Den Hartogh, 2014; Mitchell, 2017; Mea and Sims, 2019). As an aspect of lived experience, human dignity involves inward thoughts, values, and attitudes as well as outward actions that reflect those inner ideas. Accordingly, dignity can be affirmed or denied in the leader-follower relationship. Affirmation or denial of dignity can have significant and lasting impacts for the individuals involved as well as the organisation. In spite of its importance, quantitative and qualitative studies indicate a need to improve the dignity situation in the workplace (Hodson,

2001; Crowley, 2012; Porath, 2014; Swartz and Porath, 2014; Thomas and Lucas, 2019; 2014; Willis Towers Watson, 2020). For example, consider the following recent studies of dignity in the workplace:

The workplace dignity survey. A 2019 survey of 129 large and mid-sized companies in the United States indicates that respect for dignity is lacking in the workplace and that employers and employees do not share perceptions of the situation (Willis Towers Watson, 2019). The survey indicates that only 50% of employees surveyed believe employers have a sincere interest in their well-being (as opposed to 86% of employers). Further, the survey indicates that only 51% of employees surveyed felt encouraged to speak up at work. More than one quarter of survey respondents felt that their organisations lack accountability and that senior leaders abuse their power. And, nearly one fifth of respondents felt that some leaders intentionally isolate or marginalise employees.

Study of civility in the workplace. A 2014 survey involving 19,000 participants revealed that honouring the dignity of employees has a significant effect on individuals and organisations (Schwartz and Porath, 2014). Of all of the leader behaviours covered in the survey, treating employees with respect was shown to have the most significant effect. The study also revealed that more than half of participants (54%) do not regularly receive respect from their leaders. The same researchers conducted a separate survey of 125 individuals that admitted to disrespecting the dignity of others by acting uncivilly in the workplace (Porath, 2014). The researchers found that 60% of the respondents justified their incivility on the grounds that they are overworked and do not have time to be nice.

Workplace dignity scale. A study conducted in 2019 involved an initial field test of the Workplace Dignity Scale (Thomas and Lucas, 2019). This study revealed that dignity is both a cause and a consequence of organisational phenomena. Thomas and Lucas found that positive dignity experiences predict higher levels of employee engagement and, conversely, negative dignity experiences predict higher levels of burnout and turnover.

Together, the qualitative and quantitative evidence suggests that human dignity is relevant to the study of leadership. Further, there is a need to improve the dignity situation in many workplaces since organisations and individuals stand to benefit when dignity-affirming leadership practices are employed in the workplace. As we consider human dignity in the leader-follower relationship, it is necessary to look at both its inner life aspects as well as its

outward behavioural aspects. As explained in later chapters, the participants of this research project believe organisational leaders, by acknowledging and respecting the dignity of others, can positively impact well-being in the workplace. By promoting practices such as inclusive decision-making, leaders can create environments in which followers experience an increased sense of mattering in the workplace and a heightened sense of dignity. Inclusion and mattering are central concepts in spiritual leadership theory, but the corresponding connections to human dignity have not been made explicit in any of the published versions of the theory (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017).

1.2.2 Spiritual Leadership as a Theoretical Platform for This Research

Spiritual leadership is the subject of current research with an active global research community. Field research has shown that spiritual leadership practice can result in positive outcomes for individuals and organisations across industries and geographies (Ayranci and Semercioz, 2011; Bodia and Ali, 2012; Chen and Yang, 2012; Fairholm and Gronau, 2015; Fry, 2016; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Jeon et al, 2013; Lean and Ganster, 2017; Malik et al, 2017; Saripudin and Rosari, 2019; Wang et al, 2019). These same studies have shown positive results of spiritual leadership practice on organisational outcomes across geographies and cultures. Human dignity is not explicitly named in the theory, but the “primacy of people and human well-being” are core assumptions (Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013, p. 223). With the primacy of people as a foundational concept of the theory, spiritual leadership suggests that people should not be commodified in the pursuit of instrumental outcomes (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008, Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). These aspects of the theory reflect a close parallel to the language of human dignity and, as such, make spiritual leadership a suitable platform for this research. According to the theory, a leader can create a culture and environment in which leaders and followers are intrinsically motivated and, as a result, experience a sense of spiritual well-being. This research explores the role of human dignity in that causal linkage on both a theoretical level and as a matter of lived experience.

1.2.3 Human Dignity as a Growing Area for Leadership Research

In recent years, there has been increasing interest in the topic of human dignity in the workplace (Lucas, 2015; 2017; Pirson, 2017; Hicks, 2018; Thomas and Lucas, 2019). To a large extent, this research has focused on managerial topics of safety, compensation, termination policies, etc. (Ackroyd, 2007; Barber, 2007; Coats, 2007; Philpott, 2007; Bolton, 2010; Gilabert, 2016). There has been limited, but growing, interest in human dignity as an aspect of the leader-follower relationship as well (Lucas, 2015, 2017; Pirson, 2017; Hicks, 2018; Thomas and Lucas, 2019). Human dignity is a valuable addition to the larger discussion of organisational leadership for several reasons. Without invoking the phrase *human dignity*, well-known management consultant, Ken Blanchard, gets close to the concept in a recent paper on people-centred leadership. Referring to people in the workplace, he writes, “You could downsize them, rank order them, get rid of the bottom 10 percent, and take other liberties because they were perceived as commodities” (Blanchard, 2015, p. 2). In making this statement, Blanchard’s comment raises important questions: *Is a human a commodity in the workplace? Are they simply means to instrumental ends in the workplace? Do they have value beyond their ability to contribute to the financial bottom-line?* Like all other human relationships, the perception of human dignity is an aspect of the leader-follower relationship in the workplace. For example, and as noted above, without directly referencing the concept of human dignity, spiritual leadership proposes an answer to these questions and, in so doing, introduces the possibility of exploring human dignity through the lens and in the context of this theory. For example, spiritual leadership theory states

“[...] the organization exists to serve people and not to make people serve it. Therefore, human beings are more than human capital or human resources [...] The primacy of people is essential to implementing [spiritual leadership]” (Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013, p. 223).

1.2.4 The Importance of Workplace Well-being

Broad-based well-being in the workplace is an area of growing research interest. Employees in good physical, emotional, and mental health perform better in their roles and also experience higher quality of life in and beyond the workplace (Adams, 2019). The leader-follower relationship is important in this regard and can have a substantial impact on employee well-being (Ray et al, 2017; Williams et al, 2017). Spiritual leadership addresses two aspects of spiritual well-being, the sense of calling and the sense of membership in the

workplace (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). *Calling* is the transcendent sense that one can make a difference in the world by applying one's unique abilities and talents through service to others (Fry, 2003). Calling is linked to one's sense of purpose and meaning making. *Membership* is the transcendent sense that one belongs to something greater than oneself, and that one is appreciated and valued in the community (Pfeffer, 2010). Calling and membership contribute to one's sense of *wholeness* and *mattering* in the workplace, both of which will be discussed in the context of perceived dignity in future chapters.

1.3 Research Aim and Research Questions

Having established that human dignity is an area worthy of organisational research and that spiritual leadership is an approach to organisational leadership with implicit connections to human dignity and employee well-being, the aim of this research is:

To critically examine human dignity as an element of the leader-follower relationship, as a factor of employee well-being, and as a basis for potential enhancements to spiritual leadership theory and practice.

The research questions outlined below provide a foundation for the research (Blaikie, 2010). They are structured as *what* questions (i.e. descriptive), *why* questions (i.e. causal and teleological), and *how* questions (i.e. interventional). The questions stand alone in one sense but are linked to one another in that they are designed to address the research aim.

1. What literature is available to address the intersection of spiritual leadership, human dignity, and workplace well-being? What does the literature reveal about the ways and to what extent the ethos and structure of spiritual leadership connects with ideas of human dignity and well-being?
2. What are some of the perceptions of human dignity and well-being in the leader-follower relationship? Specifically, what perceptions, if any, do leaders and followers have of the relationship between spiritual leadership behaviours and the sense of dignity and well-being? Why do individuals hold these views and perceptions?

3. In what ways do leaders and followers express their ideas about and experiences with human dignity in the workplace? Why do leaders choose to employ dignity-affirming and dignity-denying behaviours as an expression of those ideas?
4. How might the leader-follower relationship be improved through dignity-affirming leadership behaviours? Specifically, how might spiritual leadership theory and practice be applied and improved, if at all, toward dignity-affirming practices in the workplace and away from dignity-denying practices in the workplace?

1.4 Research Methodology

To explore the aim and research questions listed in Section 1.3 above, this research consists of an inductive, qualitative study involving in-depth, semi-structured, in-person interviews in the critical realist paradigm. Participants consist of executives, mid-level managers, and individual contributors in non-profit and for-profit organisations. A thematic approach was taken to the interviews. In total, nineteen interviews were conducted.

Given the deeply personal nature and the subtlety of language of the topics at hand, in-depth, semi-structured, in-person interviews are well-suited to this project. In-depth, live interviews provide the opportunity to ask additional questions and seek clarification (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009; Maxwell, 2012; Seidman, 2013). This interpersonal approach allows the human story to be uncovered (Seidman, 2013). The interviews for this research project were based on a set of thematic, base questions upon which the researcher could develop additional questions depending on the situation and direction of each interview.

By design, this research is multidisciplinary. Mitroff encouraged management and leadership researchers to pursue multidisciplinary research on the grounds that humans are complex creatures that cannot be understood in narrow dimensions. He argued,

“[...] we cannot achieve a real theoretical understanding of human behaviour at any level of society unless we achieve a theory that is informed by what occurs simultaneously at all levels of human behavior”
(Mitroff, 1983, p. xix).

More recently, Hicks suggested a similar idea: that navigating the intersection of human dignity and leadership requires a broad knowledge that goes beyond superficial information or disciplinary definitions (Hicks, 2018). Aligned with these ideals, this research brings

together two areas of social science research, human dignity and leadership theory, in a single, integrated, multidisciplinary effort.

1.5 Thesis Outline

The thesis consists of seven chapters, the reference section, and the appendix. This first chapter is intended to provide an introduction to the research, including its purpose and design. In addition to providing a general background and context for the research, namely human dignity and spiritual leadership, it introduces and explains the aims and research questions. It provides a high-level introduction to the research design and underlying philosophy.

Chapter 2 – Literature Review. This chapter provides a systematic review of the relevant research and supporting material for this research. The chapter is divided into four sections, 1) a review of literature on spiritual leadership theory, 2) a review of literature on human dignity, 3) integrative and synthetic analysis of human dignity connections in spiritual leadership, and 4) an analysis of literature gaps and research opportunities. Building upon the literature review and in support of the research aim and questions, the chapter concludes with a description of the theoretical framework of the research.

Chapter 3 – Research Methodology. This chapter provides a detailed presentation of the research approach used in this project. This chapter is divided into four sections, 1) research philosophy, which covers such topics as the research paradigm and stance of the researcher, 2) research design, which explains the research strategy, theory of analysis, ethics, and other conceptual considerations, 3) data collection, which describes the process and elements of the in-depth interviewing approach used in this research project, and 4) data reduction and analysis, which describes the approach used to code and interpret the interview data.

Chapter 4 – Research Findings. This chapter presents an extensive set of interview responses from the research participants. These findings are organised into three prominent themes that emerged in the coding of the results: 1) the inner life of values and attitudes, 2) inclusive decision-making, and 3) mattering. Well over 20 hours of in-person interviews were transcribed and coded. For readability, this chapter represents a condensed, but still extensive, set of responses.

Chapter 5 – Analysis and Discussion. This chapter provides the detailed analysis and discussion of the research findings. Guided by the research aim, research questions, and theoretical framework, this chapter explores the three prominent themes listed above. The chapter considers the themes in light of the overall aim of the research and explores the implications of the findings for spiritual leadership.

Chapter 6 – Conclusion. This chapter provides an overall summary of the thesis, its findings, and analysis. This chapter provides an analysis of the implications of this research for spiritual leadership theory as well as other areas of workplace life such as employee well-being, self-actualisation, membership, meaning making, and motivation. Among the implications, the chapter offers two proposed advancements to spiritual leadership theory based on human dignity. The chapter also suggests a number of areas for future research and practice that builds upon this research.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Spiritual Leadership

2.1.1 Overview

The term *spiritual leadership* was coined by Gilbert W. Fairholm (1997) of the University of Richmond. Building on Greenleaf's (1977) concept of servant leadership and Maslow's (1971) work on self-transcendence through service to others, Fairholm developed a model of leadership that incorporates and attempts to balance the needs and interests of leaders, followers, and organisations (Fairholm, 1997; 1998; 2011). He argued that leaders and followers are whole beings that desire to bring themselves fully to the workplace, engaging and applying their ideas, beliefs, skills, hopes, and dreams. He contrasted modern work environments with the past by suggesting that modern workers want to grow and be fulfilled in their work as whole beings. In this approach, the challenge for leaders is to provide a venue in which the interests and needs of the organisation are highly aligned with the interests and needs of the individuals within the organisation. He notes,

“This leadership pattern [...] accepts the fact that people come to work owning all of their human qualities, not just the few skills, knowledge, and abilities needed at a given time by the employing corporation. Workers today – and perhaps always – come to work armed with and ready to use their total life experience. They have and want to use all of their skills. They want to apply all of their capacities to think, act, be creative, and take responsibility. Spiritual leadership is a holistic approach that considers the full capacities, needs, and interests of both leader and led, and the goals of the organisation. Spiritual leaders see leadership as a contextual relationship in which all participants want to grow and help others in their self-development activities” (Fairholm, 1997, p.111).

Fairholm established the foundation for spiritual leadership but did not develop a comprehensive theory based on these principles (Fry, 2003). Building on the work of Fairholm (1997; 1998; 2011), House (1971; 1996), House and Mitchell, (1974), and Deci and

Ryan (1985; 2000), Louis Fry (2003) proposed a theory of spiritual leadership that incorporates intrinsic motivation. Fry defines spiritual leadership as follows:

“[...] the values, attitudes, and behaviors that are necessary to intrinsically motivate one’s self and others so that they have a sense of spiritual survival through calling and membership. This entails 1) creating a vision wherein the organization members experience a sense of calling in that their life has meaning and makes a difference; 2) establishing a social/organizational culture based on altruistic love whereby leaders and followers have genuine care, concern, and appreciation for both self and others, thereby producing a sense of membership and feel understood and appreciated” (Fry, 2003, p. 694)

In essence, the theory of spiritual leadership proposes that leaders that establish environments and communities in which leaders and followers are intrinsically motivated by shared objectives, hope/faith in the effort and work itself, and the opportunity to serve others, have spiritually healthy employees (intermediate outcomes) and strong organisational results (ultimate outcomes). In its initial form, spiritual leadership included an intrinsic motivation model, “spiritual well-being” of followers and leaders as intermediate outcomes and material, but somewhat vague, benefits for the organisation as the ultimate outcomes as depicted in Figure 2-1. After the initial publication of the theory, Fry and colleagues introduced and proposed several additions to the theory, including a more complete idea of the intrinsic motivation model as well as a more comprehensive concept of ultimate outcomes that, in turn, clarify the spiritual well-being benefits for employees (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008, Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). See Figure 2-2. As seen in Figure 2-3, the most recent version of the theory emphasises the role of the inner life of the leader, which is a significant factor in this research.

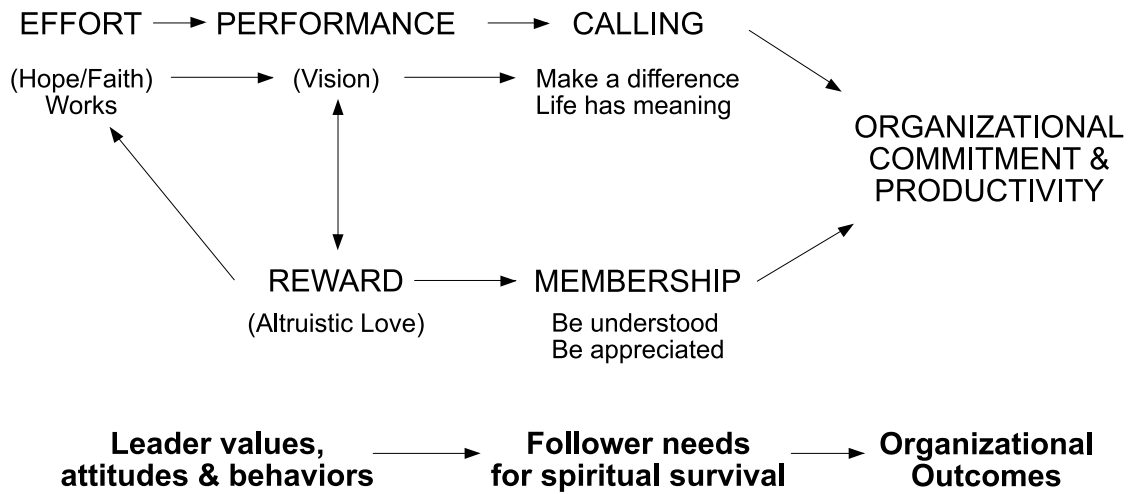


Figure 2-1: Spiritual Leadership, Version 1 (Fry, 2003)

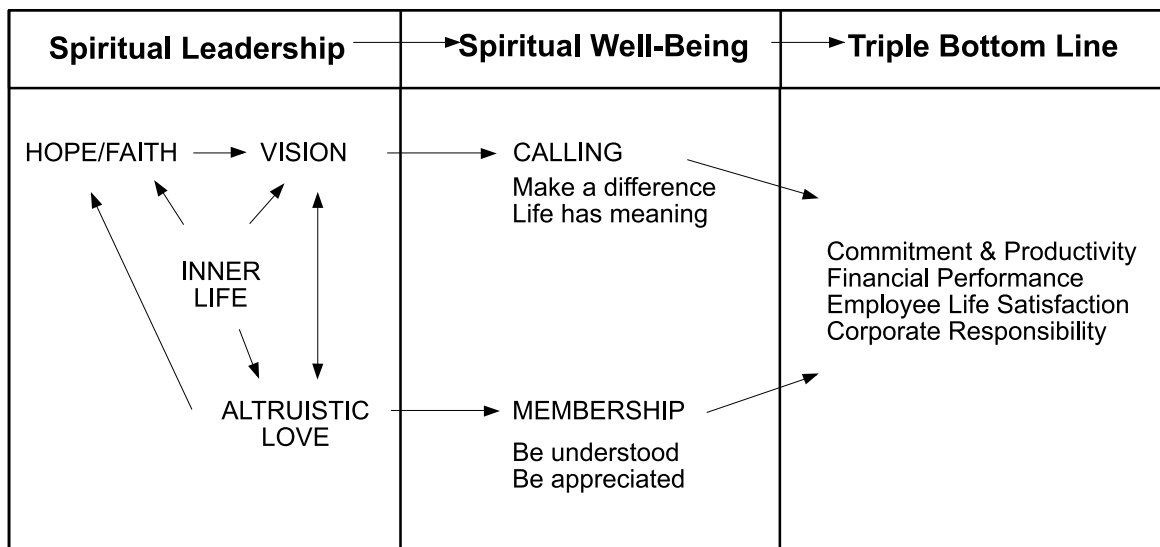


Figure 2-2: Spiritual Leadership, Version 2 (Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013)

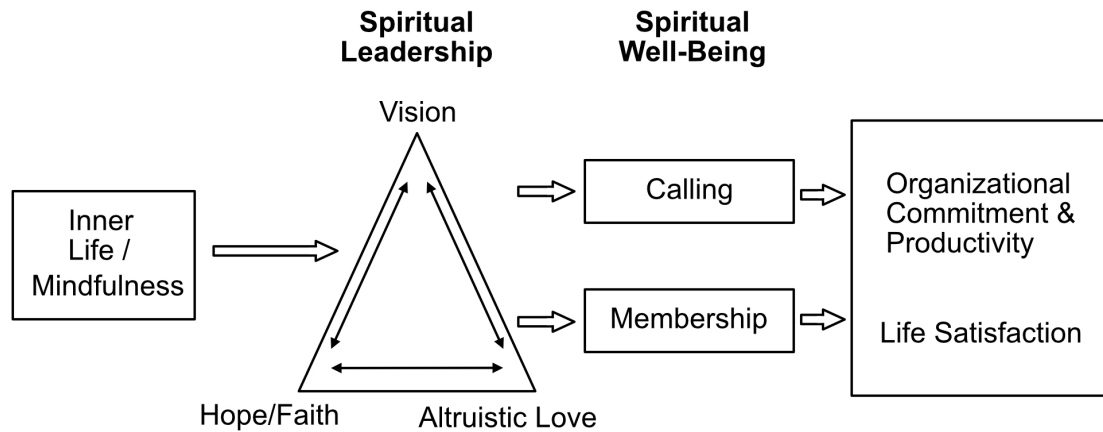


Figure 2-3: Spiritual Leadership, Version 3
(Fry, Latham, et al, 2017)

Since its introduction in 2003, Fry and other researchers proposed additions and enhancements to the theory, gained practical experience with the theory in various industries and geographies, and have tested its validity and efficacy. Several spiritual values and practices have been proposed as specific additions to the theory, including 1) showing respect for others, 2) demonstrating fair treatment, 3) expressing caring and concern, 4) listening responsively, 5) recognizing the contributions of others, and 6) engaging in reflective practice (Reave, 2005). Fry indicates that spiritual leadership results in several individual and organisational outcomes. These outcomes include increased organisational commitment, job-satisfaction, altruism, conscientiousness, self-career management, identification, retention, organisational citizenship behaviour, attachment, loyalty, and work unit productivity and negativity (Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). In addition to impacts in these areas, empirical studies have shown positive impacts of spiritual leadership behaviours on organisational outcomes in multiple geographies and cultures, including Canada (Fry, Matherly, Ouiment, 2010), China (Wang et al, 2019), India (Malik et al, 2017), Indonesia (Saripudin and Rosari, 2019), Korea (Jeon et al, 2013), Pakistan (Bodia and Ali, 2012), Taiwan (Chen and Yang, 2012), Turkey (Ayranci and Semercioz, 2011), and the United States (Fry, Vitucci and Cedillo, 2005). Mathew Fairholm (the son of Gilbert Fairholm) and Taylor Gronau (2015) identified eight major themes associated with spiritual leadership behaviours in the public administration context. Hunsaker (2016) found that spiritual leadership has a positive impact on organisational citizenship behaviours such as helping behaviours, sportsmanship, loyalty, and

individual initiative. Lean and Ganster (2017) identified 39 behaviours associated with spiritual leadership, of which the most commonly cited are 1) being authentic, 2) maintaining and being guided by personal spiritual values, 3) being kind, compassionate, or caring, and 4) being honest and of high integrity. Saripudin and Rosari (2019) found that spiritual leadership enhanced the level of work engagement for hospital employees. Fry has continued to develop the spiritual leadership model as well. For example, a balanced scorecard was developed for practitioners seeking to apply spiritual leadership in specific organisations (Fry Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010). A modification to the theory has been proposed called “being-centred leadership” in which the human is seen to have a complex, multi-level existence rather than a single, monolithic state of being (Fry and Kriger, 2009). Several links have been identified between spiritual leadership behaviours and performance excellence among Baldrige award recipients in manufacturing, service industries, small business, education, healthcare, and non-profits (Fry, Latham, et al, 2017).

Although the name may suggest otherwise, spiritual leadership as envisioned by Fairholm (1997) and later developed by Fry (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008, Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017) is not an overtly religious theory. It does involve inner beliefs and motivations of leaders and followers which may be rooted in religious views and practices. Other than this indirect link to religious faith and practice, though, the term spiritual leadership is not meant to imply leadership in the church, synagogue, mosque, or other religious setting. Even so, spiritual leadership as defined by Fry (2003) can be easily confused with religious leadership since many religious books and articles have been written using the same term. In 2017, an internet search of 100 books with the phrase *spiritual leadership* in the title revealed that 11 touched on one or more of the areligious themes developed by Fairholm and Fry. Of the 89 other books, 71 involved evangelical protestant or broadly Christian themes and largely involved church and pastoral leadership. Thirteen involved pluralistic or broadly spiritual themes, four involved Roman Catholic themes. One involved Buddhist themes. Four notable examples among these are *Spiritual Leadership* by Sanders (1967) and *Spiritual Leadership* by Blackaby and Blackaby (2006) both of which address leadership in the evangelical church context, *Spiritual Leadership: The Quest for Integrity* by Doohan (2007) which addresses leadership in the Roman Catholic church and school context, and *Women’s Spiritual Leadership in Africa: Tempered by Radicals and Critical Servant Leaders* by Ngunjiri (2010) which explores community leadership from a broad and pluralistic approach to spirituality.

Fry (2003) distinguishes the theory of spiritual leadership from religious works by emphasising self-transcendence as a higher-order human need (Maslow, 1971) as well as a secular definition of workplace spirituality proposed by Giacalone and Jurkiewicz (2010).

The following Section, 2.1.2, will consider spiritual leadership theory in the larger milieu of organisational leadership theories. Then, the following sections will review and analyse the main elements of the theory. The inner life of the leader is discussed in Section 2.1.3. The intrinsic motivation model is discussed in Section 2.1.4. Spiritual well-being, encompassing calling and membership, will be considered in Section 2.1.5. The ultimate outcomes of the theory in the triple bottom-line framework will be discussed in Section 2.1.6.

2.1.2 Spiritual Leadership among other Leadership Theories

Spiritual leadership is a relatively new theory that is still being developed (Lean and Ganster, 2017), but as evidenced by the depth and breadth of publications, it has established itself among other leadership theories. Fairholm (2011) refers to spiritual leadership as a 5th generation leadership model as shown in Table 2-1. Addressing Fairholm's generational approach, Crumpton notes,

“Each generation is active and fairly independent from one another with each still gaining scholarly attention and focus. Leadership theories do not seem to go away but continue to evolve” (Crumpton, 2013, p. 2)

The lines separating the various theories and models of leadership are not as well-defined as Table 2-1 might suggest. Bass (1985; 1998; 1999), for example, explains that transformational leadership is composed of elements of charismatic leadership. He also suggests that transactional leadership is built upon a contingency model of reward and discipline. Transformational theories vary in their use of definitions for charismatic leadership and generally do not include elements of ethical leadership (Reave, 2005).

Theory Generation	Area of Focus	Examples
1 st	Character traits of leaders	Great Man/Trait Theory (Bird, 1940; House and Aditya, 1997) Charismatic leadership (Shamir et al, 1993; Conger and Kanungo, 1998)
2 nd	Activities of leaders	Behavioural Theories (Conger and Kanungo, 1987)
3 rd	Circumstances of leadership (e.g. where, when, etc.)	Contingency Theory (Feidler, 1964) Path-Goal Theory (Evans, 1970; House, 1971; 1996; House and Mitchell, 1974)
4 th	Values of leaders (e.g. what they think about, what they value, etc.) and the concept of leaders as influencers	Authentic Leadership (Avolio et al, 2004; Avolio and Gardner, 2005) Ethical Leadership (Brown et al, 2005; Brown and Treviño, 2006), Principle-centred Leadership (Covey, 1991) Servant Leadership (Greenleaf, 1977; Parris and Peachey, 2013) Transactional leadership (Burns, 1978; Bass, 1998) Transformational leadership (Bass, 1998)
5 th	Holistic well-being of the organisation, follower, and leader	Spiritual Leadership (Fairholm, 1997, 1998, 2011; Fry, 2003; 2005; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017)

**Table 2-1: Generations of Leadership Theories
(Fairholm, 2011)**

Although Fairholm (2011) suggests that spiritual leadership represents a new generation of leadership theory, like all contemporary leadership theories, it has roots in the theories that precede it on the generational chart. In the initial publication of spiritual leadership theory, Fry (2003) compared and contrasted it with path-goal theory (Evans, 1970; House, 1971; 1996; House and Mitchell, 1974) and contingency theory (Fiedler, 1964). In many ways, Fiedler's work on a contingency theory of leadership was limited by its focus on short-term team organisational structures (Fry, 2003). In spite of this limitation, it opened the door to further research in contingency theory by observing that the impact of leader behaviour varies based on the circumstances of the organisation. Evans (1970) explored the impact of

leader behaviour on follower path-goal instrumentalities (i.e. the extent to which individuals sense that their actions and behaviours will positively or negatively impact desired outcomes). His study revealed that the same leader behaviours applied in different situations produced different results (Evans, 1970). Inspired by these divergent outcomes, House (1971) proposed a more complete path-goal theory of leadership which outlined four categories of leader behaviours that could be contingently applied depending on the organisational situation: 1) achievement-orientated behaviours, 2) directive behaviours, 3) participative behaviours, and 4) supportive behaviours. The initial path-goal theory focused on extrinsic motivation. House and Mitchell (1974) expanded the theory to include elements of intrinsic motivation. After several years of field research with the path-goal model, House (1996) reformulated the theory to include ten categories of leader behaviours that contingently impact follower motivation. With such a large range of leader behaviour categories, path-goal theory is one of the more comprehensive leadership theories and reflects the breadth and complexity of the leadership role. Although path-goal theory remains one of the more complex leadership theories, it is focused on the limited scope of leader-follower and leader-work group dynamics (Fry, 2003). Spiritual leadership builds on the legacy of contingency and path-goal theories and incorporates the ideas of strategic, values-orientated, and the organisational culture-focus of leadership research that were popular in the 1980s (Fry, 2003). Spiritual leadership is somewhat unique among leadership theories in that it considers motivation and well-being of both the leader and follower (Fry, 2003). In this regard, Kyle et al (2017a) proposed leader meaning-making as an element of leader well-being in the spiritual leadership framework. By incorporating higher-order needs, intrinsic motivation, and leader well-being, spiritual leadership offers a unique and interesting advancement to the generational lineage of leadership theory. On the other hand, by incorporating several subjective elements, spiritual leadership has moved, at least to some degree, away from the empirical base of these theories.

While not presented as a leadership theory, participative management shares many concepts with spiritual leadership and is, arguably, itself a contingency leadership model based on a theory of needs and intrinsic motivation (Sashkin, 1982; 1984; 1986). Summarizing the work of Hackman and Lawler (1971) and Katz and Kahn (1978), Sashkin (1984) suggests that all employees have basic work needs of autonomy, achievement, and interpersonal contact. These needs are collectively satisfied, at least in part, when employees participate in 1) setting goals, 2) making decisions, 3) solving problems, and 4) making organisational

changes. A substantial stream of research has demonstrated not only positive outcomes for organisations and individuals that employ participative management, but also damaging outcomes for individuals that are not invited to participate (Likert, 1967; Lowin, 1968; Hackman and Lawler, 1971; Katz and Kahn, 1978; French et al, 1982; Sashkin, 1982; Kanter, 1982; Jackson, 1983; Kim, 2002; Angermeier et al, 2009; Beniol and Somech, 2010; Ogbeide and Harrington, 2011; Pardo-del-Val et al, 2012). Based on the findings that workers can be psychologically harmed by not participating in the four areas, and assuming an organisational ethical position of “do not actively harm other people,” Sashkin (1982; 1984; 1986) argues that participative management is an ethical imperative. Ouchi (1979) extends the participative leadership behaviour concept by suggesting that “clan control” include elements of leader-follower agreement, consideration, cooperation, fairness, and social equity (Fry, 2003). Fry suggests that this sequence of leadership theory development, namely contingency -> path goal -> clan, has introduced the distinction between “management as control” and “leadership as motivation” (Fry, 2003). He argues that charismatic leadership (House and Howell, 1992) and transformational leadership (Bass, 1999) also exist in this sequence of development because of their focus upon leader behaviours that contribute to follower motivation (Fry, 2003). That psychological harm can result from the inconsistent application of participative leadership behaviours serves as a notable caution for leaders seeking to apply spiritual leadership and a potential dark side of the theory.

Ethical leadership, identified as a 4th generation leadership theory by Fairholm (2011), has noteworthy connections to spiritual leadership, but was not chosen as the subject and theoretical basis of this research. Ethical leadership is defined as

“[...] the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, and the promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement, and decision-making” (Brown et al, 2005, p. 120).

Like spiritual leadership, ethical leadership is related to inner life values (Burns, 1978; Bass and Avolio, 1993; Ciulla, 2004a; 2004b; Brown et al, 2005). These values can drive exemplary behaviour and establish the leader as a moral role model for others (Avolio, 1999). Ethical leadership emphasises leader altruism rather than selfishness (Bass, 1998; Howell and Avolio, 1992) that, when implemented in practice promotes the dignity of followers (Kanungo and Mendonca, 1996). In these and other ways, there are conceptual connections

and similarities between ethical leadership and spiritual leadership. In spite of these commonalities, spiritual leadership was chosen instead of ethical leadership as the object and theoretical lens of this research for two reasons. First, spiritual leadership is a more comprehensive theory. Ethical leadership is seen by many researchers as an aspect or dimension of leadership rather than an entire theory that stands on its own. In the literature, it is generally situated in the context of other leadership theories such as transactional leadership, transformational leadership, and charismatic leadership (Conger, 1999; Shamir, 1999; Ciulla, 2004b; Brown et al., 2005). Second, spiritual leadership is a causal theory that proposes an explanation of specific intermediate and ultimate outcomes stemming from the inner life values and attitudes of the leader and the leadership behaviours motivated by them (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al., 2017). The causal structure of spiritual leadership theory provides a theoretical framework with which this research can be developed.

The next four sections will critically explore the main elements of spiritual leadership theory. These sections also serve to establish the key themes that will be used to navigate the findings and analysis of this research, as described in Chapters 4, 5, and 6. Section 2.1.3 will explore the starting point of spiritual leadership theory, the inner life of the leader. Section 2.1.4 will explore the central component of spiritual leadership theory, the intrinsic motivation model. Section 2.1.5 will explore spiritual well-being, which is the intermediate outcome of spiritual leadership. Section 2.1.6 will explore the ultimate outcomes of spiritual leadership for stakeholders. Finally, once the main elements of the theory have been examined, Section 2.1.7 provides a summary analysis and criticism of the theory and its component elements.

2.1.3 Spiritual Leadership and the Inner Life of the Leader

Many leadership researchers have emphasised the importance of the inner life of the leader as the source of leadership practice (Palmer, 1998; Moxley, 2000; Bolman and Deal, 2001; Ciulla, 2004a; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Cameron, Mora, et al., 2011; Holden, 2012; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al., 2017; Hicks, 2018). Similarly, spiritual leadership theory envisions that the spiritual leader's inner life includes a level of concern, love, and respect for their followers that guides the leader to create a culture and environment in which leaders and

followers are intrinsically motivated and experience a sense of calling and membership as two elements of well-being (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). The inner life of the spiritual leader is the ultimate motivation for practicing spiritual leadership. That is, the values and attitudes of the inner life result in outward behaviours.

Since its initial publication in 2003, the theory of spiritual leadership has undergone two major revisions, both of which involved the inner life of the leader. The initial theory is depicted in Figure 2-1. In 2008, the leader's inner life was introduced as a core part of the intrinsic motivation model, as shown in Figure 2-2 (Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013). This addition reflects the idea that a leader's motivation to create a spiritual leadership environment is driven by his/her inner values and attitudes. In the 2017 revision of the theory, the inner life of the leader was emphasised even more (Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). As shown in Figure 2-3, inner values and attitudes of the leader was emphasised as the source or root of spiritual leadership behaviours and the motivation for his/her actions. These changes reflect the foundational role of the inner life to the theory of spiritual leadership.

The theory of spiritual leadership suggests that it is the values and attitudes of the inner life that lead to outward, spiritual leadership behaviours that contribute to intrinsic motivation, employee well-being, and triple bottom-line outcomes (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). In proposing the theory, Fry suggests that "leaders must get in touch with their core values and communicate them to followers through vision and personal actions" (Fry, 2003, p. 710). Fry proposes that those values include, among other things, "the universal spiritual values of humility, charity, and veracity" (p. 710). According to the theory, spiritual leaders create a shared vision and set of expectations for outcomes that leaders and followers believe will make a difference in the world. The theory also envisions a cultural environment in which leaders and followers share a genuine care, concern, and respect for one another that transcends the instrumental expectations of the organisation. Implied in these elements of the theory is the idea that leaders and followers find value in one another as human beings and as "whole people" (Maslow, 1971; Deci and Ryan, 2000; Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, 2010; Benefiel et al, 2014; Paloutzian et al, 2010; Miller and Ewest, 2013; Schein and Schein, 2018).

In summary, and as will be explored in more detail in Chapter 4, the inner life of values, and attitudes form the core motivations for spiritual leaders (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). Inner values and attitudes involve ideas about the fundamental meaning of who we are as humans and what we should be doing (Vaill, 1998; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). Inner values and attitudes impact outward behaviour (Fry, Latham, et al, 2017; Hicks, 2018) and the impression followers have of leaders (Pfeffer, 2010). In light of this linkage between the inner life and outward behaviours, it has been suggested that leaders that lack awareness of their inner values and attitudes are less likely to experience success as a leader (Palmer, 1998; Moxley, 2000; Fry, 2003). By extension, it is argued here that the inner values, attitudes, and worldviews about the role and responsibilities of the leader with respect to followers will influence his/her outward behaviour toward them, and ultimately his/her success as a leader. As will be developed in Section 2.3, these inner values, attitudes, and worldviews include the leader's perception of value and dignity of the followers.

2.1.4 Spiritual Leadership and Intrinsic Motivation

Intrinsic motivation is arguably the heart of spiritual leadership theory. To consider this aspect of the theory, it is helpful to critically consider motivation more broadly in the field of organisational leadership. Motivation is a key aspect of many contemporary leadership theories including those listed in Table 2-1. It is also an aspect of other management theories and concepts, such as McGregor's Theory X – Theory Y distinction (McGregor, 1960). Researchers have suggested that motivation of followers, rather than control of them, is one of the key distinctions between leadership and management (Kotter, 1988; Conger and Kanungo, 1998; Fry, 2003).

Spiritual leadership contains an intrinsic motivation model that includes elements of both content and process theories of motivation. Content motivation theories seek to identify human needs and then assume that humans are motivated to fulfil those needs. Perhaps the most well-known content theory of motivation is Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of need. Alderfer (1969) simplified Maslow's hierarchy to three levels – existence, relatedness, and growth (ERG). McClelland's (1961; 1985) achievement motivation theory suggests that humans have three essential needs, achievement, affiliation, and power, and that managers can improve performance by identifying the nature and magnitude of these in each employee.

Herzberg's two-factor theory of motivation suggests that some situational factors (i.e. motivators) contribute to satisfaction while the absence of others (i.e. hygiene factors) can only contribute to dissatisfaction (Herzberg, 1964). Katz and Kahn (1978) proposed that job design characteristics can be envisioned according to three basic human work needs: autonomy (i.e. control over one's own behaviour), completion or achievement of a finished task, and interpersonal contact in the workplace. Even though content theories of motivation are widely referenced in management and leadership literature, they are viewed with suspicion by some since they were formulated largely without broad empirical support (Deci and Ryan, 2000).

In contrast to the content theories that focus on what motivates humans to act, process theories focus on the psychological and behavioural processes underlying those actions and the goals that inspire the processes and actions (Deci and Ryan, 2000). Process theories involve concepts such as level of effort, sustainability of effort, and willingness to overcome hindrances. Skinner's (1938) reinforcement theory, an aspect of his operant conditioning theory, suggests that humans respond, and can be trained to respond, to various stimuli such as positive reinforcement and negative reinforcement. In Adams' (1963) equity theory, employees are seen to be perpetually comparing their own level of effort with that of their colleagues in order to normalise the effort and associated rewards. Vroom's (1964) expectancy theory suggests that employees are perpetually evaluating their own level of effort against the expected results of that effort and then adjusting their level of effort accordingly. Locke's (1968) goal setting theory established the relationship between goal setting and the motivation to achieve based on the sense of purpose and meaning captured in the *telos* (i.e. perceived purpose) of achievement. Expectancy theory and goal setting theory are generally considered hybrid theories of motivation since they incorporate elements of content and process.

Spiritual leadership incorporates an intrinsic motivation model based upon self-determination theory proposed by Deci and Ryan (1985; 2000). Spiritual leadership theory defines intrinsic motivation as:

"[...] interest and enjoyment of an activity for its own sake and is associated with active engagement in tasks that people find interesting and fun and that, in turn, promote growth to satisfy higher order needs" (Fry, 2003, p. 699).

Self-determination theory is a hybrid content-process theory that incorporates other sub-theories of motivation into a single, albeit complex, meta-theory (Deci and Ryan, 1985; 2000). The focus of self-determination theory is on the motivation behind human choices, particularly choices made to take action simply because doing so is inherently (i.e. intrinsically) satisfying and personally interesting. Intrinsic motivation appeals to higher order needs (Maslow, 1943; 1971; Deci and Ryan, 2000; Daft, 2005) and is distinguished from extrinsic motivation models, such as the path-goal theory (House, 1971; House and Mitchell, 1974), which link effort and performance to extrinsic reward (Galbraith, 1977). The expectation in path-goal theory is that leaders will apply directive and supportive behaviours to motivate followers to achieve goals and, as a result, earn extrinsic rewards (House and Mitchell, 1974; Kerr and Jermier, 1977; Daft, 2005). When an employee is intrinsically motivated, on the other hand, the work is, itself, one of its own rewards (Maslow, 1971; Fry, 2003; Cameron, 2008). Intrinsic motivation has been shown to have more “motivational power” than extrinsic motivation in many workplace situations (Pink, 2009). Crowd-sourced software projects have been given as a contemporary example of the power of intrinsic motivation. Many of these projects are completed by volunteer teams writing software simply for the fun of it and without expectation of extrinsic reward (Blitzer et al, 2007). Referring to a concept he called “metamotivation”, involving someone that has a transcendent relationship with their work, Maslow explains intrinsic motivation this way:

“[...] there is certainly no distinction between work and play for such a person. His work is his play and his play is his work. If a person loves his work and enjoys it more than any other activity in the whole world and is eager to get to it, to get back to it after any disruption, then how can we speak about ‘labor’ in the sense of something one is forced to do against one’s wishes” (Maslow, 1971, p. 294).

Maslow’s comment on work-as-play provides an interesting reflection on the Marxian idea of labour dishonour. In the Marxian view, workers are in an embattled struggle with their managers for power and control. Asking a worker to separate his/her work from the rewards of the work is dishonouring to that person (Marx, 2009). So, one way to view intrinsic motivation is that the worker expects no extrinsic reward and, thus, retains their labour-honour. And yet, one might consider work being done without extrinsic reward to be manipulative and therefore a dishonouring act (Bolton, 2010). The concept of honour and dishonour in the workplace begins to touch on the topic of human dignity which will be

discussed in more detail in Section 2.2. The Marxian view of labour dishonour will be explored further in Section 2.2.5.

Spiritual leadership theory incorporates a model of intrinsic motivation that is, in turn, based upon the hybrid self-determination theory of Deci and Ryan (1985; 2000). The content aspects of this theory focus on higher-order needs. This language of higher- and lower-order needs reflects the prominence and broad impact of Maslow's hierarchy of need (Maslow, 1943). Maslow's theory is so widely cited in and beyond the leadership and management literature that critical reflection is warranted here. A direct criticism of Maslow's theory is rooted in the limited empirical testing he conducted prior to publishing. By his own account, he only worked with a relatively small sample of high-achieving university students as his research participants (Maslow, 1943). In an extensive global study, Deiner and Tay (2011) found that while the foundational concepts of the theory exist across cultures and regions of the world, the order of the hierarchy was not experienced universally. Other related criticisms are that 1) the human experience with the hierarchy varies in times of unrest versus times of peace (Tang and West, 1997), 2) the theory may have significant variability across cultures (Mawere et al, 2016), and 3) the theory may only apply in individualist cultural settings (Pearson and Podeschi, 1999; Gambrel and Cianci, 2003). Another direct criticism of the theory suggests that the discrete needs of the hierarchy cannot be satisfied separately. For example, Rutledge (2011), suggests that humans have not been able to feed and provide shelter for themselves outside of community. Her point is that to achieve even the lowest levels of the hierarchy, individuals must be experiencing some level of membership which, according to the theory, is a higher-order need. An indirect criticism of Maslow's theory is that some workers may not seek to satisfy the specific needs identified in the hierarchy. Pfeffer, for example, suggests that, in the pursuit of sufficient compensation, some workers become so tired or have such limited intellectual capacity at the end of a workday, that they cannot rationally consider how workplace scenarios and decisions may impact them on a higher level (Pfeffer, 1987). Similarly, Bolton (2010) cautions against the use of transcendent motivation concepts and practices (i.e. spiritual leadership) in the workplace on the grounds that these may simply be ways to manipulate others. Bolton's criticism is indirect and, as such, not about Maslow's theory itself, but of its use by leaders and managers.

As shown in Figure 2-3, the intrinsic motivation model of spiritual leadership consists of three elements: shared vision, altruistic love, and hope/faith (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum,

2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). Fry argues that the elements of intrinsic motivation work together to establish in leaders and followers a sense of spiritual well-being encompassing the sense of calling and membership. This spiritual well-being, in turn, creates an elevated state of personal satisfaction, organisational commitment, productivity, and continual improvement that has positive impacts for stakeholders on the triple bottom-line (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). The following sections explore the three elements of the intrinsic motivation model in more detail.

Shared vision. Vision is the starting point of the intrinsic motivation model in spiritual leadership. Kotter (1996) and Fry and Slocum (2008) argue that vision provides followers with a view of the future as well as the compelling reasons for them to strive to create that future. Followers who agree with and see themselves as important parts of the vision will be motivated to reach the goal states (Benefiel, 2008). Fry (2003) argues that shared vision serves three important roles: 1) to clarify the general direction of change, 2) to simplify the otherwise detailed decision set, and 3) to efficiently coordinate the actions of many people. Sashkin (1982; 1984; 1986) suggests that goal setting and decision-making are two central areas of employee participation that lead to improved organisational performance as well as employee satisfaction and commitment. It has been suggested that shared vision is a key aspect of modern leadership practice, as noted below:

“Leadership isn’t about imposing the leader’s solo dream; it’s about developing a shared sense of destiny. It’s about enrolling others so that they can see how their own interests and aspirations are aligned with the vision and can thereby become mobilized to commit their individual energies to its realisation. A vision is inclusive of constituents’ aspirations; it’s an ideal and unique image of the future for the common good” (Kouzes and Pozner, 2002, p. 143).

In the spiritual leadership model, leaders and followers work together to define the shared vision, representing outcomes and efforts that they are intrinsically motivated to achieve. Institutionalised, hierarchical organisational structures, top-down decision-making cultures, and even the traditional leader-follower distinction are two obvious challenges to the development of shared vision and, therefore, the implementation of spiritual leadership (Fry and Kriger, 2009).

Altruistic love. Fry defines altruistic love as, “a sense of wholeness, harmony, and well-being produced through care, concern, and appreciation for both self and others” (Fry, 2003, p. 712). In developing this definition, he goes on to paraphrase the definition of love offered in the biblical passage of I Corinthians 13 by indicating that altruistic love in the spiritual leadership context involves “patience, kindness, lack of envy, forgiveness, humility, selflessness, self-control, trust, loyalty and truthfulness” (p.712). Altruistic love involves the sense of and need for self-transcendence (Fry, 2003; Maslow, 1971) satisfied by serving others. In broader social science research, altruistic love is thought to be a uniquely human trait that involves an intentional affirmation of the other (Post, 2002). In the spiritual leadership context, altruistic love is linked to the need to serve others, whether leaders, followers, peers, customers, or other stakeholders (Fry, 2003).

The proponents of positive psychology and the spirituality at work movement have suggested that love plays an important role in overcoming anger, fear, and other destructive emotions (Ferris, 1988; Mitroff and Denton, 1999; Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Snyder and Ingram, 2000; Colvin, 2001). Recent research suggests that, while love is an unusual concept for the workplace, managers associate love in the organisational context with virtue, “community-ship”, and meaning-making (Cunha et al, 2017). Barsade and O’Neill (2014) found that “companionate love” in the workplace (i.e. feelings of affection, compassion, caring, and tenderness toward others) positively contributes to employee satisfaction and sense of team, and reduces absenteeism and emotional exhaustion. They offer a caution, however, that the benefits of love in the workplace are moderated by one’s “trait positive affectivity,” which is essentially one’s predisposition to have a positive engagement with one’s environment.

Hope/Faith. In colloquial use, to hope for something is to wish for, but not actually expect it. By contrast, the *Webster II New Riverside University Dictionary* (1984) defines hope as “to wish for something with *expectation* of its fulfilment.” Spiritual leadership uses this latter definition in its conception of hope (Fry, 2003). In this sense, belief in the shared vision combined with the hope (i.e. expectation) that one’s actions will positively impact the end state are intrinsic motivators for leaders and followers (Fry, 2003). In the context of spiritual leadership, hope/faith refers to one’s personal commitment to the organisation’s vision and mission, the belief that the organisation’s vision and mission will be fulfilled, and that one’s

personal effort will meaningfully contribute to the fulfilment of that mission. Fry explains it this way,

“[...] the hypothesized relationships among the variables of the causal model of spiritual leadership, ‘doing what it takes’ through faith in a clear, compelling vision produces a sense of calling—that part of spiritual survival that gives one a sense of making a difference and therefore that one’s life has meaning. Hope/faith adds belief, conviction, trust, and action for performance of the work to achieve the vision. Thus, spiritual leadership proposes that hope/faith in the organisation’s vision keeps followers looking forward to the future and provides the desire and positive expectation that fuels effort through intrinsic motivation” (Fry, 2003, p. 714).

2.1.5 Spiritual Leadership and Spiritual Well-being

Personal and communal spirituality are aspects of well-being in spiritual leadership theory (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). Building on the research of Giacalone and Jurkiewicz (2010), Fry (2003; 2005) connects the intrinsic motivation model of spiritual leadership to inner, higher order, and spiritual (i.e. transcendent) needs of leaders and followers. Kyle et al (2017b) suggest that by leading according to these principles, as an acknowledgement of the dignity of those they lead, leaders can achieve a higher sense of meaning and purpose in their work as leaders. There is increased awareness in the literature of the need for leaders and organisations to nurture the whole person – physical, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual (Hicks, 2003; Reave, 2005; Paloutzian et al, 2010; Miller and Ewest, 2013; Benefiel et al, 2014; Fairholm and Gronau, 2015). In deference to religious and cultural differences, spirituality and self-transcendence at work have largely been pushed aside in the modern corporation, essentially requiring workers to “check their faith at the door” (Hicks, 2003; Miller and Ewest, 2013; Benefiel et al, 2014). Researchers have suggested that without the ability to connect their labour with their personal belief systems, many leaders and followers have lost their moral compass, sense of self, and sense of transcendent meaning in their work (Fry, 2003; Fairholm and Granau, 2015; Reave, 2005; Vaill, 1998). Several studies have shown that re-integration of inner beliefs and work can have positive results for individuals, customers, and corporate performance (Mitroff and Denton, 1999; Quatro et al, 2007; Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, 2010; Sweeney and Fry, 2012; Benefiel et al, 2014; Neal, 2014; Fairholm and Gronau, 2015). Fairholm and Gronau suggest:

“[...] workers are searching for a deeper meaning in their work life, thus integrating their spiritual identity with a professional work persona. Rather than compartmentalization, they desire integration and wholeness” (Fairholm and Gronau, 2015, p. 358).

Krishnakumar and Neck (2002), citing Naylor et al (1996), suggest that a lack of meaning at work can lead to “existential sickness” and “separation/alienation from oneself.”

The first version of spiritual leadership theory refers to the concept of “spiritual survival” as the most basic level of spiritual consciousness and as the intermediate outcome of spiritual leadership (Fry, 2003). In the second and third versions of the theory, spiritual survival is expanded into the broader concept of well-being and flourishing of the whole person (Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al 2017). By creating an environment in which leaders and followers work together to establish a shared vision, and by encouraging followers to bring the full range of their ideas, beliefs, and skills to the work at hand, and by focusing on the others-orientated value of the work product, spiritual leaders contribute to the sense of well-being and flourishing of their followers and, indirectly, themselves (Fairholm, 1997; Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). In other words, Fry (2003) argues that by deploying the intrinsic motivation model of spiritual leadership, leaders can have a positive impact on the well-being and flourishing of the whole person. In the third version of spiritual leadership theory, Fry and Nisiewicz also use the language of employee well-being. They write,

“[...] high-performance workers seek 1) interesting work that permits them to learn, develop, and have a sense of competence and mastery, 2) meaningful work that provides a sense of purpose, 3) membership through a sense of connection and positive social relations with their co-workers, and 4) the ability to have an integrated life, so that one’s work does not conflict with who they are as human beings” (Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013, p. 197).

Spiritual leadership theory rests upon the idea that humans are motivated to pursue ends greater than themselves. This is reflected in the altruistic love element of the intrinsic motivation model. These ideas are tied to a sense of the common good which, in turn, is connected to the sense of calling. To explore this aspect of the theory, consider this definition of workplace spirituality:

“[workplace spirituality consists of] aspects of the workplace, either in the individual, the group, or the organization, that promote individual feelings of satisfaction through transcendence. To elaborate, that the process of work facilitates employees’ sense of being connected to a nonphysical force beyond themselves that provides feelings of completeness and joy”
(Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, 2010, p. 13)

Fry builds on this definition by suggesting that a personal sense of calling (i.e. vocation) and membership are integral parts of “spiritual survival” and spiritual well-being in the workplace (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). In addressing the whole person concept as an element of the perceived inner needs of calling and membership, which will be addressed in more detail in Section 2.3.3, spiritual leadership also addresses one of the ideals of “transforming leadership” proposed by Burns (1978). Fry is essentially suggesting that leaders and followers are intrinsically motivated when, among other things, they are able to bring all of themselves to work, and when the organisation demonstrates concern for both higher- *and* lower-order needs (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). Nurturing the whole person has been proposed as an integral element of leadership responsibility (Sheep, 2006). In reflecting upon a lifetime of research and clinical practice as a psychologist, Maslow (1971) observed a strong connection between self-actualisation, the highest order need of his needs-hierarchy, and self-transcendence. He notes,

“Self-actualizing people are, without one single exception, involved in a cause outside of themselves. They are devoted, working at something, something which is very precious to them – some calling or vocation in the old sense, in the priestly sense” (Maslow, 1971, p 42).

In making this statement, Maslow was expressing an observation from his clinical practice: that the only people that achieve the highest level of the needs hierarchy (i.e. those that self-actualize), have done so through self-transcendence. That is, they have involved themselves in a purpose beyond themselves and, especially, in the service of others or a sense of the common good (Maslow, 1971). Kouzes and Pozner connect this to the leadership role by suggesting that the workplace is an environment in which many people seek to find this type of meaning and purpose in their lives. They, in turn, connect this to the responsibility of leadership to enable members of the organisation to self-transcend. They write,

“Work has become a place where people pursue meaning and identity. [...] When leaders clearly communicate a shared vision of an organization, they ennoble those who work on its behalf. They elevate the human spirit”
(Kouzes and Pozner, 2002, p.152).

Pfeffer (2010) reinforces this idea by outlining four dimensions of spirituality in the workplace context: 1) interesting, meaningful work and learning opportunities that allow workers to obtain a level of mastery, 2) meaningful work that connects to a sense of purpose, 3) connection and positive social relationship with co-workers, and 4) integration of life in and outside of work that is consistent with the person’s worldview. The first two dimensions relate to calling in the spiritual leadership model. The second two relate to membership.

The themes of well-being, flourishing, and personal wholeness in spiritual leadership theory, parallel similar ideas in the field of positive psychology, specifically its authentic happiness and well-being theories (Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Seligman, 2002; Seligman, 2011)¹. Positive psychology is briefly mentioned in the initial version of spiritual leadership theory, but detailed connections have not been well-developed in subsequent versions of the theory (Fry, 2003). Seligman, the progenitor of positive psychology, proposed definitions and structures for understanding human well-being as an element of positive psychology (Seligman, 2011). He defines well-being as a state of being that people will choose for its own sake, consisting of five underlying elements which form the acronym PERMA, each of which can be measured individually: P - positive emotion, E - engagement, R - relationships, M – meaning, and A - accomplishment. Each of these elements have a place in spiritual leadership, but positive emotion is not emphasized in the theory. Recent research suggests that connections between spiritual leadership and well-being theory could be explored (Lampersky, 2018; Reece et al, 2019).

¹ Even though spiritual leadership and positive psychology have notable overlap in the area of human well-being, the intersection of the two theories has not been investigated. They share an emphasis on intrinsic (or, as described in positive psychology, uncoerced) motivation, the importance of achievement to the sense of calling, transcendent meaning-making, positive relationships, and engagement. Spiritual leadership puts less emphasis on positive emotion. The fields of “positive leadership” and “positive organizational scholarship” (Cameron, 2008; Cameron and Spreitzer, 2012; Kelloway et al, 2012) are conceptually connected to spiritual leadership, but have been developed from the foundation of positive psychology rather than the foundation of intrinsic motivation.

The spiritual well-being (or, as described in the first version of the theory, spiritual survival) element of spiritual leadership theory consists of calling and membership (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). Calling and membership are higher-order needs, the fulfilment of which is desired by leaders and followers. They represent fulfilment of the intrinsic motivation element of the theory and are the intermediate outcomes of spiritual leadership practice. Calling and membership are explored below.

Calling. Calling is the transcendent sense that one can make a difference in the world by applying one's unique abilities and talents through service to others (Fry, 2003). Competence and mastery of skills are insufficient for most people to achieve a full sense of calling and meaning in their work (Pfeffer, 2010). In the spiritual leadership context, leaders are to know, understand, engage, and encourage the sense of calling felt by followers in order to incorporate them into the formation and pursuit of shared vision, shared objectives, and self-determined task assignment (Fry, 2003). In contrasting three views of work, Cameron (2008) offers a description of calling that ties it together with intrinsic motivation and meaning making. Connecting the sense of calling with intrinsic motivation, he says the view of work as calling, in contrast with the view of work as a job or as a career, "characterizes individuals who work for the sake of the work itself. [...] Their work possesses a sense of meaning that reaches beyond personal benefit or the acquisition of reward" (Cameron, 2008, p. 68).

Membership. In a similar way, membership is the transcendent sense that one belongs to something greater than oneself, and that one is appreciated and valued in the community (Pfeffer, 2010). Fry (2003) argues that people achieve a transcendent sense of belonging through meaningful, mutually supportive relationships in the workplace. Many of the content and process theories refer to membership, relatedness, and the sense of community as key components of motivation (Maslow, 1943; McClelland, 1961; 1985; Alderfer, 1969; Katz and Kahn, 1978; Deci and Ryan, 2000). Suggesting that the sense of membership in the workplace is the result of intentional culture development by the leaders, Fry and Nisiewicz note,

"Membership at work requires an organizational culture based on the values of altruistic love so there is a sense of mutual caring, support, and being connected to each other as part of a larger community based on mutual acceptance and trust. Through membership, employees feel a deep

connection with their leaders and fellow workers” (Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013, p. 149).

A reasonable criticism of spiritual leadership is that it only focusses on spiritual well-being and higher-order needs. Organisations must also consider the lower-order needs of their employees – compensation, benefits, rest, safety, fairness, etc. (Bolton, 2010). In remaining silent about lower-order needs, one might assume that the theory assumes that if the higher-order needs are being met, the lower-order needs will take care of themselves. Given the world’s history of leadership failure and abuse in the workplace (Hodson; 2001; Ackroyd, 2007; Bolton, 2007; 2010; Sayer, 2007), it must be noted that the pursuit of higher order needs alone is not sufficient in the employment scenario. Additional shortcomings of the theory will be addressed in Section 2.1.7.

2.1.6 Spiritual Leadership and the Triple Bottom-line

The initial version of spiritual leadership, as shown in Figure 2-1, included the ultimate outcomes of organisational commitment and productivity (Fry, 2003). In the second version of the theory, Fry introduced an emphasis on stakeholder outcomes using the “triple bottom-line” framework (Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013). Even with this change, ultimate outcomes of spiritual leadership remain the least clearly defined aspect of spiritual leadership theory.

Sustainability consultant, John Elkington (1994), coined the term “triple bottom-line” as an accounting and financial governance approach intended to expand beyond the single bottom-line of financial profit to also include social (second bottom-line), and environmental (third bottom-line) impacts. These are often grouped together and referred to as “profit, people, and planet.” At the core of the triple bottom-line concept is the assumption that managers have a responsibility to pursue and balance organisational outcomes and performance in each of the three dimensions (Fry and Slocum, 2008; Hindle, 2009; Slaper and Hall, 2011; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013). Savitz and Weber (2006) connect the triple bottom-line concept with sustainability by offering this definition, “a sustainable corporation is one that creates profit for its shareholders while protecting the environment and improving the lives of those with whom it interacts” (p. x). A persistent challenge, with or without the triple bottom-line framework, is meaningfully measuring social and environmental outcomes simply because of their potential scope (Elkington, 1994; Slaper and Hall, 2011). In spite of this challenge, Fry

and Nisiewicz (2013) suggest that the ultimate outcomes of spiritual leadership can and should be measured on all three bottom lines. The triple bottom-line provides spiritual leaders the opportunity to frame the organisational mission and associated tasks with “higher purpose” objectives that are important to leaders and followers in the organisation, thereby linking them with the intrinsic motivation model. As such, the triple bottom-line serves to connect corporate social responsibility (i.e. CSR) ideals as the ultimate outcomes of spiritual leadership.

With the obvious exception of the first bottom-line (i.e. financial profit), the emphasis of the triple bottom-line concept, as measured by the volume of research literature, has primarily been on the third bottom-line (i.e. planet) in the form of sustainability metrics. The connection between the leader-follower relationship and the second bottom-line (i.e. leaders and followers as second bottom-line stakeholders) is a notable gap in the literature and potential point of challenge for spiritual leadership’s incorporation of the triple bottom-line as its ultimate outcome. Slaper and Hall (2011) suggest that measuring the second bottom-line would include consideration of such broad factors as the unemployment rate, female labour force participation rate, median household income, relative poverty, percentage of population with post-secondary degrees or certificates, average commute time, violent crimes per capita, and health-adjusted life expectancy.

Fry and Nisiewicz (2013) suggest that the second bottom-line must also measure impacts on a range of stakeholders including shareholders (i.e. the first bottom-line beneficiaries), employees, customers, suppliers and trading partners, neighbours, and others impacted by the organisation’s operations. As such, leaders and followers within the organisation are included in the list of stakeholders in the second bottom-line (Slaper and Hall, 2011). Leader and follower well-being in a triple bottom-line context can be framed and understood in the context of stakeholder theory (Freeman and Reed, 1983; Freeman, 1984; Mitroff, 1983; Donaldson and Preston, 1995; Mitchell et al, 1997; Pirson, 2017). Stakeholder theory stands in contrast to the traditional input-output model of the firm and rests on the assumption that all stakeholders have value.

“[The] interests of all stakeholders are of intrinsic value. That is, each group of stakeholders merit consideration for its own sake and not merely because of its ability to further the interests of some other group, such as the shareowners” (Donaldson and Preston, 1995, p. 67).

Contrasting the input-output model of the firm with the stakeholder model, Pirson (2017) uses the terms “economistic perspective” and “humanistic perspective”.

2.1.7 Analysis and Criticism of Spiritual Leadership

Like most theories, spiritual leadership has its detractors. For example, Western (2013) discounts spiritual leadership on the grounds that spiritual leaders may expect ethical and positive outcomes from their followers while themselves failing due to immoral and unethical acts. He rails against paternalistic leadership models from his own experience in the healthcare industry, referring to them as “Daddy Doctor” and “Mummy Nurse.” While not unreasonable, this criticism is very broad and could arguably be applied to any leadership or management theory.

Others have suggested that there are specific gaps in the spiritual leadership model that must be explored. For example, the theory has been criticized for not providing specific behavioural and trait characteristics expected of spiritual leaders (Reese, 2005; Krishnakumar et al, 2015). Fairholm and Gronau (2015) and Lean and Ganster (2017) have attempted to address this concern with initial proposals of behavioural and trait characteristics. It has also been suggested that few researchers have explored the potential “dark sides” of spiritual leadership, pointing to potential hypocritical and “sinister” behaviours (Krishnakumar et al, 2015). There is a risk, for example, of employers using spirituality as a means of manipulating employees for materialistic gain. Reave explains this concern:

“There are a couple of dangers involved in including vision as part of spiritual leadership. First, the idea of the leader coming down from the mountain to share a vision with the group may encourage personal vanity and isolationism” (Reave, 2005, p. 662).

While not specifically directed at spiritual leadership theory, concerns have been raised that the intentional management of employee motivation is manipulative (Pfeffer, 1987). Pfeffer borrows Kantian language by suggesting that managers that consider employee motivation as part of their strategy are violating the rational autonomy of those employees. Specifically, he states, “[...] those workers are tired after work, having little opportunity to consider in an informed, intelligent way such issues [may impact them].” He goes on to say that unlike students, whose motivation is also a factor for faculty and administration in the academy,

workers often lack “the knowledge of how to begin [the analysis of being manipulated] and the intellectual capacity to do so” (Pfeiffer, 1987, p. 110).

Spiritual leadership theory does not currently have provisions for employees that do not wish to participate in shared visioning and objective-setting. For example, some employees may wish to complete their work as assigned and go home without the deeper engagement implied by spiritual leadership. This is a possibility explored by Vroom’s (1964) expectancy theory and Sashkin’s (1982; 1984; 1986) participative management model.

Reflecting a Marxian viewpoint and the related concern about “the potentially negative consequences of free market capitalism”, Bolton (2010, p. 157-158) has raised questions about the potential performative implications of using a “spiritual strategy” that links spiritual conditions with expectations for cooperation and citizenship behaviours. While Bolton is hopeful that a spirit-work connection may be made at some point, she doubts its likelihood because, in her view, “capitalism is pulling in a different direction to the call for decent work, meaning that denials of dignity at work are unlikely to disappear” (Bolton, 2010, p. 168).

Crossman (2010) has called for an in-depth analysis of spiritual leadership in light of other values-based leadership theories and models. Specifically, she notes the challenge of using the phrase “spiritual”, which is ill-defined and, to some degree, unwelcome in the academic and business domains. Citing Durkheim (2008), who believed that the sacred and profane cannot coexist, Crossman (2010), questions the juxtaposition of spirituality and work.

In a recent study of an Indonesian hospital, Saripudin and Rosari (2019) found that spiritual leadership has a positive impact on individual sense of meaning and calling and that this, in turn, contributes broadly to employee engagement in the workplace. They were unable to find, however, a causal relationship between spiritual leadership behaviours and a sense of membership among employees of the hospital. This calls into question the implied balance of calling and membership as elements of spiritual well-being, an issue that is not discussed in the theory. Although the studies are quite different in design and intent, Saripudin and Rosari’s findings regarding membership are inconsistent with those reported in Chapters 4 - 6.

Many of the future research areas for authentic leadership called for by Avolio et al (2009) also apply to spiritual leadership. Some examples of areas for future research include

exploration of links to cognitive psychology, research into why some leaders may be drawn to spiritual leadership while others are not, and exploration of spiritual leadership in differing cultures and geographies. There is work required to develop a pedagogical framework and rubric for leadership development education of leadership practitioners. And, of course, there is considerable work yet to be done to continue and extend the preliminary work of Kyle and Wond (2018) in understanding the lived experience of human dignity in the context of spiritual leadership.

2.2 Human Dignity

2.2.1 Overview

The concept of human dignity is broadly accepted by most people groups as a core social construct and expression of human value (Schachter, 1983; Mattson and Clark, 2011). It is a normative principle in western society and encapsulated in many national and international laws (Riley, 2010). Mattson and Clark (2011) personalise the ubiquity of human dignity by stating that it is something virtually all people want. In addition, they suggest that the social resonance of human dignity may explain its use as a guide to and judge of the conduct of individuals, organisations, and governments. In recent years, human dignity has been increasingly referenced in academic writing, trade press, and the popular media (McCrudden, 2013). In spite of its ubiquity, the meaning and application of human dignity is the subject of much debate. The philosophical constructs and anthropological legacy of human dignity are abstract and generally not familiar to management practitioners. As such, they can be difficult to understand and apply. The lack of a universally agreed definition is one of the key challenges facing researchers in the human dignity domain. This problem is widely acknowledged in the literature (Schachter, 1983; Meyer, 1992; Pinker, 2008; Waldron, 2009; Kateb, 2011; Mattson and Clark, 2011; Shultziner and Rabinovici, 2012; McCrudden, 2013).

Schlink (2013) argues that human dignity is linked to deep-rooted human needs. He describes human dignity as a *sehnsuchtsbegriff*, a concept that encompasses a longing for a better and fairer world. He suggests that human dignity

“brings together people of goodwill who share that longing, though they may disagree on what human dignity means, demands, and prohibits; whether it has religious connotations or is a completely secular concept;

whether it builds on the idea of virtue, on individual autonomy, on social status, or on some other basis. This longing is something on which they can meet and join in at least some steps toward a better and fairer world” (Schlink, 2013, p. 634).

McCrudden (2013) and Schlink (2013) refer to the potential power of human dignity as a unifying concept among those of goodwill. McCrudden (2013) argues that even in the face of disagreement about the origins and nature of human dignity, it is a unifying concept with respect to its functions in society. He proposes that human dignity has four functions: 1) a flag under which the dispossessed unite and fight for freedom, equality, and access to resources, 2) a means of expanding the role of empathy between individuals and groups, 3) a tool to combat discrimination, and 4) a basis for moral judgements.

While not touching on leadership *per se*, management researchers have explored human dignity as a basis for workplace standards. The primary focus has been on the rights of workers, the establishment of “good work” movements, and various practical workplace matters such as health, occupational safety, compensation, and severance policies (Ackroyd, 2007; Barber, 2007; Coats, 2007; Philpott, 2007; Bolton, 2010; Barrett and Thomson, 2012; Vettori, 2012). Many of these efforts are built upon an assumption of the Marxian tension between labourers and managers. Bolton (2007; 2010) and Hodson (2001) are two notable examples of researchers that have taken this approach. Bolton, for example, argues that employees struggle with lower-order needs in the workplace and, as such, do not have sufficient energy and mental bandwidth to think about higher-order needs such as self-actualisation. In the name of human dignity, she calls for efforts to be made to improve workplace safety, compensation, and other systems (Bolton, 2007; 2010).

The aforementioned research has explored the connections between human dignity and *management* theory and practice. Very little has been done to explore the connections between human dignity and *leadership* theory and practice. Given the focus of contemporary leadership theory on the development of the individual and the value of teams, this is a noteworthy gap in the leadership research literature. Given its ubiquity, human dignity provides a useful basis for dialog among people of differing theological, cultural, and philosophical traditions and backgrounds (Schachter, 1983; Riley, 2010). Further, human dignity provides a meaningful and even practical framework for the leadership research community to explore and apply the concept of human value to its theories and models. This is especially true of the most contemporary leadership theories, those described by Fairholm

(2011) as “fifth generation” theories, which attempt to find a balance between intrinsic benefits for the individual and benefits for the organisation. The theory of spiritual leadership is a good example of such a theory since it incorporates elements of intrinsic motivation, higher-order human needs (e.g. calling and membership), and the triple bottom-line model (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). In the most general sense, this exploration of the connections between human dignity and contemporary leadership theory is an attempt to open a new area of research into the philosophical foundations of leadership theory.

2.2.2 Human Dignity: Definitional, Colloquial and Cultural Issues

There is no universally accepted definition of or philosophical basis for human dignity (Meyer, 1992; Waldron, 2009; Mattson and Clark, 2011). Philosophers and theologians continue to explore and debate the definition and relevance of human dignity. Riley (2010) suggests that the lack of a common definition combined with the breadth of the concept leads to significant difficulty in the study of human dignity. Addressing a key challenge of conducting research in the area of human dignity, one researcher laments,

“[human dignity] appears simple enough to identify until one tries to grasp it, when it then becomes an object of questionable validity” (Mitchell, 2017, p. 37).

A research endeavour to study the connections between human dignity and spiritual leadership will be challenged by these and other issues. While it may not have a universally accepted definition, human dignity is not without meaning. Human dignity has colloquial familiarity that Riley (2010) describes as “intuitive universality” in which the words honour, respect, and dignity are often used interchangeably. Mea and Sims (2019) suggest that although there is not a universally agreed definition of human dignity, people are able to identify a violation of it. To illustrate the point of colloquial variation, Table 2-2 provides a few examples of the ways human dignity is used as a phrase.

Colloquial View of Dignity	Summary Description
Human dignity as a character trait	Some perceive dignity to vary among individuals and situations. “Dignity can also be a personal characteristic which people have in general to different degrees and can individually display to different degrees on particular occasions” (Den Hartogh, 2014, p. 201).
Human dignity reflected in actions	Hodson (2001) and Bolton (2007; 2010) note that society considers work that is tedious, dirty, or dangerous to be undignified and those that do this work are not respected.
Human dignity is antithetical to shame	In some cultural contexts, shame reflects the absence of dignity (Moxnes, 1993). The use of shame to control and shun members of society is a common practice in many parts of the world (Anderson, 2009).
Human dignity as a final appeal for decency	Human dignity can, at times, be the appeal of last resort. In cases of extreme mistreatment and abuse, an appeal to human dignity is often made when all other claims of fair and right treatment have fallen short (Schlink, 2013).

Table 2-2: Examples of Colloquial Variations of Human Dignity

2.2.3 Theoretical and Philosophical Perspectives on Human Dignity

Views on human dignity are rooted in historical, cultural, philosophical, and theological traditions. Generally, these views fall into four broad categories: human dignity 1) as a matter of rank, 2) as a matter of inherent worth, 3) as a matter of normative behaviour, and 4) as an illegitimate concept (Kyle et al, 2017a). Establishing human dignity as a foundation for contemporary leadership theory must consider all four of these viewpoints. The four theoretical views are summarized in the Table 2-3 below and described in detail in the remainder of this section.

Theoretical View of Dignity	Summary Description
Human dignity as social rank	The view that one's dignity is hierarchical and defined by one's role or standing in society or community. The word "dignitary" derives from this view. This is not a commonly held view in the social science research community.
Human dignity as inherent worth	The view that dignity is an aspect of being human and is defined as one's intrinsic value or worth. This view holds that dignity is universal and independent of one's ability to create value in society. This is the most commonly held view in the social science research community.
Human dignity as normative behaviour	The view that dignity results from the manner in which one behaves or carries themselves in social settings. The phrase, "acting in a dignified manner" conveys the essence of this view. As a standalone view of human dignity, this is not a commonly held view in the research community.
Human dignity as an illegitimate concept	The view that humans do not have dignity and, as a result, are not due special rights, regard, or esteem. This view is rooted in specific views of human anthropology and the connection between dignity and assumed rights in areas such as bioethics.

Table 2-3: Summary of Theoretical Views on Human Dignity

Human dignity as rank. Aristotle believed human dignity to be a matter of social rank (Aristotle, 2001a; 2001b). In the Aristotelian model, some humans are born into a life of nobility and others, including all women, into servile classes. The divine right of kings reinforced this hierarchical view by suggesting that kings are appointed by God, not accountable to the people, and above the rule of law (Burgess, 1992). The view that dignity is a matter of rank (e.g. nobleman or bishop) within an established social framework persisted into the Enlightenment period (Meyer, 1992). For example, Thomas Hobbes proposed a framework consisting of worth, dignity, and honour. He proposed a rank-based, transactional approach in which the worth (i.e. value) of a human is the price one would pay to leverage the power and influence of that person (Hobbes, 2002). Correspondingly, he proposed the following definition of dignity,

“The public worth of a man, which is the value set on him by the commonwealth, is that which men commonly call DIGNITY. And this value of him by the commonwealth is understood by offices of command, judicature, public employment; or by names and titles introduced for distinction of such value” (Hobbes, 2002, p. 68).

Building on this definition of dignity, Hobbes proposed an extensive system of rules defining honour and dishonour of station. Edmund Burke (1973) refers to men of inherited nobility as “men of dignity.” The concept of dignity as rank is less acceptable in western society today because it emphasises differences rather than similarities of people (Düwell, 2014a). Even so, rank can be a helpful way to understand human dignity in a contemporary sense if one considers all humans belong to the highest noble class (Waldron, 2009). This idea has been coined “universal nobility” (Neuhäuser and Stoecker, 2014).

Human dignity as inherent worth. This is the prevailing view in most contemporary literature on human dignity. This view is rooted in ancient religious traditions as well as Enlightenment philosophy. The Judeo-Christian view of human dignity, for example, is rooted in a Biblical anthropology, specifically the account of the creation of humans by God. According to the biblical passage of Genesis 1:26-29, the first human was created in the “image” and “likeness” of God. Passing from one generation to another, this *imago dei*, distinguishes humans from the rest of Creation (Hoekema, 1986; Kilner, 2015). According to this tradition, the universal, equal, and inherent dignity of humans stems from God’s dignity rather than from the human physical form and moral actions. The moral and political philosophy of post-Enlightenment western civilisation has borrowed significantly from this Judeo-Christian tradition (Riley, 2010).

In the 15th century, Giovanni Pico della Mirandola (1956) built on the *imago dei* concept to form an early humanist view of dignity. He proposed that humans stand somewhere between angels and animals in that they uniquely possess the ability to pursue philosophical thought, which he believed to transcend earthly existence (Kirk, 1956). Although rejected by the church leaders of the time, Pico’s ideas provided a platform for Erasmus and others to establish a broader framework of humanism (Kirk, 1956). It can be argued that by focusing on the human ability to engage in philosophical (i.e. higher order) thought, Pico set the stage for Immanuel Kant’s broad proposal that humans are distinguished by their rational autonomy (Meilaender, 2009). In the 17th century, Blaise Pascal followed a similar line of thinking. He wrote,

“Man is but a reed, the most feeble thing in nature; but he is a thinking reed. The entire universe need not arm itself to crush him. A vapour, a drop of water suffices to kill him. But, if the universe were to crush him, man would still be more noble than that which killed him, because he knows that he dies and the advantage which the universe has over him; the universe

knows nothing of this. All our dignity consists, then, in thought. By it we must elevate ourselves, and not by space and time which we cannot fill. Let us endeavour, then, to think well; this is the principle of morality” (Pascal, 1958, p. 97).

Enlightenment philosopher, Immanuel Kant, is perhaps the most widely cited philosopher in the human dignity domain (Gewirth, 1992). By placing human dignity in the framework of moral philosophy, Kant contributed significantly to the shift from understanding human dignity as a matter of rank to one of inherent worth (Bayefsky, 2013). Consider the following quote:

“But a human being regarded as a person, that is as the subject of a morally practical reason, is exalted above any price; for as a person (homo noumenon) he is not to be valued merely as a means to the ends of others or even to his own ends, but as an end in itself, that is, he possesses a dignity (an absolute inner worth) by which he exacts respect for himself from all other rational beings in the world. He can measure himself with every other being of this kind and value himself on a footing of equality with them” (Kant, 1996b, p. 557).

This quote encapsulates two of Kant’s important ideas about human dignity. First, he proposed that all humans have inherent and equal dignity, based on the notion that humans are uniquely autonomous² and rational creatures. Second, Kant proposed that dignity is defined as infinite economic worth. He argued nothing can be traded or exchanged for human dignity. In other words, humans can never lose their dignity. Kant extended his thesis to suggest that, since humans have these inherent traits, there are normative implications for how they treat one another. Consider the following:

“For, all rational beings stand under the law that each of them is to treat himself and all others never merely as means but always at the same time as ends in themselves. But from this there arises a systematic union of rational beings through common objective laws, that is, a kingdom, which can be called a kingdom of ends (admittedly only an ideal) because what

² Kant’s understand of human autonomy differed from the modern conception this word. Rosen (2012, p. 25) explains the difference this way, “What Kant has in mind as autonomy is the idea that the moral law which we much acknowledge as binding upon us is self-given. That is something quite different from the modern understanding of autonomy as the capacity of individuals to choose the course of their own lives however they see fit.”

these laws have as their purpose is just the relation of these beings to one another as ends and means” (Kant, 1996a, p. 83).

According to Kant, human dignity has significant and far-reaching implications. Humans are to treat all other humans, not as means to ends, but as ends in themselves. Stemming from this Categorical Imperative³, Kant envisioned an ideal “kingdom of ends” in which humans interact with each other only on the basis of their inherent, equal, infinite worth (Kant, 1996a; Bayefsky, 2013; Kerstein, 2014).

Kant’s model of human dignity has received criticism from post-Enlightenment and contemporary philosophers since it does not make explicit allowance for the dignity of children and mentally challenged adults (Kerstein, 2014). It also does not provide sufficient balance between personal freedom and the actions of an immoral person (Shell, 2003). Some philosophers, such as Arthur Schopenhauer, find Kant’s argument for higher, moral laws too dependent upon unstated theological assumptions (Schopenhauer, 1995). Kant also held some of the common prejudices of his day, particularly involving women and non-European races that, to the modern reader, would seem inconsistent with his own philosophy (Hill, 2014). Dutch theologian, Herman Bavinck, criticised Kant for choosing autonomy as the basis for his categorical imperative, noting that autonomy in the extreme, becomes “a principle that undermines every authority and law” (Bavinck, 2020, p. 102). Regardless of these criticisms, Kant established a new paradigm of thought about human dignity, namely that it is inherent in every human and cannot be taken away. These ideals established by Kant are commonly expressed by contemporary writers and thinkers. For example, reflecting a modern view of human dignity informed by the Kantian ideal, Baumann states, “[human dignity] is something one cannot lose – and certainly not by behaving in a certain way. In this understanding of human dignity, it can be violated but it cannot be lost” (Baumann, 2007, p. 6).

Human dignity is not a common theme of ancient writings outside of the Judeo-Christian tradition. Cicero represents one of the few voices from antiquity that wrote explicitly on this topic. He held that humans have dignity and are superior to other forms of life because they

³ In *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* (Kant, 1996a), Kant offered three progressive formulations of the Categorical Imperative. This is the second, and most familiar, formulation.

have the ability to reason and control their desire for sensual gratification (Cicero, 2000). He also argued that while inherent, human dignity implies a degree of normative behaviour reflected in stoic ideals.

“Moreover, if we are willing to reflect on the high worth and dignity of our nature, we shall realise how degrading it is to wallow in decadence and to live a soft and effeminate life, and how honourable is a life of thrift, self-control, austerity, and sobriety” (Cicero, 2000, p. 37).

Cicero and Kant, like many thinkers and writers on the topic of human dignity, concluded that while it is inherent and irrevocable, its presence implies normative behaviour that respects the dignity in oneself and others.

Human dignity as normative behaviour. This view reflects the idea that one’s dignity is not an inherent trait, but dependent upon the degree to which a person behaves according to certain norms of dignity. Human dignity as a matter of normative behaviour inclines us “to think in terms of comparative degrees of human distinction or dignity – and of some as more dignified than others” (Meilaender, 2009, p. 6.). Some refer to this understanding of dignity as “social dignity” and have specifically applied it to the study of marginalized people groups (Oeur, 2016). In contemporary usage, dignity as normative behaviour can be understood in the word *dignified*. When someone acts in a dignified manner, we understand them to be acting in a manner consistent with an established norm (Melden, 1992). Using dignitaries as an example, Melden indicates that we expect them to exhibit dignified behaviours such as thoughtfulness, resoluteness, and confidence. Düwell argues that dignity as normative behaviour involves the application of rationality to one’s actions, emotions, sobriety, and “to stay in control of himself” (Düwell, 2014c, p. 26). As an example of this line of thought, Rosen argues that dignity is displayed in one’s manner of speech (a behaviour),

“Dignitas and its relative, gravitas, were used (notably, by Cicero himself in his De Oratore) to characterize speech that was weighty and majestic, in contrast to discourse that was light and charming (which was referred to by the words gratias and venustus). And (as our own modern usage) the term was applied not just to the manner of speech but to the speaker him – it always was ‘him’-self. We have here the roots of the association of the idea of dignity with what is ‘dignified’ manner” (Rosen, 2012, p. 12-13).

Utilitarianism is a consequentialist framework that seeks to maximise human happiness and minimise human pain. Jeremy Bentham, the progenitor of utilitarianism, proposed “the

greatest happiness of the greatest number” as a guiding principle of this philosophy (Bentham, 2003, p. 18). Power held by the state and the rule of law provide the “guide rails” of behaviour in this model (Warnock, 2003). In the utilitarian view, human rights do not stem from inherent dignity. Instead, they are granted by the state. Normative moral behaviour is a proxy for human dignity that reflects one’s level of commitment to society through obedience to the law. Bentham famously rejected the concept of inherent natural rights as “nonsense upon stilts” (Bentham, 1843). Unlike Kant, Bentham argues that morality is only measured by the outcomes of behaviour (i.e. utility) and that state power is the only way to direct human behaviour toward moral goodness.

While Kant introduced a paradigm shift from human dignity as a matter of social rank to a matter of universal, inherent worth, he also established a moral foundation for maintaining human dignity as normative behaviour (Bayefsky, 2013). In the Kantian approach, inherent dignity entitles a person to a certain manner of treatment that is respectful of the “humanity in his person” (Bayefsky, 2013, p. 817). In other words, Kant argues that if humans have inherent dignity, they also have responsibilities to observe certain moral norms as a means of respecting that dignity. Citing the German philosopher Friedrich Schiller, Rosen extends the moralistic implications of Kantian dignity to also include “grace” for those times in which we are called to respect the dignity of others even when we are not inclined to do so. He notes,

“Grace and dignity are the characteristic expressions of two cardinal moral virtues: The ability to act well spontaneously (grace) and the ability to act well despite the resistance of our natural inclinations (dignity)”
(Rosen, 2012, p. 35).

Price (2008) argues that there are practical outcomes of Kantian dignity in the workplace, namely that leaders are normatively obligated to engage their followers through consent rather than coercion. Following a similar line of reasoning, Hicks (2016) suggests that a “code of civility” should be adopted by those in societal leadership roles. She outlines ten “elements of dignity” that she believes are behaviours that respect the dignity of others: acceptance of identity, recognition, acknowledgement, inclusion, safety, fairness, independence, understanding, benefit of the doubt, and accountability (Hicks, 2016; 2018).

Adam Smith did not explicitly mention human dignity in his writings but did have a well-conceived idea of dignity based on his theory of moral sentiments (Smith, 2009; Debes, 2012). Debes argues that Smith essentially held a view that dignity is a matter of normative

behaviour. In the theory of moral sentiments, Smith suggests that all humans have a degree of self-regard, even self-love, combined with a capacity for self-determination. A person honours the dignity of another person by recognizing in them their self-regard and capacity for self-determination. Debes specifically notes that, following this model, individuals honour the dignity of others by engaging them in matters that pertain to them and allowing them to exercise their self-regard and self-determination in those matters (Debes, 2012). In tying this idea to modern leadership practice, DePree states, “Few elements in the work process are as important to personal dignity as the opportunity to influence one’s own destiny” (DePree, 1989, p. 35). The findings of Kyle and Wond (2018) suggest that this concept is not merely a theoretical concept, but an element of lived experience of leaders and followers in the workplace.

Demonstrating that the lines between the four main approaches to human dignity are not perfectly clean, Den Hartogh connects dignity as normative behaviour with dignity as rank by stating, “A mayor can have dignity because of his function and lack it because of his behaviour” (Den Hartogh, 2014, p. 202). Den Hartogh reveals one of the most significant difficulties with the normative behaviour approach: it is relativistic and temporal and, as such, difficult ground on which to base a theory. Baumann (2007) proposes that dignity as normative behaviour and dignity as inherent worth coexist as two distinct and uniquely useful ideas. To aid the distinction, he refers to human dignity as normative behaviour as *dignity simpliciter* and human dignity as inherent worth as *human dignity*. Mitchell (2017) proposes that human dignity as a matter of rank and human dignity as a matter of normative behaviour can be understood together through the lens of performativity, in which the words of dignity become the action and basis for action in the organisational context. Some have tied dignity as normative behaviour to the process of personal growth, suggesting that it must be developed through appropriate action (Sison et al, 2016).

Human dignity as an illegitimate concept. Some deny the concept of human dignity altogether. Addressing concerns about the use of human dignity in bioethics debates, for example, one commentator argues that human dignity is a bogus concept that hinders human progress, saying it is nothing more than a proxy for human autonomy (Pinker, 2008). Reflecting similar concerns, Macklin states, “Dignity is a useless concept [...] and can be eliminated without any loss of content” (Macklin, 2003, p. 1420). Some argue that human dignity is an illegitimate concept simply because there is no agreement on its definition.

Without a universal definition, it is argued, human dignity lacks value as a philosophical construct that, if there was an agreed definition, might carry universally normative implications (Pinker, 2008).

Schopenhauer criticised Kant's assumption of the existence of transcendent moral laws. Even if such laws existed, he argued, man is not obligated to keep them without empirical, *a posteriori*, knowledge of them (Schopenhauer, 1995; Wolf, 2015). Schopenhauer could not accept Kant's assumption of transcendent moral laws because this, in turn, would also require the assumption of a transcendent lawgiver (Wolf, 2015). Schopenhauer strongly criticises the second formulation of Kant's Categorical Imperative, describing the concept of an "end in itself" as a *contradictio in adjecto* (Schopenhauer, 1995). Schopenhauer considered human dignity, at least in Kant's formulation, to be without merit. He argued,

"[...] that expression, dignity of man, once uttered by Kant, afterward became the shibboleth of all the perplexed and empty-headed moralists who concealed behind that imposing expression their lack of any real basis of morals, or, at any rate, of one that had any meaning" (Schopenhauer, 1995, p. 100).

Behavioural psychologist, B.F. Skinner, offers an extensive critique of human dignity in his book, *Beyond Dignity and Freedom* (Skinner, 1971). He argues that human dignity, human autonomy, and human freedom are examples of non-scientific thinking about the nature of humanity. He proposes that the primary task of behavioural psychology is to abolish the conception of the autonomous human. Instead, he argues, humans are merely following a course of thought and actions that are existentially predetermined by their chemical makeup (Skinner, 1971; Schaeffer, 1982). Skinner writes,

"What is being abolished is autonomous man – the inner man, the homunculus, the possessing demon, the man defended by the literatures of freedom and dignity. His abolition has long been overdue. Autonomous man is a device used to explain what we cannot explain in any other way. He has been constructed from our ignorance, and as our understanding increases, the very stuff of which he is composed vanishes" (Skinner, 1971, pp. 200-201).

Advancements in the natural sciences, especially in gene therapy and reproductive medicine, have raised questions about the legitimacy of human dignity. For example, the field of bioethics has become an important center of debate on human dignity. With its focus on the questions of life, health, and death, there may be more references to human dignity in the

sphere of bioethics debates than in any other contemporary domain (Düwell, 2014b). It has been suggested that any moral standing of humans above other forms of life is inconsistent with the core tenants of Darwinism (Rachels, 1990). Darwin himself equivocated somewhat on this, suggesting that there is a moral distinction between humans and animals (Dixon, 2007). Jacque Monod (1971), also arguing from a Darwinian viewpoint, suggests that all life is the result of cosmic chance and that the human life form is not inherently more valuable than other matter and energy in the universe. He argues that human values, including the concept of human dignity, are arbitrary and have no inherent metaphysical foundation (Monod, 1971; Schaeffer, 1982).

Rosen, a proponent of human dignity as a basis for human rights and as a unifying principle for the decent treatment of others, offers two additional arguments against the concept of human dignity that, while not commonly referenced in the literature, may be held by some (Rosen, 2013). In making these arguments, he is not advocating for these positions as much as listing them for the sake of completeness. First, he notes that human dignity as a matter of rank or status is a self-enacted claim, which could undermine its merits as a useful construct. Second, he suggests that human dignity as rank, when considered as a universal human trait, implies that no one actually has a distinct rank. To make this point, he quotes a song from Gilbert and Sullivan's light opera, *The Gondoliers*: "When everybody's somebody then no one's anybody."

2.2.4 Human Dignity and Human Rights

Even those that deny the legitimacy of human dignity as a concept cannot deny its prevalence in human discourse. Most human interactions and, as shown in the next section, many legal systems around the world assume human dignity to be a normative value and a foundation for human rights. Further, while philosophers disagree about the meaning and content of human dignity and more broadly, the principles of morals, there is general agreement about their implication (Bayefsky, 2013).

Human dignity is often a key assumption in the discussion of human rights (Schachter, 1983; Meyer, 1992; Sulmasy, 2007; Mattson and Clark, 2011; Kleinig and Evans, 2013). It is assumed that since human beings have dignity, they are worthy of respect and, in turn, have rights (Sulmasy, 2007; Kleinig and Evans, 2013; Den Hartogh, 2014). This has been referred

to as the “respect-as-observance” of human dignity (Rosen, 2012). Mattson and Clark suggest that dignity justifies the bestowing of rights because all humans are “intrinsically special” (Mattson and Clark, 2011). Sulmasy proposes that human rights extend from dignity which, in turn, is based on intrinsic properties of the species: “language, rationality, love, free will, moral agency, creativity, and aesthetic sensibility” (Sulmasy, 2007, p.16). A common view of human dignity in the human rights literature is that the acknowledgement, in word and action, of human dignity by individuals, institutions, and states is a pathway to human well-being and that such acknowledgement has a moralistic dimension (Kleinig and Evans, 2013). An explicit commitment to inherent human rights is reflected in nearly every national constitution adopted since WWII (Glendon, 2001) as well as many other international accords such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Social, Economic and Cultural Rights (Anderson, 2009). A few examples of human dignity references in constitutional documents are listed in Table 2-4.

Document	Reference to Human Dignity
U.N. Universal Declaration of Human Rights	The first sentence of the preamble of U.N. Universal Declaration of Human Rights states, “Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world [...]” (U.N. General Assembly, 1948).
Preamble of the Charter of the United Nations	“we the peoples of the United Nations [...] are [...] determined [...] to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women of nations large and small.” (U.N. General Assembly, 1945).
Basic Law for the Federal Republic of Germany (i.e. The German Constitution)	Article 1: “human dignity is inviolable”. Article 2: “The German people therefore acknowledge inviolable and inalienable human rights as the basis of every community, of peace and of justice in the world.” (German Parliamentary Council, 1949).
Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (i.e. The Helsinki Accords)	...human rights: “derive from the inherent dignity of the human person.” (Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, 1975).
Constitution of the United States of America	The phrase “human dignity” does not appear in the U.S. Constitution or the Bill of Rights. It is considered by scholars, however, to be a fundamental value underlying the founding documents of the United States (Parent, 1992).

Table 2-4: Examples of Human Dignity in Constitutional Documents

While most scholars argue that human rights extend from human dignity (i.e. we have rights because we have dignity), Barak offers a somewhat more nuanced approach by arguing that human dignity is, itself, a right (Barak, 2015). In other words, he argues that humans have the right to have dignity. This view extends from his definition of human dignity,

“[...] the purpose of the right to human dignity is fulfilment of the humanity of a person as such. Human dignity as a constitutional right is a person’s freedom to write her life story. It is her free will. It is her autonomy and her freedom to shape her life and fulfill herself according to her own will rather than the will of others” (Barak, 2015, p. xix).

Note that Barak connects human dignity to one’s sense of fulfilment in life. This will be addressed in later chapters as we consider the higher order needs of self-actualisation and membership.

In spite of its prevalence in international law, human dignity as the basis of human rights, or as a right itself, is not without its detractors. For example, it has been suggested that human dignity may be nothing more than a capacity to assert legal claims (Feinberg, 1970). Similarly, the political arguments of Hannah Arendt have been used to suggest that human dignity may simply be the right to have rights (Menke, 2014). Others suggest that the concept of human dignity may be losing its relevance in some legal cases, including those involving human rights, because it is ill-defined (Shultziner and Rabinovici, 2012).

2.2.5 Human Dignity in the Workplace

Research on human dignity in the workplace has, to a large degree, focused on worker’s rights, unionisation, and progressive political interests. Émile Durkheim, Karl Marx, and Max Weber shared a concern about advanced industrialisation as a destroyer of human dignity (Bolton, 2007). Durkheim was concerned that a societal focus on economic efficiency would result in the loss of social norms that would, in turn, undermine the value of the individual (Bolton, 2007). Marx suggested that in selling his labour, the labourer loses his “labour-power” and ultimately his dignity (Marx, 2009; Healy and Wilkowska, 2017).

Much of the management literature dealing with human dignity reflects a Marxian view of the workplace, characterised by oppressed workers locked in a perpetual struggle with powerful business owners for equalisation of power, profit, and status. This view of human

dignity is limited in that it focuses on workers exclusively and gives little consideration to the dignity of managers, executives, and owners. It also denies the possibility that managers and leaders may genuinely care about their employees enough to practice leadership behaviours that acknowledge and respect the dignity of others. Rather than considering the broader implications of human dignity in the workplace, many efforts to focus on human dignity in the workplace are “reduced to the narrow sense of freedom from bullying or harassment” (Barrett and Thomson, 2012, p. 87). One researcher argues while employers should not “extol the goodness of scrubbing toilets and laundering linens”, they should acknowledge that the “basic dignity and inherent human worth of the oppressed transcends their labor, which often fails to express or actualize their human potential.” (Veltman, 2016, p. 33). In other words, she argues that while some labour is considered lowly and degrading, the dignity of the labourer is found in their person rather than in their work.

Hannah Arendt attempted to address some of these issues by proposing a refined set of definitions. According to her definitions, *labour* involves activities required to sustain life, like cooking and cleaning, while *work* involves activities that produce durable artefacts that persist beyond the grind of daily life (Arendt, 1958). Castrillón also counters the traditional Marxian view by suggesting that both workers and managers have dignity in the workplace. In framing his argument, he asks two questions, both of which are relevant to the research objectives of this research:

“First, how can managers preserve the dignity and value of all the people affected by their actions and decisions? Second: how can managers themselves come to deserve the dignity of the offices they hold?”
(Castrillón, 2012, p. 160).

With the assumption that humans have inherent dignity, he argues that managers must be trained in the concepts of human dignity. He proposes that business schools have a responsibility to teach on human dignity along four philosophical dimensions: 1) the praxeological dimension – practical wisdom manifested in goal-oriented actions, 2) the epistemological dimension – knowledge of human dignity theories and foundations, 3) the axiological dimension – wisdom manifested through the values that advance respect for human dignity, and 4) the ontological dimension – wisdom manifested in managers through a “preoccupation with its promotion in others” (Castrillón, 2012, p. 175).

Sayer (2007) argues that “dignified work” requires that workers be respected, trusted, and taken seriously. He argues that work should not involve being taken advantage of, being made vulnerable, or doing work that is demeaning. Hodson (2001) suggests that dignity in the workplace rests on the worker’s ability to establish a sense of self-worth and self-respect, demand a living wage and equal opportunity, resist abuse, and take pride in his work. The Marxian view suggests that workers must “struggle to achieve dignity and to gain some measure of meaning and self-realisation at work” and that managers and owners cannot be trusted to meet these objectives (Hodson, 2001, p. 4). Gomberg suggests that the dignity of work is tied to social status and access to opportunity. He notes that people living “lives of disadvantage, lives of mind-numbing labour, social inferiority, and diminished social esteem” do not have access to dignified labour opportunities (Gomberg, 2007, p. 166). Some research has referenced human dignity violations in the workplace. For example, citing numerous accidents and deaths, Barrett and Thomson (2012) connect human dignity with occupational safety. Citing Roman Catholic social teaching as applied to the health care industry, Hamel (2007) claims that human dignity is the basis for a “just workplace” that includes provisions for processes that are physically safe and not harmful to a worker’s moral integrity. In her exploration of severance compensation practices, Vettori (2012) suggests that human dignity and commercial viability (i.e. profit motivation) are fundamentally opposed to one another.

This raises an important question, “Are the concepts of business performance and human dignity compatible?” (Morin, 2012, p. 190). Morin offers an answer to his own question by suggesting that they are in tension, but not utterly incompatible. He suggests that a truly free market would find an equilibrium that balances working conditions and productivity. In that equilibrium, the organisation would produce profits by employing management practices that acknowledge and respect dignity in the workplace. As a balance to Morin’s free market approach, some have argued that human dignity should be included in a broader structure of organisational governance and oversight for corporate social responsibility (CSR) (Crowther and Davila Gomez, 2012). They contend that the activities of an organisation impact more than just the shareholders alone, and therefore it should be accountable to a broader set of stakeholders. They are not specific about what form human dignity governance would take, but the implication is that the dignity of workers and managers must be a consideration.

Building on a theme of human dignity, some researchers have called for “decent work”, “dignified work”, and “good work” movements (Ackroyd, 2007; Barber, 2007; Coats, 2007;

Philpott, 2007; Sayer, 2007; Bolton, 2010; International Labour Organisation, 2015; Gilabert, 2016) that reduce repetition, boredom, and “dirty work”, while raising the minimum wage. Abrams (2002) argues that low wages, those he describes as “below the bread-line”, do not allow a worker to experience the fullness of human dignity. The former General Secretary of the Trades Union Congress in the U.K. believes that by balancing power between business owners, managers, and workers, trade unions play a role in the maintenance of human dignity in the workplace (Barber, 2007). In this sense, he suggests that the trade union is a “pro-dignity institution.” Applying the political philosophy of Hannah Arendt to the organisational context, Ingman argues that an organisation that promotes individual participation and expression is promoting “reversed totalitarianism” and those that do not are “undignified” (Ingman, 2017). Building on the language of the U.N. Universal Declaration of Human Rights (U.N. General Assembly, 1948), Gilabert suggests that employers can create good work environments that proactively affirm human dignity as an aspect of the management-employee relationship (Gilabert, 2016). Borrowing from social contract theory, Aguado et al (2017) suggest that professional communities (e.g. trade and professional associations) can establish human dignity norms for the workplace that extend beyond the expectations of short-term profit-making as minimally acceptable outcomes of the firm as a societal stakeholder.

Recognizing a lack of quantitative data on workplace dignity⁴, Kristen Lucas and her team at the University of Louisville have been exploring quantitative studies in workplace dignity (Lucas 2015; 2017; Thomas and Lucas, 2019). She defines workplace dignity as “the self-recognized and other-recognized worth acquired from (or injured by) engaging in work activity” (Lucas, 2017, p. 2549). Her model of workplace dignity involves four elements: 1) acknowledgement that workplace dignity is rooted in relationship, communication, and interaction, 2) understanding that dignity is experienced by most individuals as both inherent and earned, 3) understanding that the sense of dignity is very personal and the individual involved is the final arbiter of their sense of workplace dignity, and 4) an understanding that workplace dignity is often experienced more by its absence than its presence (Lucas, 2017;

⁴ According to Thomas and Lucas (2019), the only known quantitative dataset on workplace dignity was developed by Hodson (Hodson and Roscigno, 2004). This dataset served as the starting point for their work which has since created a new dataset based on the Workplace Dignity Scale (Thomas and Lucas, 2019).

Thomas and Lucas, 2019). Most recently, Thomas and Lucas (2019) have proposed and explored a workplace dignity scale (WDS). The WDS is built upon a six-factor model of workplace dignity that includes five positive items, namely 1) respectful interaction, 2) recognition of competence and contribution, 3) equality, 4) inherent value, and 5) general feelings of workplace dignity, as well as one negative item, 6) the experience of indignity. By incorporating both an inherent dignity concept and an earned dignity concept, the WDS reflects an attempt to address dignity as an inherent trait and as a behavioural norm. Thomas and Lucas (2019) acknowledge that this approach is problematic in that human dignity cannot be both inherent and earned. Tiwari and Sharma (2019) have also explored quantitative approaches with a workplace dignity scale that has produced similar results.

A few recent efforts have been made to connect the ideas of human dignity to the field of management and leadership at the level of higher-order needs of workers. Dierksmeier (2011) and Pirson (2017) have been exploring ways to recast the traditional view of humans in the workplace from economic to humanistic management that is driven by the ideals of the common good rather than individualistic gain. Kostera and Pirson (2017) have extended these ideas in an edited volume, covering some of the concepts of human dignity in the organisational context along with some of its practical challenges. Mea and Sims (2019) have proposed that human dignity can serve as a core principle of business ethics and management practice that results in practical wisdom, self-control, magnanimity, and humility in the workplace. Field work reported by Worline and Dutton (2017), suggests that when employees feel devalued and “at the whim of supervisors who didn’t understand the difficulties of their work”, it can lead to disengagement in the workplace (p. 8). Applying her work in the application of human dignity to resolve international conflict to leadership, Hicks (2018) suggests that acknowledgement of dignity is a human need. She proposes that raising “dignity consciousness” in the workplace is a responsibility of organisational leaders. She argues that this should be done in such a way that acknowledges the hierarchical power structure while also respecting the inherent dignity of everyone in the organisation. She also suggests that respecting another person’s dignity is an element of showing love for that person, which she considers a transcendent (i.e. spiritual) goal of human development.

Another dimension of workplace dignity as an element of higher-order needs involves the concept of mattering. Mattering is not a synonym for dignity, even in the Kantian framework. It is, however, an element and consequence of dignity that offers an additional nuance for the

ways dignity might be understood and experienced in the workplace and other settings. The Oxford English Dictionary defines mattering this way: “to be of importance; to have significance.” As noted above, the Kantian conception of human dignity involves human value or worth (Kant, 1996a; 1996b). Human dignity as a matter of inherent worth or value is also used by most contemporary writers on this subject (Schachter, 1983; Meyer, 1992; Pinker, 2008; Waldron, 2009; Riley, 2010; Kateb, 2011; Mattson and Clark, 2011; Shultziner and Rabinovici, 2012; McCrudden, 2013). Another way to say that a human has value or worth is to say that they matter as a unique human person. This connection provides a helpful framework for relating dignity to the human need for significance that will be explored further in Chapters 5 and 6. Dixon Rayle provides a helpful and succinct definition of mattering that connects it to human need. She writes, mattering is “the fundamental need that individuals have to feel important and significant to others” (Dixon Rayle, 2006, p. 483). Another researcher defines interpersonal mattering as “the individual’s feeling that he or she counts, makes a difference” (Rosenberg, 1985, p. 215). Research suggests a positive relationship between one’s sense of mattering and well-being (Dixon Rayle, 2006; Jung, 2015; Lampersky, 2018; Bucher et al, 2019; Matera et al, 2019; Reece et al, 2019). When a person matters to another, there is a bond of mutual knowledge, concern, and appreciation that extends beyond the level of acquaintance. Several researchers have explored the role of mattering in the workplace (Schultheiss, 2007; Jung, 2015; Blustein, 2011; Dixon, 2016; Bucher et al, 2019; Reece et al, 2019). These connections will be explored in more detail in Chapter 6.

2.3 Human Dignity Connections in Spiritual Leadership

2.3.1 The Primacy of People in Spiritual Leadership

Although human dignity is explicitly mentioned in just one of Fry’s research papers (Fry, Matherly, Ouimet, 2010), the “primacy of people and human well-being” is a key assumption of spiritual leadership theory (Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013, p. 223). Human dignity is an implied, rather than explicit, concept in spiritual leadership. Even though very few direct references to human dignity exist in the theory of spiritual leadership, at least four implied connections can be identified: 1) basic assumptions of human dignity, 2) altruistic love as the basis for mutual well-being, 3) wholeness of the human person, and 4) service to others as an

acknowledgement of human dignity. The first of these will be explored in the next section, 2.3.2. The other three connections will be explored in the following sections.

2.3.2 Basic Assumptions of Human Dignity in Spiritual Leadership Theory

Four basic assumptions of human dignity in the theory of spiritual leadership will be explored in the remainder of this section: 1) assumption of human dignity as an aspect of inner life, 2) assumption of human value over organisational value, 3) assumption of human autonomy and rationality, and 4) assumption of human equality and de-emphasis of rank.

Assumptions of human dignity as an aspect of inner life. Even though the phrase “human dignity” is rarely used in Fry’s description of spiritual leadership, the theory contains at least three implicit assumptions of human dignity: human value, autonomy, and equality. These assumptions extend throughout spiritual leadership and are specifically reinforced by the inner life aspect of the theory. That is, while not stated explicitly in the theory, human value and human dignity are integral aspects of the values, attitudes, and worldview (i.e. inner life and values) of spiritual leaders and reflective of intrinsic value placed on humans by leaders that practice spiritual leadership. This will be explored in more detail in Chapter 4.

Assumption of human value over, or at least in balance with, organisational value. Perhaps the central foundation of spiritual leadership theory is the idea that people matter. By emphasising triple bottom-line outcomes, the theory does not ignore the instrumental needs of the organisation, but it does prioritize human well-being. Fry and Nisiewicz state,

“An assumption of the spiritual leadership model is that the organisation exists to serve people and not to make people serve it. Therefore, human beings are more than human capital or human resources [...] The primacy of people is essential to implementing [spiritual leadership]” (Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013, p. 223).

Note that this statement employs a concept of human value that is consistent with Kant’s Categorical Imperative (Kant, 1996a), namely that a human, or an organisation of humans in this case, should not use another human as a means to an end.

Assumption of human autonomy and rationality. The intrinsic motivation model of spiritual leadership reflects an assumption that every leader and every follower is capable of having autonomous, rational thoughts and desires. Fry argues that people are motivated to explore and employ these thoughts and desires as a way to bring value and find meaning in the workplace (Fry, 2003). Kant argued that this concept, rational autonomy, is the foundation of human dignity (Kant, 1996b). The desire for personal growth (e.g. mastery of craft in the workplace) along with transcendent realisations of self are example of autonomous rational thought that not only serve the self, but also the organisation as leaders and followers seek to serve one another in pursuit of shared objectives (Pfeffer, 2010).

Assumption of human equality and de-emphasis of rank. There is significant emphasis in spiritual leadership on the importance of both the leader *and* follower (Fry, 2003). In the interest of the organisation, followers and leaders seek to serve one another, as well as other stakeholders, in the context of community. Membership in the workplace community is defined by commitment to the vision and shared objectives, as well as by the application of individual abilities (i.e. applied calling), not exclusively by organisational rank (Fry, 2003). As such, the spiritual leadership model appeals to equality as an aspect of inherent human dignity. It also establishes norms of behaviour, namely commitment to the shared vision and objectives, that support human dignity as model of normative behaviour (Fry, 2003). Notice the human dignity language offered by Kouzes and Pozner: “When leaders clearly communicate a shared vision of an organization, they ennoble those who work on its behalf. They elevate the human spirit” (Kouzes and Pozner, 2002, p. 152). The de-emphasis of rank involved with the establishment of shared values appeals to the Kantian spirit of human dignity as described by Rosen:

“[...] the Kantian idea of acknowledging the inherent dignity of morality underpins a strongly egalitarian – bourgeois, if you like – conception of honor as something that we owe to everyone (ourselves included) in equal measure, quite different from the aristocratic understanding of honor as part of a status hierarchy between inferiors and superiors” (Rosen, 2012, p. 27),

2.3.3 Altruistic Love as a Basis for Mutual Well-being

The theory of spiritual leadership is based on the assumption that leaders and followers share a desire for mutual well-being that is motivated by shared objectives, hope/faith, and

altruistic love (Fry, 2003). The desire for the well-being of another person is, by definition, altruistic love (Wojtyla, 1981). Such reciprocal relationships (i.e. reciprocal desire for the well-being of the other) are not built on the assumption of *quid pro quo*, but on expectations of mutual respect and appreciation (Mattson and Clark, 2011; Coates, 2013). Maslow (1971) describes what he calls “unambivalent” love:

“The point at which a corner is turned is when the love becomes so great and so pure (unambivalent) for the object itself that its good is what we want, not what it can do for us, i.e., when it passes beyond being means and becomes an end” (Maslow, 1971, p. 136).

Referencing Kant’s Categorical Imperative and adding the Greek concept of *agape* (i.e. unconditional love for humanity), Wojtyla (1981) not only suggests that desire for the well-being of another person is the definition of altruistic love, but that love is the only reasonable posture of one human toward another. Together, these ideas suggest that altruistic love is rooted in the recognition of the inherent value and dignity of the other person. Fry picks up this theme by suggesting that we love someone by showing “care, concern, and appreciation” for them (Fry, 2003, p. 712). In other words, altruistic love for a colleague, the desire for them to flourish, and expenditure of personal effort toward a community built upon mutual well-being rests on the assumption that humans have value (i.e. dignity). As leaders and followers work together in the context of spiritual leadership, altruistic love forms a bond of mutual value. This concept is expressed, albeit not directly, in the membership and calling aspects of spiritual leadership theory (Fry, 2003).

One notion of mutual well-being based on altruistic love builds on an assumption of mutual respect (Coates, 2013). In proposing a “needs-conception” of human dignity, Baumann (2007) suggests that the human need for respect from others is an essential element of human dignity. Building on Hegel’s conception of mutual recognition⁵, he begins his argument by suggesting that as egoistic, social creatures, we inherently need the respect of others. He suggests that we can only accept full respect from those that we ourselves fully respect. His conclusion is that if we do not give full respect to others, we will ourselves not receive the

⁵ In *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Hegel describes the complex scenario of two egoistic, self-conscious beings acknowledging each other as egoistic, self-conscious beings. He writes, “They recognize themselves as mutually recognizing each other.” (Hegel, 1977, p. 112)

full respect we need as egoistic, social creatures. Mattson and Clark also suggest a link between human dignity and giving respect to the “other” that benefits the other more than the self. They note, “granting dignity to others can be accompanied [by] a willingness to sacrifice oneself in the service of others” (Mattson and Clark, 2011, p. 308). Preliminary field work suggests that mutual respect is a key aspect of the ways that leaders and followers experience human dignity in the workplace (Lucas, 2015; Kyle and Wond, 2018).

Positive psychology offers an alternative approach to understanding altruistic behaviours. Rather than seeing altruism in fundamentally egoistic terms, as explained above, “positive altruism” accepts a balance of benefits for both the altruistic actor and the recipient (Irani, 2018). In this approach, the egoistic benefits of altruistic behaviour are seen as largely incidental, unintended side-effects of otherwise unselfish behaviour rooted in genuine empathy for the other (Batson et al, 2011; Irani, 2018). Empathy, in this approach is defined as an “other-focused emotional response that is congruent with and provoked by the perceived welfare of the other person” (Irani, 2018. p. 20). Positive altruism, as described here, is more closely aligned with the theory of spiritual leadership than the mutual respect approach since the theory assumes, in its framework of altruistic love, a genuine desire for the other person’s well-being.

2.3.4 Wholeness of the Human Person

Content and hybrid motivation theories suggest that humans are driven to satisfy both lower- and higher-order needs (Maslow, 1943; 1971; McClelland, 1961; 1985; Herzberg, 1964; Alderfer, 1969; Katz and Kahn, 1978; Deci and Ryan, 2000). Spiritual leadership is primarily focused on higher-order needs that are found in pursuits that have transcendent and spiritual meaning to leaders and followers, such as serving others, making good products (i.e. that have value), and working in a positive environment with supportive co-workers (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). In his revised theory of need, Maslow suggested that the only way for humans to self-actualise (a higher-order need) is to make efforts toward a cause or purpose outside of themselves, generally involving other people (Maslow, 1971). He referred to this concept as “self-transcendence” and established it as a “whole person” ideal for well-being. Maslow refers to Kant’s Categorical Imperative in explaining his revised theory:

“Transcendence refers to the very highest and most inclusive or holistic levels of human consciousness, behaving and relating as ends rather than as means, to one-self, to significant others, to human beings in general, to other species, to nature, and to the cosmos ” (Maslow, 1971, p. 269).

Deci and Ryan offer a somewhat different, but aligned, view of this concept:

“[...] humans are active, growth-oriented organisms who are naturally inclined toward integration of their psychic elements into a unified sense of self and integration of themselves into larger social structures [...] it is part of the adaptive design of the human organism to engage in interesting activities, to exercise capacities to pursue connectedness in social groups, and to integrate intrapsychic and interpersonal experiences into relative unity” (Deci and Ryan, 2000, p. 229).

In other words, the psychological framework of need and motivation leads humans to pursue meaning-making and unifying activities that are interesting to them (i.e. sense of calling) and that involve relatedness in social communities (i.e. membership). These ideas come together in spiritual leadership which encourages the leader to develop a set of leadership practices and cultural norms within the organisation that embrace a concept of the whole person, encompassing lower- and higher-order needs (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). Altruistic love in the organisational context can be demonstrated by leaders when they are mindful of “each person as a total person – one with needs, wants, and desires” (van Dierendonck and Patterson, 2015).

The whole person concept is also connected to Fry’s concept of spiritual well-being (Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013). To a large extent, leaders and workers have been discouraged from expressing and exploring personal spirituality in the workplace (Hicks, 2003; Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, 2010; Hill and Smith; 2010; Pfeffer, 2010). Requiring employees to bisect themselves by “checking their spirituality at the door” actually leads to workplace frustration and demotivation (Hicks, 2003; Hill and Smith; 2010; Pfeffer, 2010). Spiritual leadership incorporates these ideas and assumes that leaders and followers are more intrinsically motivated when they are able to bring all of themselves, including their spirituality to pursue work that has transcendent (i.e. higher order) value to them. Fry writes,

“The spiritual quest is one that emphasizes a dynamic process where people purposefully seek to discover their potential, an ultimate purpose,

and a personal relationship with a higher power or being that may or may not be called God” (Fry, 2003, p. 705).

In this sense, asking followers or leaders to check their spirituality at the door is a violation of that person’s dignity in the Kantian formulation. Kant (1996b) argues that human dignity is built upon our autonomous rationality. In our rationality, we are capable of a range of ideas that would apply in the workplace. Our thoughts about moral judgments, for example, are often informed by our spiritual and religious experiences. When colleagues are asked to leave this aspect of their rational being at home, whether moral judgments or ideas they have about the sort of work they like to do, the value they bring to the organisation as an integral, whole, and autonomous person is decreased.

By assuming a high value of the human person, human dignity provides a metaphysical foundation for spiritual leadership, and a framework for spiritual wellbeing. Adding nuance to this concept, Kateb (2011) suggests that an element of human dignity is the diversity of talents and abilities we have individually. This argument is made in the context of a broader human rights framework, but the implication is that we can respect the dignity of individuals by encouraging them to use those talents and abilities. Following his logic and merging it with spiritual leadership theory, the implication is that an aspect of respecting human dignity in the workplace involves enabling and encouraging leaders and followers to apply the full range of their unique abilities and talents to the mission of the organisation.

2.3.5 Service to Others as an Acknowledgement of Human Dignity

Spiritual leadership incorporates a stakeholder concept in which leaders and followers are motivated to serve a broad base of stakeholders, including one another (Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013). Serving others as an act of altruistic love is an integral part of the intrinsic motivation model of spiritual leadership. Fairholm and Gronau (2015) argue that in this and other ways, service to others is an integral aspect of spiritual leadership. Maslow (1971) suggests that service to others is an element of self-transcendence which, in turn, is closely linked to self-actualisation.

In the intrinsic motivation model of spiritual leadership, service is performed in the context of community and in pursuit of shared objectives and outcomes (Fry, 2003). Empirical research results suggest that when people strive toward something beyond themselves,

particularly serving others, there are positive personal and organisational outcomes (Paloutzian et al, 2010). Spiritual leaders, then, are motivated not simply by the single bottom-line of financial profit, but by the triple bottom-line, which also includes people and planet (Fry, 2003; Slaper and Hall, 2011). The idea that serving others can produce motivational value for leaders and followers beyond the financial bottom-line implies that humans, specifically those being served, have value (i.e. Kantian dignity). In other words, we receive satisfaction from serving others because we recognise inherent value in them. It follows that the transcendent, higher order need to serve others, and the spiritual wellbeing received from doing so, can be understood in the metaphysical framework of human dignity. Kurth summarises this idea:

“Service is the natural expression of spirituality. When we recognise our inherent connection with others, we can be inspired to serve, and in the process, fulfil a higher purpose and be linked with the deepest part of ourselves” (Kurth, 2003, p. 448).

Baumann (2007) suggests that unless we reciprocate the honour shown to us, we are not acknowledging the dignity of others, especially those that honoured us in the first place. In building upon the connections between human dignity and spiritual leadership theory, it has been suggested that leaders can find meaning by leading others in a way that enables them to achieve a sense of calling and membership in the workplace (Kyle et al, 2017a).

2.4 Literature Gaps and Related Research Opportunities

Several aspects of this research involve concepts and themes that are either ill-defined, largely unexplored, and/or contested (i.e. “good work”, human dignity, employee well-being, stakeholder theory, spirituality at work, etc.). An important research opportunity exists in the exploration of these challenges. With respect to human dignity, Rodriguez (2015) has proposed that it can be studied as an “essentially contested idea”. This is a legal construct that would allow research to proceed, even though there is disagreement about the origins and foundations of human dignity because there is relatively little disagreement about its existence and implications.

Beyond its definitional and philosophical ambiguity, there is significant opportunity to explore human dignity more broadly and more consistently in the management and leadership domains. As noted above, some research has explored the role of human dignity in

the workplace, by considering compensation, safety, worker's rights, etc. (Hodson, 2001; Ackroyd, 2007; Coats, 2007; Gomberg, 2007; Sayer, 2007; Barrett and Thomson, 2012; Vettori, 2012; Gilabert, 2016; Veltman, 2016). Human dignity has not been well-explored in the leadership literature, however. For example, it may be helpful to explore lived experiences with human dignity as an aspect of leadership in highly directive environments such as the military and law enforcement, in highly hierarchical environments such as government agencies and school systems, and in highly decentralised environments involving home-based and mobile workers.

The second bottom-line represents an under-explored area for both management and leadership research. The business academy has invested many years of effort into understanding and exploring the first bottom-line, even before recognizing the existence of the other two bottom-lines (Elkington, 1994). More recently, CSR initiatives, green movements, and government mandates have inspired significant growth in third bottom-line research. That the second bottom-line remains a largely untapped area is a significant gap in the literature. The concepts of stakeholder theory and human well-being, for example, while largely adopted in academic research, are open to exploration. There are few comprehensive studies of these concepts that explore similarities and differences between generational groups, racial and cultural groups, socio-economic groups, etc. A longitudinal study of changes in attitudes about human dignity and leadership over time may also be helpful as an indication of cultural shifts. The shift from single to triple bottom-line theory and practice is perceived by many to be a significant challenge for most profit-seeking organisations (Dierksmeier, 2011; Aguado et al, 2017; Pirson, 2017). Aguado et al (2017) have suggested an "integrated social contract theory" approach to making this shift through the adoption of accountability and standards in social communities (e.g. communities of organisations, trade associations, etc.) There is a significant gap in the research regarding the effectiveness of this sort of effort. Crowther and Davila Gomez (2012) have suggested that human dignity should be included in a broader structure of organisational oversight for corporate social responsibility (CSR). They are not specific about what form human dignity governance would take, but the implication is that the dignity of workers and managers must be a consideration. Both the theoretical and practical implications of this proposal should be explored further.

This research may call into question the term “resource” when referring to a human being. For example, Bal and de Jong write,

“[Human Resource Management] research has primarily used the Resource Based View (RBV) of the firm to explain how people can be managed in organizations...Although RBV has had some success, one of its downsides is that employees are perceived to be instrumental to the organizational goals, which have become increasingly defined in financial terms” (Bal and de Jong, 2017, p. 175).

The impact of a human dignity-based approach to leadership and the triple bottom-line will have a distinct impact on HRM research and should be further explored.

There is a growing body of research involving workplace spirituality (Hicks, 2003; Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, 2010; Paloutzian et al, 2010; Miller and Ewest, 2013; Benefiel et al, 2014). Even with this growth, there is significant opportunity to explore these topics in academic research. Workplace spirituality, expression of the inner life, and exploration of religious concepts and ideas in the secular workplace are largely considered taboo and somewhat off-limits in the workplace and academy (Hicks, 2003; Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, 2010; Benefiel et al, 2014). As leadership theories move increasingly toward promoting a sense of wholeness of the human person, this gap may become more pronounced. As such, it represents a significant opportunity for research.

As noted in Section 2.1.7, many of the future research areas for authentic leadership called for by Avolio et al (2009) also apply to spiritual leadership. For example, two interesting and related areas are: exploration of links to cognitive psychology, and research into why some leaders may be drawn to spiritual leadership while others are not. There is work required to develop a pedagogical framework and rubric for leadership development education of leadership practitioners.

Building on the framework of positive psychology (Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Seligman, 2002; 2011), positive leadership asserts that a leader is responsible to create a positive climate, positive relationships, positive communication, and positive meaning for followers (Cameron, 2008). Each of these elements are conceptually linked to the causal flow of spiritual leadership theory. Although positive leadership was published initially in 2008 and has been the subject of subsequent research publications (Cameron, Mora, et al, 2011), it makes no mention of spiritual leadership theory. This gap in the literature is an opportunity

for research involving the two theories and their underlying assumptions. For example, positive leadership proposes that leaders are responsible to create positive meaning for their followers (Cameron, 2008). Spiritual leadership features calling and membership as two elements of spiritual well-being, both of which are aspects of meaning-making for leaders and followers in the context of human dignity (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017, Kyle et al, 2017a). These theories address related topics from differing viewpoints which, when studied together, may provide helpful insight to the leadership research community.

In addition to the gaps and research opportunities revealed through critical analysis of the literature as listed above, several other specific concerns about spiritual leadership have been raised by the research community. These were discussed in Section 2.1.7. These concerns also represent opportunities for further research, so they are listed here for completeness. Krishnakumar et al (2015) have raised concerns over the theory's lack of specific leadership behaviours and character traits. Others have raised concerns over the potential dark sides and opportunities for manipulation of followers by leaders (Pfeffer, 1987; Bolton, 2010; Krishnakumar et al, 2015). Crossman (2010) has suggested that the phrase "spiritual" may be an unwelcome concept in some business and academic domains. And, a field study found that calling and membership may not be balanced as elements of well-being in the workplace (Saripudin and Rosari, 2019).

2.5 Theoretical Framework

Given the preceding body of literature in the domains of spiritual leadership and human dignity and given the research aim and questions posed in Section 1.3 above, it is fitting to describe and explore the theoretical framework that provides the lens with which this study will be conducted. The causal structure of spiritual leadership theory, as described in Section 2.1.1 and depicted in Figure 2-3, provides the foundation of the theoretical framework for this research. Spiritual leadership is relatively unique among leadership theories in that it is built upon a structure of causality (Fry, 2003). The causal structure connects the inner life of the mind and heart to leadership behaviours, intermediate outcomes for leaders and followers, and ultimate outcomes for the organisation and its stakeholders. An abstraction of the causal structure of the theoretical framework is shown below in Figure 2-4.

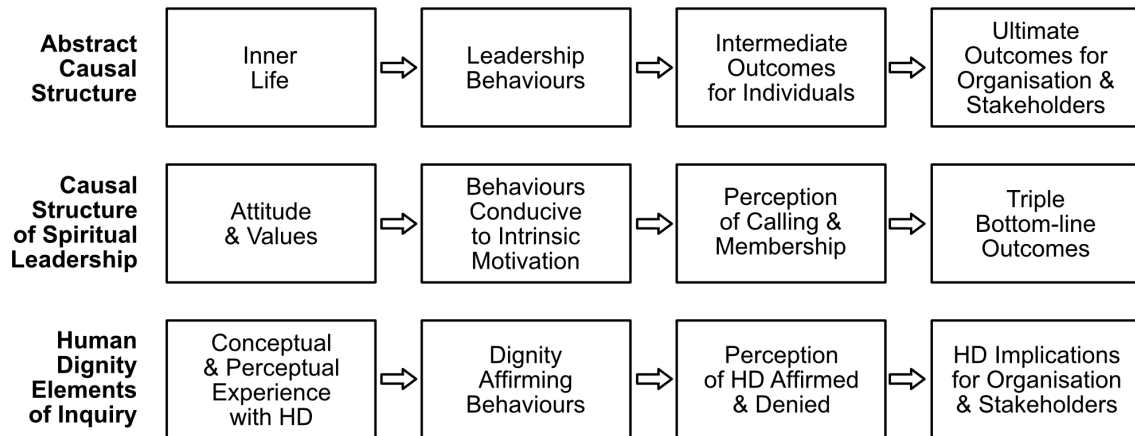


Figure 2-4: Theoretical Framework - Causal Structure

Abstract Causal Structure. Examination of spiritual leadership, as was described in Section 2.1 of the literature review, reveals that it is situated upon an abstract causal flow. It suggests that leadership behaviours flow from the inner life of the mind and heart of the leader and that these behaviours have meaningful impact, or outcomes, for themselves and others in the organisation. These intermediate outcomes, in turn, impact broader outcomes for the organisation (e.g. the achievement of instrumental and other goals) and the organisation’s stakeholders. This casual structure, which is derived as an abstraction of spiritual leadership theory, provides the lens with which the study will be conducted.

Causal Structure of Spiritual Leadership. Spiritual leadership follows the abstract causal model described above with specific elements at each step of the causal flow. As explored in Section 2.1.3 of the literature review, spiritual leadership begins with the inner life of the leader and is framed around attitudes and values, specifically regarding the “primacy of people and human well-being” (Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013, p. 223). These inward attitudes and values guide the leader to create an environment conducive to intrinsic motivation. As explored in Section 2.1.4, intrinsic motivation in spiritual leadership involves shared objectives, hope/faith, and altruistic love. As described in section 2.1.5, creating such an environment contributes to well-being, specifically the perception of calling and membership. As the members of the organisation experience these intermediate outcomes, they are

inspired to contribute to positive outcomes on the triple bottom-line as described in Section 2.1.6 of the literature review.

Human Dignity Elements of Inquiry. The abstract causal structure of spiritual leadership also provides the theoretical framework for exploring the role of human dignity in the leader-follower relationship. As explored in Sections 2.2.1, 2.2.2, and 2.2.5 of the literature review, human dignity is both theoretical and perceptual. As such, the theoretical framework provides a lens to explore the perceptions of and lived experience of human dignity in the context of the leader-follower relationship in the domain of spiritual leadership practice. This theoretical framework also supports inquiry into the relationship between dignity-affirming (or dignity-denying) leadership behaviours and the perception that one's dignity is affirmed (or denied) as a lived experience within the context of the leader-follower relationship. Finally, this framework supports inquiry into the perceptions of the value and challenge of human dignity at the organisation and stakeholder level (i.e. triple bottom-line) as well.

Guided by the research questions, the literature, and this theoretical framework, the research can explore the connections between spiritual leadership theory and human dignity as it is understood and experienced by leaders and followers. The causal structure of the theoretical framework, which is an abstraction of spiritual leadership itself, provides the basis for the interview questions as well as the interpretation and analysis of the findings which will be explored in Chapters 4, 5, and 6.

3 Research Methodology

3.1 Research Philosophy

3.1.1 Research Paradigm

The research paradigm is an overarching approach to “research problems from different theoretical and methodological perspectives” (Blaikie, 2007, p. 109). The research paradigm incorporates epistemological and ontological assumptions that impact and give meaning to the methods and results of a research project. Blaikie describes ten research paradigms that may be employed in a research project (Blaikie, 2007; 2010). Burrell and Morgan (1979) take a different approach, suggesting that there are just four paradigms. Disagreement among researchers about paradigms is widely noted in the literature (Gage, 1989; Ritchie and Lewis, 2003; Saunders et al, 2007; and Seidman, 2013). Gage coined the term “paradigm wars” to describe the intensity of the debate (Gage, 1989). In the end, the researcher must sort through the various paradigms and worldviews finally arriving at an approach that fits the research at hand and delivers a meaningful contribution to the field. Reflecting the circumstances and objectives of this project and the views of the researcher, this research follows the critical realist paradigm.

In the past thirty years, realism has emerged as the dominant paradigm in the social sciences (Saunders et al, 2007; Maxwell, 2012). Phillips defines realism to be “the view that entities exist independently of being perceived, or independently of our theories about them” (Phillips, 1987, p. 205). In other words, realism is built on a realist ontology and the perceptual, or constructivist, epistemology. Like the positivist paradigm, realism makes the ontological assumption of an objective reality (Blaikie, 2007; 2010; Saunders et al, 2007; Maxwell, 2012; Seidman, 2013). The realist paradigm accepts that human perceptions, ideas, theories, and conversations are also real in the ontological sense (Blaikie, 2007; 2010; Maxwell, 2012). The realist paradigm assumes “there is a real world that exists independently of our perceptions, theories and constructions” of that world, and yet “our understanding of this world is inevitably a construction from our own perspectives and standpoint” (Maxwell, 2012, p. 5). Referencing Putnam (1999) who proposes that an

objective view of reality does exist¹, Maxwell argues that no human being can obtain this view because of our finitude, fallibility, and inescapable contextual relationship with the reality we experience with our senses (Maxwell, 2012). So, while an objective reality exists, it is possible for researchers to arrive at “more than one scientifically correct way of understanding reality in terms of conceptual schemes with different objects and categories of objects” (Lakoff, 1987, p. 265). As such, the realist paradigm accepts a form of perceptual subjectivism at the epistemological level. Some researchers have referred to this as constructivism (Barth, 1987; Maxwell, 2012) and some have referred to it as interpretivism (Frazer and Lacy, 1993).

The realist paradigm, as described above, is well-aligned with this research for four reasons. First, as described in Section 3.4 below, it aligns with the ontological and epistemological assumptions of the researcher. Second, the realist paradigm accepts that mental phenomena (e.g. ideas, theories, interpretations, definitions, etc.) are real entities (Maxwell, 2012). As such, academic and philosophical theories such as those on human dignity and spiritual leadership are real mental and social constructs that can be explored in a rigorous, objective, and critical manner. In addition, the experiences, ideas, and interpretations individuals have about life, including life at work and interactions with leaders and followers, are also real. Building on the work of others (Lakoff and Johnson, 1999; Putnam, 1999; Johnson, 2007), Maxwell (2012) argues that humans can derive meaning from both physical and mental phenomena and can act upon this meaning. Third, the realist paradigm is distinct from the positivist paradigm in that it is not exclusively naturalistic. It allows for a spiritual, or transcendent, dimension of life that cannot be fully explained by natural phenomena (Wright, 1992; McGrath, 2002). The theory of spiritual leadership deals with transcendent matters, such as love, meaning, calling, and purpose (Fry, 2003). Fourth, as described in Sections 3.3 and 3.4 below, the in-depth, personal interview is a suitable method for exploring the ideas and meanings leaders and followers have about their lived experiences with human dignity and spiritual leadership. Positivism, following an empiricist epistemology, requires the researcher to make observations “with innocent, unprejudiced observation” (Medawar, 1969, p. 147). That is, the researcher is “attempting to understand an object and is trying to be

¹ Maxwell (2012) is referring to an ultimate, single view of truth and reality that Putnam called the “God’s eye view” (Putnam, 1999).

objective by eliminating the bias that could lead to inaccuracy” (Doyal and Harris, 1986, p. 2). By contrast, the realist paradigm, especially the critical realist sub-form of this paradigm proposed by Bhaskar (1978), argues that social science “consists of a practical intervention in social life, and it logically entails value judgments” (Bhaskar, 1983, p. 275). As such, in-depth interviews, with open-ended and *ad hoc* follow-up questions, while largely unacceptable in the positivist/empiricist paradigm, are acceptable means of gathering information in social science research according to the realist paradigm. The data gathered from these interviews can then be subjected to analysis of meaning and language in a hermeneutical tradition (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009).

The realist paradigm is also aligned with the subject of this research on a conceptual level. As explained in Chapter 2, there are four distinct approaches to understanding human dignity: 1) human dignity as a matter of inherent worth, 2) human dignity as a matter of social rank, 3) human dignity as a matter of normative behaviour, and 4) human dignity as a bogus concept (Kyle et al, 2017a). Each of these approaches is rooted in diverse assumptions of objective reality. For example, Kant (1996a; 1996b) and Aristotle (2001a; 2001b), representing the first two approaches, assume the existence of higher moral imperatives and human ideals such as virtue, truth, and love. Both of these approaches assume that the existence of mental entities and inner values regarding human dignity can lead to normative behaviour. Even those that adhere to the fourth approach to human dignity (i.e. the denial of its existence) rely on an objective reality rooted in Darwinism, atheism, and/or moral relativism. As with other philosophical and theological ideas, the perceptions people have of human dignity and its related concepts are often partially formed, highly varied, and based on lived experiences such as education, cultural background, and religious views (Meyer, 1992; Waldron, 2009; Riley, 2010). It follows that the perceptions people have of spiritual leadership and its related concepts of shared vision, hope, altruistic love, calling, and membership are also often partially formed and highly varied. Through in-depth interviews, which provide interpersonal conversation and discourse, the researcher is able to uncover real perceptions and real ideas participants have about these concepts and how they perceive them to be manifested in the behaviours of leaders in their places of work.

3.1.2 **Ontology**

As noted above, the realist paradigm assumes the existence of an objective reality. In what some have called the critical realist ontology² (Blaikie, 2007; 2010; Maxwell, 2012), Bhaskar has proposed three stratified domains of reality: real, actual, and empirical (Bhaskar, 1978). The *real domain* is the place of causation – the powers and mechanisms that generate actual events (Bhaskar, 1978; Sayer, 2000). For example, gravity is real even when there are no celestial bodies to interact with one another. The *actual domain* is the domain of events, whether or not humans are present to observe and experience them. For example, if no humans existed, gravity would still act upon the celestial bodies of the universe. The actual domain “refers to what happens if and when those powers of objects are activated” (Sayer, 2000, p. 12). Finally, the *empirical domain* involves human experience and observation with our senses. For example, we can feel the force of gravity upon us and measure its effects. In addition, we can have ideas and theories about gravity that, as mental entities, are real. For example, we can consider how gravity simultaneously empowers us as humans and also limits us. This stratified model of reality allows the researcher to describe and explain observable phenomena while inductively seeking “underlying structures and mechanisms” of reality (Maxwell, 2012).

Bhaskar (1989) recognised that research in the natural sciences and research in the social sciences are different in two respects: 1) human behaviour and activity (i.e. human agency) shape social structures (e.g. culture, norms, etc.) which, in turn, influence human agency, 2) human agency leads to temporal structures of social reality. Ideas change over time and, as a result, so do social structures. Correspondingly, ideas about human dignity and leadership have changed over time. Understanding this reality, this research makes a point-in-time exploration of these ideas in the workplace. Based on the realist paradigm, it is expected that participants in this project will have varying perceptions and experiences with the ideas of human dignity and leadership at an empirical level.

² Bhaskar initially referred to the realist paradigm as transcendental realism but later adopted the phrase Critical Realism to incorporate some of the ideas of Critical Theory in the tradition of the Frankfurt School (Bhaskar, 1978). Blaikie (2007; 2010) uses the phrase depth realism to describe this ontological position.

3.1.3 Epistemology

Adherents to the realist paradigm have primarily adopted a form of the constructivist epistemology, which suggests that human knowledge and understanding is built upon our personal “constructions” of what we observe in the world around us (Berger and Luckmann, 1966; Blaikie, 2007; 2010). Superficially, this seems to be inconsistent with the realist ontology, which is rooted in the existence of an objective reality that exists outside of human knowledge and observation. Many researchers have challenged the realist paradigm on the basis of this apparent conflict (Lincoln and Guba, 2000; Smith and Deemer, 2000; Denzin and Lincoln, 2005; Smith and Hodkinson, 2005). Supporters of the realist paradigm, however, argue that these criticisms are rooted in a misunderstanding of the paradigm itself and confusion about the distinction between ontology and epistemology (Bhaskar, 1989; Scott, 2000; Norris, 2002). This argument against the realist paradigm has been referred to as the “epistemic fallacy” (Scott, 2000).

Building on the work of Harré (1977), Bhaskar (1989), and other researchers (Keller, 1992; Lenk, 2003; Barrad, 2007) have argued that the critical realist ontology and constructivist epistemology work well together in the realist paradigm. To understand how they fit together, it is helpful to consider constructivism in the context of another ontological view. The constructivist epistemology is most often associated with the idealist ontology, which denies, or at least doubts, the existence of an objective reality (Blaikie, 2007). The constructivist epistemology, as applied in an idealist ontology, assumes that social scientists are unable to “produce a certain or true representation of the external world” (Blaikie, 2007, p. 23). By contrast, the social constructivist epistemology, as applied in the realist ontology, assumes that social scientists not only can, but are compelled to pursue an understanding of objective reality based on individual observations and perceptions (Maxwell, 2012). Thus, the realist ontology provides a platform for inductive research based on the gathering of perceptual data from participants that can, in turn, lead to qualified generalisations about social phenomena. As previously noted, these generalisations must be considered temporal, due to the dynamics of human agency and social structures (Bhaskar, 1989).

The constructivist epistemology allows the research to gather and appreciate the perceptions participants have of human dignity and leadership as important aspects of lived experience (Berger and Luckmann, 1966; Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009; Seidman, 2013). The

constructivist epistemology also allows the research to view these perceptions and lived experiences as important antecedents of the social meaning-making activities of the participants (Blaikie, 2007; Seidman, 2013). This appreciation for the participants and their unique lived experiences, in turn, fits conceptually with the spirit of research in the domain of human dignity. Mitchell suggests that field studies of human dignity are understood in the context of social attitudes such as integrity, respect, pride, recognition, worth, standing, status and, therefore, should focus on “the experiential understanding of context in order to more fully appreciate local symbolism and meaning” (Mitchell, 2017, p. 46).

3.1.4 Stance of the Researcher

Blaikie (2010) proposes six possible stances for the researcher: detached observer, empathetic observer, faithful reporter, mediator of languages, reflective partner, and dialogic facilitator. The first two of these are primarily associated with a positivist paradigm; the last two with a postmodern worldview. Given the nature of the research, the stance of the researcher is a blend of faithful reporter and mediator of languages. As a faithful reporter, the researcher is responsible to ensure that the phenomena described by the participant remains recognisable by the participant throughout the data gathering and reporting process (Schütz, 1963). As a mediator of languages, the researcher recognises that the technical language of human dignity and spiritual leadership are not commonly used in the workplace. As such, the researcher is responsible to bridge the language gap between descriptions of phenomena given by participants and the more formalised language of the field.

In both stances, but particularly with the mediator of languages, it must be acknowledged that the researcher brings his own ideas, cultural presuppositions, theories, and lived experiences to the process of research interpretation. While this is an expected part of obtaining knowledge in the constructivist epistemology (Maxwell, 2012), it raises the importance of adhering to good investigative craft in order to minimise biased subjectivity (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009). Tying these ideas to the topic of this project, the researcher believes research on human dignity should go to great lengths to respect the dignity of the participants. Doing otherwise seems antithetical to the spirit of this project. Hicks notes in her book on conflict resolution and mediation,

“when [the participants] feel that they are seen, heard, understood and recognized as worthy...Honoring peoples’ dignity is the easiest and fastest

way to bring out the best of them...Leading with dignity would mean that you know how to treat people as though they matter” (Hicks, 2011, p. 67).

Reflexive considerations are at the heart of qualitative research craft (Symon and Cassell, 1998; Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009; Maxwell, 2012). The researcher is not an impersonal machine taking dictation in the research interviews and then analysing the results with utter detachment. Instead, the researcher is a human being that both influences and is influenced by the research experience (Maxwell, 2012). Advocating for excellent research craft, Kvale and Brinkmann argue that researchers must understand the role of personal subjectivity in the process of designing, conducting, and understanding the research. In this regard, they suggest that researchers must be “objective about subjectivity” (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009, p. 242). With these considerations in mind, I will address three specific aspects of reflexivity here: The critical realist paradigm reflects my personal worldview, specifically that there is an objective reality that extends beyond our individualistic perceptions of and experiences with that reality. In the critical realist worldview, I accept that, ontologically, there is an objective reality while our experience with and knowledge of that reality (i.e. epistemology) is perspectival. This worldview is reflected in every aspect of the research, from its foundational concept, to the choice of methodology, and interpretive approach. My paradigmatic worldview includes a transcendent, spiritual dimension of human life that addresses aspects of human motivation, meaning making, calling, and the sense of belonging. During the course of this research, each interview participant shared their ideas and opinions with me, along with some aspects of their stories of home and the workplace. I was struck by these stories for at least two reasons. First, as noted in section 3.1.4 above, I was very grateful that the participants chose to spend time with me, investing in a project that has come to mean a lot to me personally. Second, several of the interview participants shared personal stories from childhood, home, and personal beliefs. The semi-structured approach was an excellent choice for this situation because it allowed me to honour the participants while keeping the interviews on track and moving along a well-designed path of inquiry. In other words, active listening techniques and the use of the semi-structured approach allowed me to be personally touched by the stories without losing sight of the research objectives. Finally, a paragraph on reflexivity would not be complete if it was silent about the researcher’s sense of purpose. Research textbooks often define research as an activity that leads to an increase in knowledge and truth. Guided by this principle, my primary motivation for this research is a hopeful one: to play a role in helping to improve our understanding of the role of human

dignity in the leader-follower relationship. I recognize, and intentionally mention here as a matter of reflexive practice, that my hopeful posture must be balanced with a level of critical-thinking and critical analysis that is appropriate to rigorous academic research. I have attempted to maintain a balance of this hope with the need for criticality throughout the thesis.

3.2 Research Design

3.2.1 Inductive Research Strategy

The choice of research strategy is arguably one of the most important decisions faced by a researcher because it sets the pattern for the entire research design. Research strategy is “a procedure, a logic, for generating new knowledge [that provides] a starting point and a set of steps by means of which ‘what’ and ‘why’ questions can be answered” (Blaikie, 2007, p. 8). Blaikie outlines four possible research strategies: deductive, abductive, retroductive, and inductive.

This project follows the inductive research strategy that begins by gathering interview data. Once gathered, the data is analysed for possible thematic associations and relationships. The inductive research strategy is suited to this project for four reasons, all of which centre on the fact that this is the first project of its kind and that no data currently exists to inform a starting point for the research. First, very little work has been done previously to connect the concepts of human dignity with the theory of spiritual leadership. As such, there is no existing data from which to form a credible hypothesis that may be tested using the deductive strategy. Second, the iterative theory-testing of the abductive strategy also assumes that the initial findings will result in a theory worthy of iterative testing. Without initial data, this approach presents risks that are unwarranted for an initial research project. Until an initial set of data can be gathered, the abductive strategy should be held for future research. Third, the retroductive strategy begins with an “observed regularity” (Blaikie, 2007). Since this is the first research project involving the intersection of human dignity and spiritual leadership theory, there is no observed regularity from which to launch. Fourth, the inductive strategy logically fits the situation. There is no existing data, but there is opportunity to acquire observations and perceptions from participants via in-depth interviews. From these

observations, at least basic answers to the foundational and “what” questions can be explored.

3.2.2 Theoretical Considerations of the Method: In-depth, Semi-Structured Interviews

Data gathering was achieved through in-depth, semi-structured interviews with leaders and followers in the workplace. Seidman proposes the purpose of in-depth interviews,

“[...] is not to test hypotheses, and not to ‘evaluate’ as the term is normally used. At the root of in-depth interviewing is an interest in understanding the lived experience of other people and the meaning they make of that experience” (Seidman, 2013, p.9).

He goes on to suggest, “At the heart of interviewing research is an interest in other individuals’ stories, because they are of worth” (p. 9). Remembering that Kant (1996b) equates human dignity with worth, it is fitting for this research to employ a methodology that itself is rooted in an appreciation of human worth. To this end, it has been argued that the notion of human worth (i.e. dignity) should inspire a researcher to develop his or her craft as an interviewer (Kvale and Brinkman, 2009; Seidman, 2013).

Saunders et al (2007) and Easterby-Smith et al (2008) propose three categories of interviews: *structured interviews* (consisting of pre-defined, questionnaire-style questions), *semi-structured interviews* (consisting of open-ended questions, some of which may be omitted or asked out of order), and *unstructured interviews* (consisting of no pre-defined questions). Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) and Seidman (2013) use the term in-depth and semi-structured interchangeably to indicate that the interviews will consist of pre-determined, open-ended and conversational questions. In addition, in-depth and semi-structured refer to the researcher having the flexibility to ask questions out of order and to ask an unlimited number and range of *ad hoc* follow-up questions. This project employs the term “in-depth” to indicate that the interviews are substantial and not superficial. It employs the term “semi-structured” in the manner intended by Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) and Seidman (2013), indicating that the researcher employed both *a priori* and *ad hoc* questions.

Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) contrast the practice of in-depth interviewing with structured interviews and questionnaires. Structured interviews and questionnaires, they argue, are primarily aligned with a positivist paradigm. Semi-structured interviews, on the other hand,

are consistent with a research paradigm chosen for its ability to produce social knowledge, reflecting the dynamic nature of human interaction. With semi-structured interviews, the researcher and participant form a social, conversational, and “reflexive” (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007) relationship that is “contextual, linguistic, narrative, and pragmatic” (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009, p. 18). Similarly, Seidman (2013) recommends the use of “open-ended questions” along with conversational exploration of the participants’ responses to those questions. The goal of this method is to reveal and explore the lived experiences of the participants as well as the meaning they make of those experiences. Schütz (1967) refers to this as the “subjective understanding” of the participant.

The risk of in-depth interviewing is that, if not managed well, the data gathered during the interview will be disorganised and muddled which, in turn, would hinder the researcher’s ability to perform thorough and meaningful analysis. To prevent this situation, and in the spirit of good interviewing craft, this research has followed a seven-stage approach to interviewing: 1) thematising, 2) designing, 3) interviewing, 4) transcribing, 5) analysing, 6) verifying, and 7) reporting (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009). These stages will be described in the remaining sections of this chapter along with other key aspects of the research such as participant selection and ethical considerations.

3.2.3 Thematic Interview Design and Base Questions

Thematising the interview involves the formulation of preliminary research questions based on the themes of the research (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009). These preliminary, or base, questions are then developed further within the context of each interview as needed by the researcher (Jones, 1985). This approach requires the researcher to be very familiar with the topic and themes of the research (Easterby-Smith et al, 2008; Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009). The interviews for this project involved a set of thematic, base questions upon which the researcher asked additional and follow-up questions depending on the situation and direction of each interview.

For this project, the base questions do not refer to spiritual leadership by name since the participants are not assumed to be familiar with the theory. Instead, the questions are framed around the elements of the intrinsic motivation model within Fry’s spiritual leadership theory because the terms are more familiar at an elemental level (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008;

Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). Specifically, the questions incorporate the ordinary terms shared vision, hope, and altruistic love. The base questions emerged from the literature review and critical analysis of the elements of spiritual leadership theory. The base research questions are provided in Appendix C.

3.2.4 Ethical Considerations

There are three areas of ethical consideration involved with this research, two conceptual and one procedural. The first conceptual matter involves the challenge posed by Immanuel Kant (1996a) in his work on the metaphysics of morals: that a human should not be treated as a means to an end, but only as an end in himself. Since this is a study of human dignity and its relationship with spiritual leadership in the workplace, it is fitting that this research makes a concerted effort toward honouring this ideal. Respecting the participants of this research project, even in the procedural sense, helps ensure the spirit of this sentiment. Specifically, allowing participants to opt-in, opt-out, provide feedback, ask questions, and receive follow-up after the interviews are all approaches to respecting their autonomy and dignity. By offering to share the results of the research in written and presented form to the individuals and organisations also helped in this regard. The second conceptual matter involves the issue of social “reflexivity” (Maxwell, 2012) in the construction of social knowledge developed in the process of in-depth interviews. The researcher brings his ideas, theories, biases, and lived experiences to the process of data gathering. As such, there is a potential for him to influence the outcomes of the research and the subsequent analysis and conclusions that could undermine its usefulness. These matters are addressed in Section 3.3 below as a matter of procedure. They are also noted here as areas in which the researcher must take great care to ensure an ethically sound approach.

With respect to the procedural considerations, this research project adhered to the standards of ethical research outlined in the Framework for Research Ethics by the British Economic and Social Research Council (2012). Referring to these standards, Silverman (2010) outlines five imperatives of ethical research practice involving human subjects: informed consent, no coercion, avoidance of harm, and avoidance of conflicts of interest. These are discussed throughout the remainder of this section.

Informed Consent. The research team members and all participants must be “fully informed about the purpose, methods, and intended possible uses of the research, what their participation entails and what risks, if any, are involved” (Silverman, 2010). This research complied with all of the University of Derby requirements with respect to informed consent in human studies. All participants completed the requisite informed consent and release forms. All participants were at least eighteen years old (i.e. the age of legal majority in the United States and the United Kingdom).

Confidentiality. “Confidentiality of information supplied by research participants and the anonymity of respondents must be respected” (Silverman, 2010). All participants received a confidentiality agreement signed by the researcher. Anonymisation techniques were used to protect personally identifiable information (PII) of the participants and to ensure interview recordings, transcripts, and quotes could not be attributed to an identifiable individual. In the presentation of the findings, quotations and other participant attributions were anonymized. All participants in the research project chose to identify as either male or female. Participant gender is identified by a single letter identifier, F or M, plus their participant number. Role is identified by IC (individual contributor), MM (mid-level manager), or EX (executive). In addition, quotations are cited with the starting minute of the timestamp associated with the remark in the transcript. For example, a quote by participant number 11, who is female, made in the 18th minute of the interview is cited as F11:18.00. Figure 3-1 describes the participant identification system use to anonymise participants. This system is used throughout the remainder of the thesis.

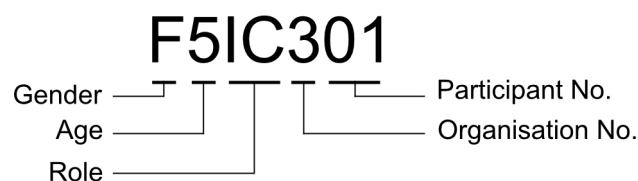


Figure 3-1: Participant Identification Coding System

No Coercion. “Research participants must participate in a voluntary way, free from any coercion” (Silverman, 2010). To the extent they existed, the researcher disclosed all prior, personal, and professional relationships with participants and hosting organisations. No immediate family members, employees, or contractors of the researcher served as

participants in the research project. Subtle coercion (i.e. leading questions) were also avoided through intentional interview preparation and question design (Seidman, 2013).

Avoidance of Harm. “Harm to research participants must be avoided” (Silverman, 2010). The researcher made every attempt to remain mindful of possible consequences for the participants throughout the process (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009). Confidentiality was maintained along with the avoidance of inadvertent quasi-therapeutic relationships with participants (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009). To ensure ongoing protection of the participants, all audio recordings and related transcripts, NVivo files, consent forms, and the file containing the anonymisation key will be maintained on a password protected computer for two years following the final publication of this thesis.

Avoidance of Conflicts of Interest. “The independence and impartiality of researchers must be clear, and any conflicts of interest or partiality must be explicit” (Silverman, 2010). In selecting participants and maintaining follow-up relationships, the researcher avoided potential conflicts of interest with employers, employees, family members, donors, academic officials, and others that may have an interest in influencing the outcomes of the research or on-going relationships with the researcher or participants.

3.2.5 Reliability and Validity

Questions of reliability and validity in qualitative research are not immune from the paradigm wars (Gage, 1989). Some qualitative researchers reject the concepts of reliability and validity altogether, arguing that findings are nothing more than relativistic and temporal social constructions (Kvale and Brinkman, 2009; Maxwell, 2012). Maxwell (2012) has argued that reliability and validity are essential to the critical realist ontology since these represent real mental and social structures. Silverman argues that a radical constructivist approach in the interpretivist paradigm would “rule out any systematic research since it implies that we cannot assume any stable properties in the social world” (Silverman, 2015, p. 84).

Lincoln and Guba (1985) have proposed an alternative to the traditional reliability and validity approaches by proposing “ordinary language” concepts such as trustworthiness, credibility, dependability, and confirmability. Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) also take an ordinary language approach by suggesting that reliability and validity are well-understood terms by giving examples such as “Your passport is not valid,” “Your argument is not valid,”

and “Is he reliable?” Wolcott (1990) and Maxwell (2012) contend that while validity is important in qualitative research, understanding is more important. Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) suggest that data is neither valid nor invalid. Instead, they argue, conclusions and inferences drawn from the data are the primary concern of validity.

Robson (2002) suggests that there are four “threats” to reliability in research: 1) participant error, 2) participant bias, 3) researcher error, and 4) researcher bias. Participant error may occur, for example, when the participant does not understand a question, is unable to answer completely, or is distracted. In this project, the researcher confirmed, to the extent possible, directly and indirectly through follow-up questions, that participants understood each question and were neither distressed nor distracted. Participant bias may occur when the participant is not able to answer questions freely or transparently. In this project, interviews were conducted in private, on-site meeting rooms, without the presence of co-workers or others that may have distracted or influenced the answers of participants. In addition, responses were anonymised to protect the participants when the results are published. In this project, researcher error was minimised through careful question design and audio recording of interviews, which helped with reliable and verifiable transcription. During the actual interviews, the researcher made every attempt to follow the practices of good interviewing craft (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009), such as active listening techniques, to help ensure that the views of the participant were not overshadowed by the tone, demeanour, or phrasing of the researcher.

Maxwell (2005) offers a nuanced understanding of researcher bias in the critical realist paradigm, suggesting that researcher bias is an expected part of qualitative research because the researcher is part of the world he/she is studying. Rather than attempting to eliminate all subjectivity, the qualitative researcher must explain possible biases as a matter of good research practice and integrity. To ensure that the researcher has considered the key areas of potential researcher bias, Maxwell (2005) identifies three areas for interviews that should be addressed: “rich” data, respondent validation, and triangulation. By “rich data”, Maxwell is not proposing a positivistic approach to establishing a minimum number of participants or length of interview. Instead, he is suggesting that interviews should be extensive enough to capture a fairly complete picture of the participant’s views on the matter. In this project, the interviews not only involved, roughly, an hour of interaction, but questions designed to encourage the participant to draw deeply upon personal views of dignity and leadership as

well as multiple real-life examples. By respondent validation, Maxwell is addressing the possibility that the researcher may not have understood a response given by a participant. In this project, the researcher used multiple active listening techniques (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009; Nichols, 2009) to reflect the words and intended meaning of the participant throughout the interviews to minimize this problem. Finally, Maxwell suggests that triangulation is an approach to identify researcher bias. Triangulation involves gathering data from a diverse range of participants (Fielding and Fielding, 1986), not to meet positivistic ends, but to provide a depth and breadth of perspectives that can be considered together in the analysis phase of the project. To this end, this project involved interviews with 19 participants in six organisations, involving individuals at various levels of responsibility, males and females, and other elements of diversity.

3.3 Data Collection

3.3.1 Introduction

In-depth, semi-structured interviews were the primary method of data collection for this research project. As noted above, the interviews used a system of base questions. The researcher asked planned, *ad hoc*, and follow-up questions during each interview. All but two interviews were in-person, and in private meeting spaces at each participant's place of work. Two of the interviews were conducted using online meeting services because the participants were not available for in-person interviews. Audio recordings were made of every interview and the researcher took notes to capture non-verbal communication and other impressions at the time of the interview. Nineteen interviews were conducted over a six-month period. The base questions were asked in the same order in each interview, starting with questions about human dignity. The questions then proceeded into the participants' experience at work and with leaders they have encountered. Finally, each participant was asked about their experience with the elements of the intrinsic motivation model of spiritual leadership. Participants were not assumed to have any knowledge of spiritual leadership theory or any of the major thought-leaders in the area of human dignity.

3.3.2 Participant Selection, Access, and Profiles

To limit the scope of this project, participants were selected from white-collar, for profit, and non-profit organisations, largely in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. In each case, the researcher identified, through personal and professional connections, a person in each organisation to serve as the primary point of contact. A blend of leaders/managers and individual contributors were selected to participate. Participants represented a range of ages, years of work experience, and other demographic attributes. Anonymised participant information is provided in the Participant Information List in Appendix D.

Research methodology experts often warn researchers about the difficulties of gaining access to research sites and individual participants (Saunders et al, 2007; Easterby-Smith et al, 2008; Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009). Following the suggestion of Easterby-Smith et al (2008), the researcher developed a list of target organisations. To overcome the challenge of gaining access, the researcher also followed the strategies recommended by Saunders et al (2007) for gaining both formal and informal access: 1) allowing sufficient time to gain access, 2) using existing contacts at the formal and informal levels, 3) providing a clear description of the purpose and type of access required, 4) addressing any organisational concerns that are raised, 5) highlighting possible benefits to the organisation, using case-appropriate language, and 6) establishing credibility. In addition, the researcher employed a research initiative packet to help the primary site contact feel comfortable with the scope and objectives of the project. Each participating organisation was offered a copy of the final research report along with a 1-hour consultative presentation on how these findings might be applied in the environment.

As described above, the approach to participant selection served to limit the scope of the research. This limitation of scope, by definition, has inescapably impacted the analysis and conclusions of the research. All of the participants work in white collar environments, mostly within organisations located in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. While several participants are immigrants, the results must be understood within the domain of American culture, the relative affluence of white-collar work, and the relatively high education levels of individuals in the Washington, D.C. area. These limitations are significant reminders that this research is just one part of a larger effort to understand the role of human dignity in the leader-follower relationship and that this research is in no way the final or complete word on

this topic. As noted later in this thesis, there are many opportunities for future research involving other geographies, cultural groups, and workplace settings. On the other hand, and as explained in section 3.4.4. below, the limitations noted above do not preclude the application of this research to theory advancement (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003; Fry, 2016). In other words, while the research has specific limitations, it is not without merits in terms of its stated purpose and objectives.

3.3.3 The Interview Experience

Interviews ranged from 50 to 75 minutes in length. Each participant was asked all of the base questions in Appendix C as well as follow-up and *ad hoc* questions. Each participant was given a packet of materials to read and sign at the outset of the interview including: 1) a participation release form, 2) a participant description form containing demographic questions, 3) a biographical description of the researcher, and 4) a summary of the interview process, all of which are provided in Appendices E-G. Each participant was asked to read the packet, sign the release, and complete the forms at the beginning of the interview. An audio recording of was made of each interview using QuickTime on a MacBook Pro laptop. Notes on nonverbal communications and other relevant observations were made by the researcher throughout each interview.

3.3.4 Saturation of Knowledge and the Number of Interviews

In contrast to the positivistic research paradigm and quasi-statistical coding method, which determine the minimum number of interviews based on statistical significance, the critical realist paradigm and template analysis coding method allow the flexibility to determine the number of interviews based on saturation of knowledge (Bertaux, 1981; Guest et al, 2006; Mason, 2010). In essence, saturation of knowledge suggests there are diminishing returns associated with additional interviews once the main thematic knowledge has been obtained. Understandably, the minimum number of interviews for qualitative research is an extensively debated topic (Guest et al, 2006; Mason, 2010). Even Bertaux (1981), who was an early advocate for a non-statistical approach, suggested the specific number of fifteen as an acceptable minimum number of interviews. Guest et al (2006) have suggested that knowledge saturation often occurs by the twelfth interview and sometimes by the sixth. Mason (2010) analysed 560 PhD theses involving qualitative studies that claimed to be using

a saturation of knowledge approach. His findings suggest that rather than actually adhering to the knowledge saturation ideal, a disproportionate number of the studies appeared to have pre-defined numbers of interviews (e.g. multiples of 10) as well as enough to meet the traditionally held views of a statistically significant sample size. He concluded that the researchers may have, at best, tried to “cover all the bases”, or at worst, failed to understand the relationship between knowledge saturation and their chosen research paradigm.

For this project, the researcher reviewed the audio and written transcripts throughout the process and determined that, within the main themes of the research, knowledge saturation occurred before the nineteenth interview, which had already been scheduled. So, the final interviews were completed, in part, as a courtesy to the participants, but also to confirm that saturation had been reached. In the end, nineteen interviews were completed for this research project.

3.3.5 Method of Transcription

Each audio recording was manually transcribed by the researcher using the NVivo software package (QSR International, 2016). Each transcript was reviewed by the researcher and a colleague to catch and correct transcription errors. To minimize the volume of transcription work, some irrelevant and purely administrative audio content was not included in the transcriptions. On occasion, participants would use their own name, the names of colleagues, or the names of organisations in their answers to questions. Every attempt was made to remove these references from the written transcriptions. For example, the name of an immediate supervisor was changed to “supervisor” and the name of the president of the organisation was changed to “president”. Participant names are not included in the audio file names. Participant names can only be found on scanned and encrypted consent forms and in a password protected document that links the name of the participant to the participant number, which is then used in the transcription record in NVivo.

3.4 Data Reduction and Analysis

3.4.1 Introduction

Analysis of natural, human language acquired during in-depth interviews can be difficult. The volume of data combined with the complexity and subtlety of verbal and nonverbal language makes the analysis of qualitative data challenging. In order to extract meaning from the interview data, the researcher must code and condense the text (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009). Coding is used to form a manageable structure upon which analysis can be performed. Coding involves the application of thematic keywords to sentences and text sections that will be used in a later stage of the analysis process. Coding allows a researcher to analyse the interview text with an eye for both the “letter and spirit of intent” (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009). The NVivo software package (QSR International, 2016) was used to support and simplify the more tedious aspects of the coding process.

3.4.2 Thematic Coding and Template Analysis

As a new research endeavour, no previously defined codes were available for this project. As such, this research employed the template analysis approach to code development (Crabtree and Miller, 1992a; 1992b; King, 1999). Following this approach, an initial set of thematic codes were developed by analysing the transcripts of four randomly selected interviews. This initial codebook was then applied to the transcripts and revised, according to the template analysis methodology (Crabtree and Miller, 1992a; 1992b; King, 1999), until a final codebook was derived. Following the method suggested by Andrasik et al (2012) and QSR International (2017), three types of codes were developed for this project: 1) *descriptive codes* that identify the “who, what, where, when, and how” of the data, 2) *topic codes* that describe what is being discussed, and 3) *analytical codes* that attempt to identify the intent of the participant, the meaning of the text, and the implication of the text.

Crabtree and Miller (1992a; 1992b) list template analysis as one of several approaches to the analysis of qualitative data. They describe a continuum of approaches with objective techniques on one end, and subjective techniques on the other. Template analysis lies between the extremes but is somewhat closer to subjective analysis. Crabtree and Miller (1992a) consider it “somewhat objective” in that it relies upon the construction and

systematic application of an *a priori* codebook (i.e. template). In their view, this approach is considered subjective because the researcher derives the initial codebook from interpretive and critical readings of a subset of transcripts and then revises the codebook iteratively throughout the coding process to reflect new knowledge gleaned from the transcripts. The template analysis approach is distinguished from the purely objective and quasi-statistical approaches “in that the template is more open-ended and undergoes revision after encountering the text. In addition, the generation of themes, patterns, and interrelationships is an interpretive rather than a statistical process.” (Miller and Crabtree, 1992a, p. 19).

Iterative interpretation and analysis of the text is an integral aspect of template analysis and is central to establishing convergent themes and extracting knowledge from the set of interviews (Crabtree and Miller, 1992a; 1992b; King, 1999). Referring to the iterative nature of data analysis in quantitative research, Seidman suggests, “Interpreting is not a process researchers do only near the end of the project. Even as interviewers question their participants, tentative interpretations may begin to influence the path of their questioning” (Seidman, 2013, p. 130). King (1999) argues that template analysis offers a flexible alternative that is not as prescriptive as grounded theory in the realist paradigm. He also outlines four types of modifications that can be made to codes during the iterative analysis process: insertion (the addition of a new code – which must be analysed in previously studied transcripts), deletion (the removal of an existing code), changing scope (editing a code that was found to be too narrow or too broad), and reclassifying (moving a code to another place in the codebook hierarchy or thematic framework). The iterative approach of code development in template analysis is also consistent with the “cyclical” approach proposed and described by Saldaña (2016).

3.4.3 Thematic Coding with NVivo

The NVivo software package does not prescribe a specific approach to coding methodology (QSR International, 2016; 2017). Instead it provides a set of tools that can be applied, in theory, to any method.³ In spite of the claim that NVivo supports any coding method,

³ In addition to its basic coding capabilities, NVivo provides several “auto-coding” features. None of these were used in this project. NVivo also provides a true *in vivo* coding capability in which actual text from the

implementing an iterative coding methodology, such as template analysis (Crabtree and Miller, 1992a; 1992b; King, 1999) is tedious in the software package. Coding a single source file in NVivo is fast and straightforward. It generally involves a single right-click, whether applying an existing code (i.e. known as a “node” in NVivo) or creating a new one. As noted in section 3.4.2 above, the template analysis approach involves iterative development of the codebook. This is challenging in that as new codes are created, there is a need to reanalyse previously analysed sources in light of the new codes. With 19 lengthy source files, this process was arduous and time consuming. While tedious, there was an upside to this process. Repetitive scanning of the transcription files as part of the iterative code-development process provided the researcher with invaluable exposure to the transcription files themselves and, as a result, a detailed working knowledge of what was said and by whom.⁴ This proved to be extremely valuable in identifying and analysing the primary themes of the data.

The specific steps used to code the data in NVivo were as follows:

1. *Initial Topic Coding*. Four random interviews were selected for topic coding. These codes include many of the central themes of this research, such as inherent dignity, earned dignity, respect, mattering, inclusive decision-making, and inner life.
2. *Initial Analytical Coding*. A second pass was made through the four initially selected transcription files to identify analytical codes. These codes include interpretive themes such as perception of respect, perception of relevance, sense of meaning, sense of purpose, sense of accomplishment, and the sense of belonging.
3. *Descriptive Coding*. Once the initial topic and analytical codes were developed, descriptive codes were applied to all of the source files. The descriptive codes included information gathered from the participant information sheet such as gender, ethnicity, education level, organisational role, as well as information noted by the researcher such as interview location, date/time, etc.

transcription file can be used as the name of the code (up to 256 characters). Given the uniqueness of the individual interviews and corresponding transcription files, this capability was not used in this project.

⁴ QSR International, the creators of the NVivo software package launched a version upgrade in the midst of this project, from version 11 to version 12. This upgrade resulted in a catastrophic loss of transcription files and coding that required a from-scratch restart. The original audio recordings were intact, fortunately, but this created a significant setback in time and momentum for this project.

4. *Export the Codebook.* At this point, an initial codebook was exported from NVivo using the Export Node Hierarchy feature of NVivo. This established the initial codebook.
5. *Successive Coding and Re-analysis.* Using the initial codebook (i.e. the NVivo Node Hierarchy), each successive transcription file was then coded. Previously analysed files were re-analysed in light of new codes that were created in each new transcription file. While a tedious process, convergence was eventually reached with relatively few codes appearing in the last several transcription files. The final codebook was then exported using the Export Node Hierarchy feature of NVivo.
6. *Visual Analysis of the Node Hierarchy.* NVivo provides a helpful way to view the frequency and density of the individual nodes. Even though the main themes of the research were readily apparent without them, the visualisation tools proved useful in confirming the primary themes.

3.4.4 Interpretation and the Analysis of Meaning and Language

Ritchie and Lewis make an important point regarding the analysis of qualitative data. Referring to the wide range of seemingly distinct analytical approaches, they note, “Distinctions are not always clear cut, however, and qualitative traditions and indeed individual studies, often cross boundaries.” (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003, p. 201). They give examples of several qualitative research methodologies as well as individual studies that, from their perspective, contradict one another on theoretical grounds and cause confusion about which approach to choose for any given research project. In attempting to make sense of the many differences of opinion, styles, and preferences, they suggest that there are two primary foci of analysis in qualitative research. On one hand, they suggest, there are approaches that focus primarily upon discourse, conversation, and narrative analysis. On the other hand, some approaches are primarily concerned with capturing and interpreting common sense meaning in the data. With its focus upon the theory of spiritual leadership and its elements of intrinsic motivation and well-being, all of which are conceptual aspects of the leader-follower relationship, this research leans toward the latter focus in the dichotomy proposed by Ritchie and Lewis, namely the focus on capturing and interpreting the intent and meaning of the participants’ expressions of personal experience. In addition to the analysis of the actual words and phrases shared by participants, the researcher has the additional

responsibility to bring his own understandings and interpretive abilities to the process of analysis.

In the analysis of meaning of the interview text, Kvale and Brinkmann, who lean toward a postmodernist paradigm and social constructivist epistemology, suggest that the researcher should go “beyond what is directly said to work out structures and relations of meanings not immediately apparent in the text” (Kvale and Brinkman, 2009, p. 207). In so doing, the researcher places the decontextualized coding and text into the broader context of the research goals and objectives. In the work of analysis, the researcher’s presuppositions may lead to a specific interpretation of the text even though that interpretation may differ with interpretations offered by other researchers viewing the same text. In the realist paradigm, which adopts many key ideas from the social constructivist epistemology, there is also room for multiple interpretations of the text (Maxwell, 2012). The burden is on the researcher to keep an open mind to alternative meanings. Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) distinguish between *biased subjectivity*, which results from “sloppy and unreliable work” (p. 213) and *perspectival subjectivity*, which results from rigorous, open-minded interpretive analysis.

In-depth interviews involve human language, which consists of verbal and non-verbal communications patterns, colloquial speech, pauses, “filler” words (e.g. “um”), and other complexities. Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) suggest that hermeneutical language analysis has three primary components: linguistic analysis, narrative analysis, and conversation analysis. Each of these forms of analysis is intended to provide insight into the meaning and intent of the participant’s answers to questions. Linguistic analysis deals with the grammar and linguistic forms and may involve the examination of “active and passive voice, personal and impersonal pronouns, temporal and spatial references, implied speaker and listener positions, and the use of metaphors.” (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009, p. 220). Narrative analysis focuses on the stories that are told by participants. Seidman (2013) emphasises the concept of story as the essence of the interviewing methodology. The essence of narrative analysis is to focus on characters, plot, and genre (Saunders et al, 2007). It can also involve the analysis of chronology, specifically when the participant places him/herself into the story line. The process of template analysis has been used in this research to identify and evaluate the linguistic and narrative elements expressed by participants.

The third element of Kvale and Brinkmann's (2009) model, conversation analysis, has not been used in this research. The focus of conversation analysis is the back-and-forth of human interaction (Garfinkel, 1967). By focusing on the pattern of turn-taking by the researcher and the participant, conversation analysis can be used to reveal areas of emphasis, frustration, and interest on the part of the speaker. In the process of analysing the pattern of conversation, the researcher faces the difficult task of interpreting not only the language but the presuppositions and intent of the speaker. For this reason, Parker (2005) dismisses conversation analysis on the grounds that it is too subjective. Curiously, even after including conversation analysis in their model of language analysis, Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) warn that distinguishing the specific elements of conversational discourse is overly complex and subject to significant interpretive errors. For these reasons, and because meaning and speaker intent could be sufficiently established without it, conversation analysis has not been applied in this research.

3.4.5 **Relevance and Generalisability**

It is widely held that qualitative research methods, such as interviews, do not produce research results that are broadly generalisable in the same way that quantitative methods are generalizable in the positivistic paradigm (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003; Blaikie, 2007; Saunders, et al, 2007; Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009; Seidman, 2013). The debates about generalizability of qualitative research do not undermine the value of qualitative research itself. On the contrary, most social science researchers hold that qualitative research is relevant as a representation of the perceptions and experiences of participants as gathered and reflected upon by the researcher (Maxwell, 2005). The sheer depth and breadth of qualitative research conducted in the social sciences is evidence of its acceptance among the research community. And yet, as a matter of completeness, the relevance and generalizability of this research must be clarified here.

How the research conclusions can be understood, and whether or not they offer insight beyond the research itself, are two important questions that must be considered. Maxwell distinguishes between internal and external generalizability of research findings:

“Internal generalizability refers to the generalizability of a conclusion within the setting or group studied, while external generalizability refers to its generalizability beyond the setting or group” (Maxwell, 2005, p. 115).

Following Maxwell's internal generalizability principle, this research assumes that the conclusions apply at least to the settings and groups studied. Going further, others have suggested that by closely relating the research to an existing theory, qualitative research results can be used to establish a foundation for theory advancement (Bryman, 1988; Marshall and Rossman, 1999; Ritchie and Lewis, 2003; Yin, 2003). To this end, the base and follow-up questions of this research project were framed by the intrinsic motivation model of the theory of spiritual leadership so that the conclusions could be applied to an advancement of the theory of spiritual leadership. Ritchie and Lewis offer a clear explanation of this justification,

“It is our view that qualitative research can contribute to social theories where they have something to tell us about the underlying social processes and structures that form part of the context of, and the explanation for, individual behaviors and beliefs. The particular value of qualitative research lies in its ability to explore issues in depth and from the perspectives of different participants, with concepts, meanings and explanations developed inductively from the data” (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003, p. 267).

They conclude by noting that theories “can then be developed and refined so that they accommodate any newly found variations in behaviours or circumstances identified through research” (p. 267).

Louis Fry, whose theory of spiritual leadership is the focus of this project, addressed the idea of theory advancement by focusing on paradigms and assumptions (Fry, 2016). Citing Hunt's (1999) observation that the transformational and charismatic leadership theories introduced in the 1970s achieved a paradigm shift in the field, Fry suggests that assumptions precede theories. He asserts that assumptions are the foundation of new theories and, as such, must be explicated and explored. Following this approach, this research explores the implicit assumption of human dignity in the theory of spiritual leadership and its relevance to workplace well-being for leaders and followers (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017).

4 Research Findings

4.1 Introduction

This chapter contains many of the responses given by the interview participants. Interview participants consisted of nineteen executives, mid-level managers, and individual contributors in non-profit and for-profit organisations. Given the personal nature and the subtlety of language of the topics at hand, in-depth, semi-structured, in-person interviews were employed for this project. In-depth, live interviews provide the opportunity to ask additional questions and seek clarification (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009; Maxwell, 2012; Seidman, 2013). This interpersonal approach also allows the human story to be uncovered (Seidman, 2013). The interviews for this research project were based on a set of base questions upon which the researcher could develop additional questions depending on the situation and direction of each interview. The interview responses reported below are a combination of answers to the base questions as well as answers to ad hoc and follow-up questions.

As will be discussed in detail in Chapters 5 and 6, three prominent themes emerged in the findings of this study: 1) the inner life of values and attitudes, 2) inclusive decision-making, and 3) the perception of mattering. To aid readability and to align the findings reported in this chapter with the analysis and discussion of Chapter 5, the findings are presented in three thematic sections. Each section includes an overview of the findings in the context of the respective theme along with transcript text from the actual interviews. To aid the readability of each thematic section, some interview quotes are repeated when the quote is relevant to more than one theme.

4.2 Theme 1 – Reflections on Inner Life Values and Attitudes

This section provides interview responses from the research participants related to the theme of inner life. Following the semi-structured interview methodology described in Chapter 3 and the base research questions provided in Appendix C, participants shared their views on the meaning of human dignity, the source of that meaning for them personally, the role of human dignity in the leader-follower relationship, and employee well-being. Participants

discussed their experience with these ideas, revealing something of their own inner life, values and attitudes. They discussed leadership behaviours that contribute to their sense of dignity and well-being and their perceptions of the inner life of leaders. As can be seen in the interview quotes below, some participants expressed very personal thoughts and feelings about these ideas. The findings are divided into two subsections. Section 4.2.1 contains several of the responses of participants serving in senior leadership (i.e. executive) roles. Section 4.2.2 contains several of the responses of those participants in individual contributor and mid-management roles.

The responses and comments of twelve participants quoted in this section are given as evidentiary examples from the interview data. They include interviews with five executives (three females and two males) and seven non-executives (four females and three males). One executive participant, M6EX102, is the CEO of his organisation. The other four executives are vice presidents, reporting directly to the CEOs of their respective organisations. The seven non-executive participants include six individual contributors and one mid-manager. The industries represented by this group of participants include graduate medical education, higher education services, a social services non-profit, a global development NGO, and a global data services company. The interview data includes direct answers to interview questions as well as comments and supporting conversation in which participants sought to explain an answer, provide clarity, or provide an example.

4.2.1 Reflections on the Inner Life – Executive Participants

Participant F6EX101 is the vice president of HR for a mid-sized, global data services company. When asked about her definition of human dignity, she gave an answer that reflects her view that it is part of how one views others as well as one's self-perception. Her answer conveys that human dignity is not an externally defined concept as much as it is an inner view one holds of themselves and others.

I would say for me it is self-worth; the ability to feel that others view you as - and you view yourself - as a person who matters, a person of worth. I mean, all people are of worth, I think, but in particular that you have this intrinsic feeling that that's the case (Participant F6EX101, 00:00:42.0).

When asked about how human dignity plays out in the workplace, Participant F6EX101 talked about employment terminations. She reflects something of her own inner thoughts on how a terminated employee can and should be treated in that situation. She also notes that the inner thoughts of the CEO (i.e. “the person in the corner office”) have a significant role in such situations. Interestingly, she makes a broad statement that anytime a leader is addressing the performance of an employee, human dignity is a factor to be considered.

I think there is one seminal even in people’s work life where dignity is either present or it isn’t. And, that’s if you are let go. My feeling is that it can be done with empathy and dignity or not. [...] We have done it both ways [...] depending on who is sitting in the corner office and how strongly they felt about certain things. [...] I think anytime you’re talking about a person either succeeding or not succeeding, you have the opportunity to make it go poorly. Or, it’s a challenge I guess because it’s all about the dignity (Participant F6EX101, 00:11:46.0).

When asked how she formed her view of human dignity, Participant F6EX101 referred to memories of her father, a person she admired and respected. His teaching and approach to others has had a lasting impact on her own sense of human dignity and desire to treat others with respect. The fondness with which she refers to her father and the role he played in the formation of her thoughts on human dignity allude to elements of her inner life – memories, family culture, and a value system formed in the narrative of her personal story.

My father was a career naval officer. [...] He grew up on a farm, dirt poor in Arkansas. He was born in 1912. He was born the day the Titanic sank and lived to almost 101 years old with all of his faculties intact. [...] You formed how you view yourself and how you view other people through how he treated everyone. [...] I never had the feeling that he felt anyone was worth more than anyone else based on the colour of their skin or what they did. He treated all people equally and with caring and empathy. [...] He always taught us to keep our minds open to other people being different. [...] He was really somebody – and for our entire lives – that we looked up to. [...] Everybody loved him, and he treated everybody with what I would call dignity (Participant F6EX101, 00:00:57.0).

Participant M6EX102 is the CEO of a mid-sized, global data services company. He was born and educated in Europe and has lived in the United States for more than 25 years. When

asked about his definition of human dignity, he gave an answer that compares humans to other forms of life. He indicates that humans have dignity because they have thoughts and feelings that reflect a conscious, communal, happiness-oriented inner life.

In my perception, human dignity is that [humans, as opposed to other forms of life] are special [in] that they have the potential to understand who they are. They are conscious. They look into the future. They look out for their family, friends, and surroundings. They have dreams and they want to be happy. And this is something we should always respect in any circumstance of life (Participant M6EX102, 00:00:07.0).

When asked about the source of these ideas, he explained that it comes from a combination of family, education, and testing of these ideas in real relationships. Note that he explains his answer by referring to his European cultural heritage, suggesting that his views on human dignity are deeply rooted within himself because they are the result of thousands of years of cultural and religious history.

Parents. School. I mean if you're coming, like me, from a European background, there is a lot of [common teaching] with regard to human dignity, much of which is related to [the influence of] religious faiths over thousands of years. [...] In life, it's also being able to test all of these things in relationships – in friendships, at work, in family, and all of that (Participant M6EX102, 00:01:043.0).

Participant M6EX102 went on to discuss the role of human dignity in the workplace. His comments were very early in the interview and were before the specific questions of how human dignity and leadership behaviours connect. In other words, even before the interview questions led him to questions of inclusive decision-making, as discussed in Chapter 5, Participant M6EX102 expressed that a tension exists between employee autonomy and the direction-setting role of leadership. As he described his views, he made the comment, “I think it is just a reflection of what happens in life,” possibly reflecting an inner philosophy that life, whether at work or otherwise, consists of trade-offs and tensions that must be balanced.

Yeah, as everywhere, human dignity plays a role in the business environment. For leaders, it's important to acknowledge that. In a business environment maybe it's even stronger than in general environments because in a business environment you

normally work under objectives and directions that not even leadership can change. [...] How do you involve the free will of all the members in the company? From a leadership perspective you have to [acknowledge] that you are dealing with humans and their dignity as well as [...] that you have to make decisions for the best of the company. It is a balancing act. I think it is just a reflection of what happens in life (Participant M6EX102, 00:09:44.0).

Participant M4EX302 is a senior executive a higher education administration non-profit organisation. He also spent many years as the provost (i.e. chief academic officer) of a mid-sized university in the United States. When asked about his definition of human dignity and how that definition was formed, he initially referred to his religious beliefs. He also said that that an historical figure, an American abolitionist, influenced his ideas that human dignity is inherent and cannot be taken away. These are both indicators that his views on human dignity are part of his inner life of personal belief and culturally formed values.

Human dignity is the notion that every human being is inherently valuable and has worth. [...] It's something that cannot be taken away (Participant M4EX302, 00:01:00.9).

I can't really separate [my views on human dignity] from my Christian beliefs, I guess. [...] I used to teach [19th century American history]. There's a [quote] from Theodore Weld or one of the abolitionists, something about human beings...nothing can be done [...] to do away with or destroy the inherent spark of dignity that all human beings have¹. [...] That is essentially what's behind my thought (Participant M4EX302, 00:03:20.1).

When asked about human dignity in the workplace, he affirmed that human dignity is not only a factor at work but is an essential idea for leaders to grasp as they work with followers. He gives two examples, listening and expressing gratitude, as ways that leaders can respect

¹ Participant M4EX302 was referring to a quote traditionally credited to the American abolitionist, Theodore Dwight Weld (1803-1895): "The Society is based on that great bottom law of human right, that nothing but crime can forfeit liberty. That no condition of birth, no shade of color, no mere misfortune of circumstances, can annul that birthright charter, which God has bequeathed to every being upon whom he has stamped his own image, by making him a free moral agent, and that he who robs his fellow man of this tramples upon right, subverts justice, outrages humanity, unsettles the foundation of human safety, and sacrilegiously assumes the prerogative of God."

the dignity of employees. He makes the point that doing these things transcends appearances that might lead to instrumental outcomes (i.e. “coming across as a good boss”). Instead, he emphasises that it should be genuine and that everyone should be *really* seen and *really* heard. Finally, he adds a comment that indicates a genuine care for his employees, namely that when they are not acknowledged, they can be deeply hurt.

Sure. It definitely comes into play at work or in the workplace and organisation. [...] One for me is listening – the importance of a leader listening. Every member of an organisation has something valuable to contribute. They deserve to be listened to, to be heard, intrinsically. [...] But not just as a formality or as a way to come across as a good boss, but to really see them and to hear them is important. [...] The notion of thanking people and expressing gratitude is a way to affirm their dignity. It’s a way to say they’re not just worker bees, but that they’re human beings. [...] People can be deeply hurt simply by not being acknowledged (Participant M4EX302, 00:09:43.5).

Participant F3EX501 is a vice president of a social services organisation that works with children and families. When asked about her definition of human dignity, she went quickly to the ideas of value and inherency. She explained that, while they might not use the word dignity, they talk about the concept in her home because she and her husband work with populations that are often treated as outcasts. This is consistent with the findings of others that have suggested that people think about the denial of dignity before they think about respect for dignity (Hicks, 2018). Note that Participant F3EX501 is expressing a number of inner values that are the subject of conversation in her home and marriage.

I would say human dignity revolves around the idea that we have innate value and worth [just] by the fact that we are human. There is something about it that is wondrous and merits a respect and solemnity because of our design in nature. [...] My husband and I [...] talk around it quite a bit. How we talk about it in our household is more in the context of where dignity is overlooked. We might use words like being outcasts, overlooked, or underserved (Participant F3EX501, 00:00:33.5).

When asked if people can lose their dignity, Participant F3EX501 initially said no. Then, as she talked more about it, she arrived at the opposite answer.

I think people will always have intrinsic worth that gives them dignity, but society and broken systems can chip away at that. So, the [...] embracing of [dignity] is so severely broken that is not felt. [...] So, I guess it can be taken away, yeah (Participant F3EX501, 00:04:01.1).

When asked if and how human dignity comes into play in the workplace, Participant F3EX501 explained that, as the leader of fundraising for her organisation, she is concerned about how donors can be treated at times. She explains that in the quest to raise money, donors can be commodified and, in the process, not treated with dignity. By focusing on the money provided by donors, rather than the donors themselves, fundraising can take away their dignity. Interestingly, her comments are reflective of the Kantian conception of human dignity: that it is infinite worth and not tradable (Kant, 1996a; 1996b). And yet, having established the view that dignity can be taken away, she used the word “commodity”, arguably the very opposite of infinite value, to indicate that the dignity of the donor has been violated. These comments reflect a set of inner values toward humans that laments their mistreatment, even in something as commonplace as fundraising.

Yes, in so many ways. We might not say human dignity per se. [...] One thing is that [fundraising] can be manipulative and exploitive. You can see people as dollar signs and commodify people. [...] It can very much rob people of their human dignity. We can exploit them for what they can do for me...or my goals (Participant F3EX501, 00:09:28.0).

As the interview continued on the topics of meaning, purpose, and membership in the workplace, Participant F3EX501 referred to her experience growing up as a Korean American. She reflected on the role of dignity, honour, respect, and shame in her childhood home. The indication here is that the ideas of dignity, honour, respect, and shame, even as they play out in the workplace and are connected to her pursuit of meaning and membership there, are deeply rooted in her inner life, even some ideas that were formed in childhood.

[Shame and respect] were pervasive in my life, like saving face, the importance of saving face. [...] on a familial level, at a cultural level. And how respect is such a pervasive thing in Korean culture and my family – the respect we had to give our parents and the share that is [received] when you’re not giving the right amount of respect (Participant F3EX501, 00:37:13.0).

Participant F4EX502 is also a vice president of the same social services organisation as Participant F3EX501. It is a social services organisation that works with children and families. Like Participant F3EX501, Participant F4EX502 reports to the CEO. When asked about her definition of human dignity, some parts of her answer were very similar to those of other participants in the research project, but one part was very different. Like others, she said that one's dignity is not based on the ability to perform well and achieve good outcomes. To this, though, she added that one's dignity is also not based on the ability to return love to others. It's helpful to know that this organisation works with families and disabled children. In another part of the interview, Participant F4EX502 mentioned that to work with these children and families is a significant honour for her, and part of her own motivation and meaning making at work. So, either her inner ideas that drew her into this work, or the work itself, have helped to form her ideas of human dignity in a very personal way, including one's ability or inability to show love.

I would say human dignity is the understanding that, by simply being human, you are infused with dignity and should be treated with dignity on the basis that you are a human being. [...] And so, human dignity should not be dependent on the individual to produce or achieve or communicate or return love. It's something inherent in the human person (Participant F4EX502, 00:00:37.4).

Participant F4EX502 believes that human dignity is an inherent aspect of being human and that it cannot be lost. When asked if a person can lose their human dignity, however, she refers to the inner, psychological experience of *feeling* that one's dignity has been lost. In making this distinction she was alluding the inner person and the psychology of sensing that one is or is not valued by others.

I think it is probably possible for a person to feel that their dignity has been lost and that their value has been destroyed. [...] So, I think, psychologically probably, it is possible for a person to think they are no longer valued (Participant F4EX502, 00:02:33.6).

During the interview, Participant F4EX502 conveyed an experience she had building a team, creating a new set of services for families, and creating the policies and procedures that surround those services. When asked what, if anything, about that experience contributed to her personal sense of human dignity, she answered by talking about her view of herself as a

woman and as a mother who had returned to the workforce after staying at home for several years to raise her children. Her point is that her work contributes to her sense of dignity because it helps her to feel valued and to keep her mind off of challenging aspects of her life, such as a recent cancer diagnosis and treatment. In answering this question, Participant F4EX502 is connecting her thoughts about feeling valued at work and the sense of dignity she has in the workplace with deeply personal thoughts from her inner life as a woman, mother, second career professional, and cancer survivor.

I just have to answer this as a woman and as a mother. [...] As I jumped back into the workforce after a period of being unemployed, it made me feel like not only did I get to come back, but I got to do something big. When I started here, I had literally been looking with my law degree in the local papers for dental receptionist jobs because I [used to] get too caught up in what I did, being a litigator. Preparing for trial consumed me. I thought about it day and night. My children needed me, and I needed to be present. So, I expected to come in and do something almost clerical and administrative, watching the clock all day. So, when I started and was able to use my legal background to create policies and procedures, I would look up and see that it was 3 o'clock and I'd be like where did this day go? [...] Sure, that makes me feel dignified. When I was a stay at home mom [I would get emails from other women with impressive job titles...] I just thought about who's bringing snacks to the baseball game. Once, I kind of thought, [...] it doesn't matter what your [job title] is when you're bringing snacks to the game. It balanced my life in a wonderful way. I went through breast cancer treatment and chemo all of last year. Talk about undignified [...] Coming here gave me a sense of purpose and distraction. So, if I had just been sitting at home thinking about it all, that would have been horrible (Participant F4EX502, 00:02:33.6).

4.2.2 Reflections on the Inner Life – Mid-Managers and Individual Contributors

Participant M4MM601 is a mid-level manager in a large, non-governmental organisation (NGO) focused on regional development. At the time of the interview, he worked in North Africa on several projects, some of which involved human rights issues. Even though he was able to quote from the U.N. Universal Declaration of Human Rights (U.N. General Assembly, 1948), and even though human rights are a key part of his work, he said that

human dignity is not a commonly used word in his workplace. As a native German speaker, he had to refer to the German word for human dignity during the interview, *Menschenwürde*, because human dignity is not a part of his English lexicon. During the interview, like the other participants of the research project, Participant M4MM601 was asked to define human dignity and explain how he came to these ideas. In explaining his answers, he described an iceberg, suggesting that some aspects of the human are visible through their actions and behaviours, while other aspects are below the surface. His suggestion indicates that he views some ideas, such as the idea of human dignity, as below the surface (i.e. in the inner self).

Behaviour and actions are above the surface and can easily be observed. [...] But under the surface of the iceberg are more invisible things, intangible things [like] values. Human dignity, then, in my perception is shaped in family. I absorbed [the idea of human dignity] in my family upbringing [...] without it being explicit most of the time. Such as how we treat family members, hopefully respectfully. And then, I think the circles become wider step-by-step. It might be schooling and education. And then how we observe values in the workplace, or in the media and broader culture (Participant M4MM601, 00:02:19.0).

When asked whether or not a person can lose his/her human dignity, Participant M4MM601 gave an interesting answer given that he does not consider himself to be a person of religious faith. For him, human dignity is a very deeply held concept, perhaps even spiritual in nature.

It's a brilliant question because it's almost a spiritual question. [...] I think we can perceive [dignity is] lost. But I would argue that in reality we cannot [lose our dignity]. [...] I think it can be buried and can be negated and neglected and disrespected and God knows what. But, at the very core, the very seed [of human dignity] is immortal (Participant M4MM601, 00:04:22.0).

Participant F4IC103 is an HR professional for a mid-sized, global data services company. When asked about her personal definition of human dignity, she noted that her definition is informed by the fact that she is an African American woman that has had a lot of experiences in life and at work. Her idea of dignity is connected, at least, to these two aspects of her sense of self – her ethnicity and her level of experience.

I think human dignity means, to me, as an African American woman who has seen a lot of things; and I've worked in a lot of different industries [...] I think it's treating people better than you would treat yourself. So, that standard you have for yourself, that should extend outwardly, no matter the level, the title, or the station in life (Participant F4IC103, 00:00:09.0).

When asked how she formed her idea of human dignity, she explained that it has been formed by life experiences, but that its foundations were formed in family relationships. In her family, she was taught to have a view beyond herself and to the world around her. Her upbringing instilled in her an ethos of leaving situations, particularly relationships, better than she found them.

I think it was shaped by my experiences. But that foundation was from my family, my grandmother, in particular. She instilled that – that you treat other people not necessarily as you want to be treated, which is the old adage, but you treat people better than you treat yourself. She used to say, “Leave a situation better than you found it.” [...] I think education helped from the standpoint of thinking outside of [the United States]. There are nationalities and ethnicities that do not have the option of being treated that way (Participant F4IC103, 00:01:18.0).

In talking about whether or not a person can lose their dignity, Participant F4IC103 explained that she has conversations about this at home. Some of these conversations are connected to her role as an HR professional, which sometimes involves the termination of employment for people in her organisation. In addition to her thoughts on the matter, it is interesting to note that these ideas are important to her, important enough to have these conversations at home with her husband. Connecting this to her ethos of leaving things better than she found them, it can be seen that Participant F4IC103 has an inner concern for the well-being of others and that her concern is rooted in deeply held ideas about human relationships.

You know it's interesting. I had this conversation this weekend with my husband. He's in the navy. We talked often about what if a person loses a job. Does that mean that the person is no longer worthy of whatever? He thinks that is a really hard question to answer. So, I said, “When you are no longer Lieutenant [...] and you come across one of the guys you went to the Naval Academy with, would they still

regard you as Lieutenant [...]?” He said yes, of course. Dignity is attached to certain things or stations or titles (Participant F4IC103, 00:05:02.0).

Participant M2IC301 works in student affairs with a higher education administration non-profit organisation. Among other services, the non-profit hosts an opportunity for university students to study in the Washington, D.C. area for one semester. Participant M2IC301 is responsible for some of the oversight and administration of that programme. During the interview, he was asked about the relationship between human dignity and respect. His answer suggests that human dignity is an abstract concept and respect is a matter of practice. For him, both dignity and respect are part of his personal value system. Note that his concept of respect involves a personal list of things for which one might be worthy of respect.

Dignity is, I think, an abstract concept [...] you have it as a human being. Whereas respect is [something] we exchange between each other. I should respect everybody because they have dignity but that’s not the reality of it. People respect people more or less based on a list of things they have decided are worthy of respect. [...] I can respect someone professionally but not in their personal choices (Participant M2IC301, 00:03:56.0).

In his role, Participant M2IC301 has daily interaction with the university students that are under his oversight in the programme. When asked whether human dignity comes into play in the workplace, his initial response was not about co-workers, but about the students. He notes that, as a matter of abstraction (i.e. his inner value system), the dignity of students suggests that he and his colleagues should work toward their betterment (i.e. well-being). In addition, he suggests that their work to teach students about public policy should include ideas of human dignity.

Generally, working in student affairs, [human dignity] definitely does [come into play in the workplace]. As professionals, we should all understand the dignity of the students and work for their betterment. Because of that, abstractly, yes. [...] When they come here, they take classes that tend to be around political science and public policy. [...] I don’t know if we use the term dignity, but we certainly talk around it [with our students]. What does it mean to create policy that acknowledges the dignity of those it’s going to effect? (Participant M2IC301, 00:05:43.0).

Participant F3IC303 is the editor of a magazine for leaders in higher education administration. For her, human dignity is mainly a matter of inherent value as a human being. She also relates dignity with choosing to do things, either at work or outside of work, that contribute to a better world. For her, there is a link between dignity and service to another person. When asked about her definition of human dignity, she connected it to membership in family and community.

I guess when I think of human dignity, I think of value first. So just inherent worth of the person, not what they contribute as a working member of society, but just as someone that contributes to family life or community life or the social aspects of it (Participant F3IC303, 00:00:21.2).

When asked if she has words and phrases other than human dignity to describe the concept of dignity, she stayed on the concept of value. Interestingly, however, she brought in the idea of well-being. She suggests that when someone helps another to flourish, the dignity of the person that receives the help is honoured.

Value. To a certain extent flourishing. [...] The idea of flourishing is not in the place of dignity but is used alongside of it...the idea that you are helping someone flourishing, you are honouring their dignity. And then respect. If you're treating someone with respect, you're honouring their dignity (Participant F3IC303, 00:01:54.8).

Finally, as Participant F3IC303 considered the ways that human dignity comes into play in the workplace and, especially, in the leader-follower relationship, she connected it to her own identity as a member of the Millennial Generation. She touched on what she perceives as a challenge for her generation: the tension between the reality of daily work tasks and the desire to do something meaningful. In making this statement, she conveyed something of her sense of herself as a member of her generation, that is, an element of her inner life and personal identity.

Especially for my generation, the Millennial Generation, we're all about purpose, goals, and finding meaning in our work. Anything that is day-to-day monotony is not good, even though that's a key part of what makes up day-to-day work. [...] My work

is not just about me, but it's about what I can do for [our constituents] (Participant F3IC303, 00:14:53.0).

Participant M5IC104 is a customer support manager for a mid-sized, global data services company. When asked about his definition of human dignity, he focused on self-worth, which is an element of self-perception, which is, itself, an aspect of the inner life. Within that understanding, he emphasised the value of the individual person.

Self-worth. That you know that the people matter and 'person' matters. So, it's not just people as a group but a person themselves (Participant M5IC104, 00:00:10.0).

When asked how those ideas of human dignity were formed within him, he initially referred to his mother. He then mentioned the influence of organisations such as the Boy Scouts of America and other clubs that have a foundational moral teaching component. Although Participant M5IC104 is in his late 50's, it is worth noting that he credits his understanding of dignity to the teachings of his mother and to childhood and adolescent experience that were formative for him.

My Mom raised us. Single mom. English teacher. And so, first off, language really mattered in the house. We spoke correctly and when we were using a word, we were told what that word meant. [...] articulation was an important piece of growing up. And so, to that end, when you talk about wording and you talk about expressing yourself, my mother was always big on equality and so on. So, I think it started at home. [...] As I grew older, sports played a big role. Scouts played a big role [...] and then just getting involved with [service clubs during high school]. And so those are the types of things that I guess made me think [life is] bigger than me. [...] You start to see the community. [...] The way that you expect to be treated...you should be treating other people the same way (Participant M5IC104, 00:00:32.0).

Participant F3IC105 is a human resource professional with a mid-sized, global data services company. For her, human dignity is closely connected to the basic human rights of food, clean water, safety, etc.

Well, I think human dignity has to do with basic human rights. So, you know I think we may get very politically charged often but you know those basic rights to food,

clean water, housing, safety [...] the sort of basic needs and wants and desires. And I think when you start to take away those basic human rights then you're threatening to take away human dignity (Participant F3IC105, 00:00:06.0).

When asked how these ideas were formed, she initially went to her political view on immigration, something she later discussed in the interview as an area of passion for her. She then said that she was taught to show dignity to others through her family life as a child. Pointing to the religious views of her current home, she mentioned her own religious faith but focused on the beliefs of her husband's religious group which has a statement about human dignity in its foundational documents.

[...] certainly when we think about the political arena and you know even immigration. Saying that a person is illegal...I think that gets close to eliminating elements of dignity because they're their person and how can a person be illegal? But they can be because that's the law. I think how I was taught to show dignity to others is certainly [from] my family and my upbringing. But thinking about what people deserve what rights do people deserve...that's been education and the political arena as well. [...] And that certainly goes into your religious concepts of humans and dignity and you know treating all humans the same way, I think. I was raised Presbyterian. My husband attends a Unitarian church. One of the foundations of the Unitarian church is that...I'm not going to get the phrasing quite right...it's something like the basic human dignity of all people.² And that's a core foundation of their beliefs (Participant F3IC105, 00:01:04.0).

As noted above, the issue of immigration and the treatment of immigrants is an area of personal passion for Participant F3IC105. She brought it up and used it as an example several times during the interview. Even as the interview shifted from the general topic of human dignity to the more specific topic of human dignity in the workplace, she continued to refer to the issue of immigration. Her compassion for immigrants was very apparent as she described employees that have chosen not to speak up in order to protect their immigration status.

² Participant F3IC105 was referring to the Unitarian Universalist Association's 1st Principle which states, "The inherent worth and dignity of every person." (Unitarian Universalist Association, 2020).

An employee told me that there are people at [the organisation] who [...] are afraid to speak up because they don't want their immigration status [jeopardised]. This broke my heart frankly because first of all it's a loss of freedom for them to surrender. [...] It's easy for me to say you will never be punished for speaking openly. [...] I mean [sometimes] demonstrated in the behaviours you have as a leader or as an organisation. But if they feel that way, there is very little that I can [change]. I can't necessarily control how they feel. And that was very disheartening to me (Participant F3IC105, 00:05:04.0).

Participant F2IC403 is a coordinator for a graduate medical education programme at a large university. She expressed that, for her, human dignity is connected with human value and human worth.

Human dignity is human value or human worth. I see dignity as someone knowing that they have value and worth and deserve respect (Participant F2IC403, 00:00:07.4).

She believes that human dignity is an inherent human trait that cannot be lost. When asked if someone can lose their dignity or not, she almost talked about her spiritual beliefs, but stopped short of that. Even so, she did convey that she does not believe human dignity can be lost even though our way of speaking about it might suggest otherwise. She suggests that personal mistakes or failings that might diminish one's dignity are not ultimately defining.

In the bigger picture, I definitely believe that human dignity cannot be lost no matter...I'm trying to keep this thought from going to a spiritual conversation. [...] No, human dignity cannot be lost. You have people use the phrase, "Oh, I lost my dignity" if they made a mistake. [...] But I do believe that is just a fleeting thing. [...] And that is not how you are identified (Participant F2IC403, 00:01:23.7).

When asked if the concept of human dignity comes into play at work, she initially spoke about an aspect of her organisation's mission to serve all people and how this is something she enjoys about the organisation. Her comments about dignity at work were not about the leader-follower relationship that she experiences in the workplace, but about the service-oriented mission of the organisation. Her emphasis is on serving others, regardless of their apparent dignity.

Yes, I think [this organisation] has been a really cool place for that in the sense of how diverse it is, but also just seeing and hearing the patient population. There is a big executive health component of this hospital in serving [famous people in the Washington D.C. area]. But also, you walk into work and pass ten homeless people. We serve that population also. [...] It's just fighting for [...] underserved populations [that] have as much dignity and value and deserve the same kind of treatment (Participant F2IC403, 00:06:09.2).

4.3 Theme 2 – Reflections on Inclusive Decision-Making

This section provides interview responses related to the theme of inclusive decision-making. Following the semi-structured interview methodology described in Chapter 3 and the base interview questions provided in Appendix C, participants shared their views on the connection between inclusive decision-making, employee well-being, and human dignity as elements of the leader-follower relationship. While there were contextual differences among them, many responses followed the same thematic thread, regardless of the role, age, gender, or racial/ethnic background of the participants. Inclusive decision-making was the leadership behaviour most frequently mentioned by participants as having a human dignity connection. Of all the human dignity and employee well-being themes discussed in the interviews, inclusive decision-making is also the one for which participants provided the most detailed and personal experiences. This is perhaps an indicator of the level of importance this topic has for them.

Fourteen of the nineteen participants made direct or indirect reference to inclusive decision-making as a leadership behaviour that contributes positively to their sense of dignity. Similarly, most participants conveyed that inclusive, relational decision-making also contributes to their sense of calling and/or membership, the two intermediate outcomes of spiritual leadership that together represent spiritual well-being in the theory. Through specific examples of projects and initiatives, the participants conveyed the experience of having their dignity respected and their sense of well-being increased when leaders engaged them in the process of making decisions. Similarly, some participants, albeit fewer, conveyed the sense of having their dignity denied when leaders failed to include them in decisions involving their work. Some participants were careful to put boundaries on their expectations of inclusion. Some mentioned, for example, that they did not expect to be included in every decision.

Instead, several mentioned that their desire was to be included mainly in decisions that directly impact them and their work.

In the theory of spiritual leadership, the sense of calling and membership are the intermediate outcomes that serve as an indication of individual well-being in the workplace (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). In establishing the base questions for this research, the term “membership” was determined to have sufficient colloquial familiarity as an organisational concept that the phrase could be used directly in the interviews with minimal risk of misunderstanding. The term “calling”, however, was determined to be less common in some organisational settings and, potentially, less well understood. Fry defines calling as,

“[...] the experience of transcendence or how one makes a difference [and] derives meaning and purpose in life. Many people seek not only competence and mastery to realise their full potential through their work but also a sense that work has some special meaning or value” (Fry, 2003, p. 703-704).

To address the potential misunderstanding of the word calling, interview participants were asked about their sense of meaning and purpose as proxies for their sense of calling. The concepts of meaning and purpose also resonate with the higher order need of self-actualisation, further supporting the decision to use these words as proxies for calling (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). The use of meaning and purpose as more commonly understood dimensions of workplace experience was intended to provide participants the opportunity to express their lived experiences with the elements of spiritual leadership in the workplace, or lack thereof, without potential confusion about definitions. The words meaning and purpose, then, were used consistently throughout the interviews to encourage and facilitate participation and to provide a foundation for the discussion of the participants’ sense of human dignity and well-being in the workplace.

In the remainder of this section, the responses and comments of twelve participants are given as evidentiary examples from the interview data. They include interviews with five males and seven females, covering a range of organisational roles and levels of responsibility: individual contributors, mid-level managers, and executives. The industries represented by

this group of participants include graduate medical education, higher education services, a social services non-profit, and companies in the financial and data services sectors. The interview data includes direct answers to interview questions as well as comments and supporting conversation in which participants sought to explain an answer, provide clarity, or provide an example. To the extent possible, participants were encouraged to cite specific examples, such as projects and workplace initiatives, to help anchor their responses in real world experiences rather than purely conceptual ideas. Section 4.3.1 contains interview responses of participants in mid-manager and executive roles. Section 4.3.2 contains responses from individual contributors.

4.3.1 Reflections on Inclusion – Mid-Managers and Executives

Participant F4EX502 is a vice president with a social service organisation. When asked about things a leader could do to contribute to her sense of dignity in the workplace, she noted the importance of being included in the decision-making process. She said that her ideas do not need to be adopted for her dignity to be respected. They simply need to be considered. She also noted the general sense of being able to participate, which is a reflection of membership, one of the intermediate outcomes of spiritual leadership (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017).

Feeling like even if my point of view is not the one that is ultimately adopted, or my suggestion isn't followed. To feel that it's at least considered. Being heard, being able to participate. I'm pretty big on organic recognition (Participant F4EX502, 00:25:09).

Participant F3EX501 is also a senior executive in the same social service organisation. She reports to the president and manages several staff members. As both a leader and a follower, she recognised that inclusion in the process of decision-making is a key part of feeling that her personal sense of dignity has been acknowledged in the workplace. Reflecting on her own experience as an employee, when asked about the ways a leader can respect her dignity, she reflected on her inclusion in and exclusion from the organisation's decision-making process, which she refers to as "the process."

I personally feel like my dignity...when a leader comes to me and says I want to know what you think about this. I want to involve you in the process (Participant F3EX501, 00:44:30).

When asked about her own experience of feeling included in the decision-making processes of her organisation, participant F3EX501 addressed her sense of being valued as a member of the organisation. This is important because it expresses the connection she feels between inclusive decision-making, her sense of membership as a higher-order need and as an aspect of well-being. Expressing the sense of having her dignity being acknowledged as “being valued”. She said,

Maybe when I'm not included in our process or I feel like I'm on the outskirts. Or I don't feel essential to the process. I think when my dignity at work might be more compromised when maybe I don't feel like a valued part of the team. It doesn't have to be in a big capacity, but whatever I contribute is like a valued part (Participant F3EX501, 00:46:37).

She notes that, from her point of view, a successful leader is one that brings people onto the team and enables them to succeed. The leader has confidence in others and themselves, so that employees do not need to be micromanaged. She sees value in the autonomy and empowerment of employees and their inclusion in the decision-making process. Combining this with her other comments, participant F3EX501 appears to associate dignity in the leader-follower relationship with empowerment and inclusion in the decision-making process. Regarding her views of successful leadership, including her own practices, she said:

A successful leader is one where they choose the right people to come alongside them and then empower them to succeed. And ones that are secure enough to let people under them fail and secure enough also to push people. I think on the flipside leaders that aren't secure have the tendency to need to micromanage or because there's always that anxiety. Do it my way or not to my standard or it's not going to succeed if I don't you because there's no competence. [...] this is just my personal preference because it's such a high value for me. But like I think leaders are very the most successful ones are authentic and vulnerable (Participant F3EX501, 00:42:28).

Participant F6EX101 is the vice president of HR for a mid-sized, global data services company. When asked about the connection between her personal sense of hope (which is an element of the spiritual leadership intrinsic motivation model and which was defined for her by the interviewer) and her sense of human dignity, she described her role in the company's decision to acquire another company. She explained that being part of that effort was very satisfying because she felt trusted and included. She noted,

It's a rich media company, and we acquired them. They're wholly owned subsidiary of [the company] now. It was first time we've ever done something like that. [...]. Now I'm the only woman officer on an all-male officer team and they are all very business driven. And I come to the table with kind of a different mindset and a different place. And I've worked with the president for a really long time and so there's a great deal of trust between the two of us. And I think and hope, and I know in my heart of hearts that I present a different something that's a little different to that whole team and to him. [...] We all had a part to play in the way you do on a team when you're young. [...] All of a sudden, I'm deciding whether we're going to make them employees or create a wholly owned subsidiary or whatever and I'm like "Are you really going to let me decide that?" And it's great. It was great and it was just a very satisfying project and I was very hopeful, and I believe in retrospect that my participation led to a better outcome than it would have otherwise (Participant F6EX101, 00:46:59).

Participant M3MM106 is a mid-level service delivery manager with a mid-sized, global data service company. Very early in the interview, embedded in his answer to another question, he revealed his belief that not being included in the decision-making process is a violation of dignity. After giving his definition of human dignity along with his view on whether or not human dignity can be taken away, he was asked if his dignity has ever been taken away in the workplace. He replied,

I don't believe anyone has taken away my dignity, but I've been insulted (Participant M3MM106, 00:08:03).

When asked about the distinction between loss of dignity and being insulted, he noted that it is a subtle distinction and therefore difficult to explain. Unprompted, he explained his point using an example related to the lack of inclusion. He explained,

These are very subtle concepts. I suppose my interpretation is when events happen without my being consulted or being recognised (Participant M3MM106, 00:08:26).

Later in the interview, participant M3MM106 was asked to describe a situation in which he played a part in developing a shared vision and shared objectives. He described a new product planning effort he had been part of. When asked if anything about that situation detracted from the team members' sense of dignity, his response clearly indicates that, for him, there is a connection between human dignity and inclusive decision-making around shared vision and objective-setting, He said,

No. I don't feel like there was any discussion where people were not at least heard or able to contribute (Participant M3MM106, 00:29:43).

Participant M4MM201 is an accounting manager in a small, regional office of a large, global financial services corporation. Near the beginning of the interview, he was asked if the concept of human dignity comes into play in the workplace. He replied,

If [leaders] are not taking you seriously or if you're not being listened to, I think that's a way you could feel you don't have dignity, or you're not being treated with the proper respect level (Participant M4MM201, 00:06:10).

He added a point that was not mentioned by any of the other participants. To him, a single episode of not being included does not constitute a dignity violation. Instead, he notes,

And I think with dignity it would go more than just a one-time incident but would be ongoing or over a long period of time (Participant M4MM201, 00:08:48).

He described his experience with the implementation of a large accounting system project. The project was driven from a large corporate office that, from his perspective, did not understand the unique challenges faced by his team in the small regional office. When asked if anything about that experience contributed to his personal sense of dignity, he replied,

We're on this conference call every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. About the progress of this system with all the offices. I think I actually feel less dignified with that just because our input isn't valued as much as other offices (Participant M4MM201, 00:43:33).

Later in the interview, participant M4MM201 returned to the topic of the accounting system project. He mentioned that he felt trusted by the leaders above him in the regional office. Their trust for him contributed to his sense of dignity because he and his team were able to work autonomously. He said,

So, yeah, I think being treated that way, I think just knowing you're valued in that way and you're appreciated [...] There's the trust aspect, too. We had the experience from the prior system. The people in [the corporate office] had the experience with the current system. And it was up to us to figure out the best way to move this over to that system based on our prior experience [...] I think anyone that had that experience would still have the same sense of dignity (Participant M4MM201, 00:50:43).

Participant F3MM305 is an HR professional with a higher educational services organisation. She works in the company's headquarters office and has responsibility for serving the HR needs of field offices. Paralleling the ideas expressed by participant F3IC105, participant F3MM305 felt valued in her role when she was able to complete a comprehensive culture-change project that resulted in, among other things, the inclusion of field directors in decision-making processes. She said,

I felt just personally, and I think for those directors of our sites, I felt personally valued. Sometimes it was directed at me and sometimes at my boss. "Thank you for including us. We've never been included in decisions before." (Participant F3MM305, 00:51:20).

Reflecting on the impact of the project on her own sense of purpose and well-being, she pointed to the idea that being seen as an advocate for inclusive decision-making improved her standing among the field directors and improved her ability to perform in her role. She said,

There are no HR employees in the sites. I'm responsible for everything. I can't know about things unless people tell me about them. It was a big moment for me in building that trust and respect in this new position. "OK, she cares about us and can advocate for us." (Participant F3MM305, 54:12).

4.3.2 Reflections on Inclusion – Individual Contributors

Participant M2IC301 is a facilities and residential experience manager for a higher education services organisation. Asked about something a leader might do in the organisation that would detract from his sense of dignity, he described a scenario in which a leader did not include him in the decision-making process. He equated this behaviour with hiding on the part of the leader. Note that participant M2IC301 connects inclusive decision-making to the sense of being known by the leader and that this leads to a trust-based relationship.

Sure. So, one would be the opposite, kind of unnecessary privacy or secrecy. Um hiding. And again, not that I need to be in everything, but just not having any sense of what's going on up there or why it's going on. Um. Would make me feel like there's not a sense of trust between me and whoever's at [that] level. And, similarly, I guess it's just the opposite, not getting to know me and making decisions or doing things that would be done differently if they did know me (Participant M2IC301, 00:22:47).

Participant M4IC304 is a department leader in a higher educational services organisation with both teaching and administrative responsibilities. When asked about whether or not he feels a sense of membership in the organisation as an element of human well-being, he indicated that he feels a sense of membership when leaders include him in the decision-making process. He specifically related this to a sense of empowerment. Connecting decision-making with empowerment as an element of membership is a direct reflection of the connection between spiritual leadership's intrinsic motivation model and the intermediate outcome of membership (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017).

I think in those moments, I've always been 100% satisfied in how they've responded in both to a personal commitment to me as well as the position. Kind of communicating their sense of how we see the situation, but we trust you now to make the decisions that need to be made. There's a sense of empowerment. Those are the things that come to mind (Participant M4IC304, 00:37:18).

A few minutes later in the interview, when asked about specific things a leader can do that would contribute to his sense of human dignity, participant M4IC304 again referenced respect for his autonomy and ability to make decisions.

This organisation has done a good job of protecting my sense of empowerment or autonomy. That's great (Participant M4IC304, 00:45:55).

He continued to explain what it means to him when he is empowered by a leader to participate in the decision-making process. For this participant, inclusion in the decision-making process is a recognition of the challenges put before him in his role and respect for his ability and willingness to deal with those challenges. It reflects a sense of being known and being seen by the leader. In this quote, he is speaking as if he is the leader that respects the dignity of his/her employee.

If I'm in your shoes, it's got to be hard to do what you do [...] Thank you for what you're doing. It's acknowledgement that I see you. I see other burdens you carry. I'm grateful that you carry them for the reasons that you carry them (Participant M4IC304, 00:48:57).

Participant F3IC303, the editor of a magazine for leaders in higher education administration. During her interview, she discussed the sense of freedom she has in identifying and making decisions about the topics and trends that the magazine should cover. She notes that not having the decision rights to shift the direction of an article would make it difficult to do her job well and would feel degrading to her (i.e. violating to her sense of human dignity).

If [the article is] being understood by the people who are writing it as it comes to fruition, then I feel valued because you're being understood and acknowledged. It helps me think I'm good at my job. [When I am told what to do rather than being allowed to collaborate in the decisions,] I'm not being trusted to fully observe these trends and decide how we should tackle it. More collaborative involvement vs. having those conversations and not being understood or having the project fall on its face or just having it be dictated to me. Partially because in that latter sense, it never ends up being exactly how it happens. Interviews and articles always go in different directions. That can also make those kinds of article trickier. [...] When I feel like I'm less empowered to make a decision to shift an article in this direction or not have this article at all, where it is dictated to me from on high, I don't have that kind of authority. Particularly to me in my role, that would feel degrading because I've had that authority in a lot of other ways (Participant F3IC303, 00:41:46).

Participant M5IC104 is a senior individual contributor with a mid-sized, global data services company. When asked what a leader can do to contribute to his sense of dignity in the workplace, he also focused on being included in the decision-making process. He also expressed that inclusive decision-making is mainly about decisions that impact the employee. In other words, he is not indicating that every employee needs to be involved with every decision in the organisation. He said,

So, inclusion. You know, that whole inclusion thing is one thing, but really including staff in management decisions that impact them (Participant M5IC104, 00:22:44).

Later in the interview, as he was reflecting on a specific project in which such inclusive decision-making was demonstrated, participant M5IC104 expressed his belief that the inclusion of others, not just himself, was beneficial to the outcomes of the project. He noted,

So, in just defining...finalise that thought...since everybody was included into the discussion, and we were able to put even into the document specific wording that belonged to other people...you know I think everybody got that (Participant M5IC104, 00:35:57).

Participant F2IC401 is a coordinator for a graduate medical education programme at a large university. In her interview, she expressed a clear connection between the concepts of membership, dignity, and inclusion. For her, human dignity is a matter of respect, so being included in decisions is an indication that leaders respect her and, in turn, respect her dignity. When asked which aspects of her work contribute most to her sense of membership, she replied,

Yeah so, I think it's being included it sounded like being included in decisions that will affect my department. And just because how are you supposed to know how things are going if you don't ask the key players right. Yeah. And I you know I'm doing and I'm ready to help in any way (Participant F2IC401, 00:25:48).

Connecting this idea to her understanding of and experience with human dignity rooted in respect, she continued,

I mean I think the whole respect thing...dignity respect. So, feeling that I am a respected employee...that my opinions matter...not necessarily that things have to go

my way but that I'm being heard. You know I think that definitely something that adds and contributes to my dignity also being included in just giving the feeling of inclusion at least even if it's just a mirage. [laughs] (Participant F2IC401, 00:28:42).

Participant F2IC401 seemed to convey some cynicism at the end of her comment. She laughingly suggested that she would be satisfied with the appearance of inclusive decision-making, even if it is “just a mirage”.

Participant F3IC105 is a mid-career HR professional with a higher education institution. At the beginning of the interview, she explained that her definition of human dignity is associated with the protection of lower order needs on Maslow's hierarchy, such as safety and nourishment. As she answered later questions, she seemed to reconsider and even broaden her definition. For example, she pointed to the importance of making sure others are heard in the organisation. In addition, she further connected this to her own sense of purpose (i.e. calling) in her role as an HR professional. She said,

So, if we go back to how I define dignity I would say probably not. But I think if I'm considering dignity in this case to be advocating for others which I don't know that that fits in my own definition of dignity. And then yes, I think it's important. Something that I want I always want to be part of my job is to make others feel like they're being listened to. And I think because I'm sort of the intermediary between the employees and the senior management at least I'll offer an opportunity for people to sort of vent to me about issues that they see and then I can try to communicate that to others. So, I guess it improves my sense of self if not dignity (Participant F3IC105, 00:28:00).

4.4 Theme 3 – Reflections on Mattering as a Lived Experience

This section provides interview responses related to the theme of workplace mattering. Following the semi-structured interview methodology described in Chapter 3 and the base interview questions provided in Appendix C, participants shared their views on the connection between mattering, employee well-being, and human dignity as an element of the leader-follower relationship. They also discussed specific leadership behaviours that contribute to their sense of dignity and well-being. While only a few participants used the

actual word “mattering”, thirteen of nineteen participants made either direct or indirect reference to the concept. As can be seen in the responses below, some participants expressed that the idea of mattering is conceptually very close to the idea of dignity, or at least respect for one’s dignity. The findings are divided into two sections: Section 4.4.1, dealing with direct references to mattering by the interview participants, and Section 4.4.2, dealing with indirect references to mattering.

Most participants conveyed, through a combination of opinions and lived examples, that leaders that convey a sense of mattering to their followers simultaneously contribute to their sense of dignity and well-being in the organisational context. Most participants relayed positive stories and experiences of how their dignity was respected by leaders that demonstrated that they mattered. A few relayed experiences of the denial of their dignity when they felt that they did not matter or were somehow not appreciated or accepted by leaders or the organisation at large. Three participants indicated that by conveying a sense of mattering, leaders and organisations have not only contributed to their sense of dignity and well-being, but also to their sense of commitment to the organisation. A subtheme for some participants is that mattering is a transcendent concept that is not directly tied to one’s work product or instrumental productivity.

In the remainder of this section, the responses and comments of thirteen participants are given as evidentiary examples from the interview data. They include interviews with four males and nine females, covering a range of organisational roles and levels of responsibility – individual contributors, mid-level managers, and executives. The industries represented by this group of participants include graduate medical education, higher education services, a social services non-profit, and companies in the financial and data services sectors. The interview data includes direct answers to interview questions as well as comments and supporting conversation in which participants sought to explain an answer, provide clarity, or provide an example. To the extent possible, participants were encouraged to cite specific examples, such as projects and workplace initiatives, to help anchor their responses in real world experiences rather than purely conceptual ideas.

4.4.1 Direct References to Mattering

Participant M3MM106 is a mid-level manager with a mid-sized, global data service company. Of all the participants in this research project, his experience provides the most direct connection between mattering and human dignity in the workplace. At the beginning of the interview, he explained that his definition of human dignity is closely related to human rights, specifically, as he said, the “right to matter.” When asked how he formed that definition of human dignity he explained that it was based on his observation that humans have basic needs and expectations. In explaining this, he said that acknowledging the dignity of another person is the same as acknowledging that they matter. He said,

And dignity usually in my mind is about an acknowledgement of mattering. Do I matter? Does this other person matter? And to someone else? If you don’t matter to them, in my mind, you don’t have dignity (Participant M3MM106, 00:01:01.0).

When asked what things a leader can do to respect the dignity of people in the organisation, he said that leaders can acknowledge that they matter. In describing his own practice as a leader, he indicated that this can be as simple as greeting someone in the hallway. He replied,

Acknowledge their successes. Acknowledge people in the first place. I pass you in the hallway frequently. I acknowledge that you work here. I am always amazed at how many people you pass in the hallway that can’t even look at you and say hello. [...] I always try to acknowledge everybody else to make sure they know I acknowledge who they are and that they matter (Participant M3MM106, 00:23:02.0).

Participant F4EX502 is a vice president with a social service organisation. For her, the definition of dignity is closely related to the concepts of value and respect. In addition, dignity in the workplace, while closely related to value, is not tied to the value one creates in a production sense. Instead, she is referring to a value of the human being that transcends the outputs of their work. In explaining how she would define and talk about human dignity, she says

Well, I would talk a lot about value and that is not defined by production. [...] Worth, value, respect (Participant F4EX502, 00:01:36.6).

When asked whether a person can lose their human dignity or if it is something inherent in being human, she explained that dignity is inherent, but that people can feel as if they have lost their dignity. In explaining her answer, she conveys a similar idea to that offered by participant M3MM106, namely that if someone feels their dignity has been lost, that they have no value. She explains,

I think it is probably possible for a person to believe that their dignity has been lost and that their value has been destroyed [...] So, I think psychologically probably it's possible for a person to think that they are no longer valued (Participant F4EX502, 00:02:33.6).

Participant F3IC105 is an HR professional working in the same organisation as participant M3MM106. When asked what a leader can do to contribute to her sense of dignity, she relayed a story about a time she was having difficulty in a master's degree programme. While she was in that difficult season, she had the opportunity to discuss it with the organisation's CTO. He encouraged her by asking, "Do you know what you call the person that graduated from medical school with the lowest grade point average?" He said, "Doctor." She gave this as an example of a time that a senior leader not only acknowledged her and was empathetic toward her situation but was confident that her investment in the master's degree would be worth it. After telling this story, she went on to explain how that conversation made her feel:

[...] that was such an important conversation because it showed me that he knew what I was doing. And it was encouraging and personal and that was such a great thing. So, I would say recognising part of my life outside of the organisation is important, but I think also recognising what I'm doing for the organisation; and you know what I'm trying to accomplish here is important. [...] It's important to know when your leader tells you that you did a good job or that they recognise your attempt is good (Participant F3IC105, 00:20:44.6).

She went on to describe a connection she feels between being recognised and valued for what she has done as well as for simply being an individual in the organisation. In her description, she equated her sense of dignity, recognition by a leader, and the sense of mattering as an individual and as a team member. When asked about what a leader might do that would detract from her sense of dignity, she said,

[...] not acknowledging what you're doing; not recognising you as an individual or as part of a team. Anything that feels like, you know, you don't matter as a person (Participant F3IC105, 00:22:05.0).

Finally, she summarised her thoughts on what a leader can do to respect the dignity of followers in the organisation by saying,

I think as much as possible, making individual feel like they are recognised as individuals (Participant F3IC105, 00:23:09.2).

Participant F3EX501 is a senior executive in a social service organisation. When asked about the ways a leader can respect her dignity, she reflected on inclusion in the organisation's decision-making process. In her response, she expressed that inclusion is important to her because it is an indication that she matters to the leader and to the process. She indicates that her dignity is respected when a leader cares to know what she thinks about something. When leaders want her involvement, it conveys to her that she matters and, in turn, that she has dignity. She gets very close to the word "mattering" when she says that she is "being valued."

I personally feel like my dignity [is respected] when a leader comes to me and says I want to know what you think about this. I want to involve you in the process (Participant F3EX501, 00:44:30).

Maybe when I'm not included in our process or I feel like I'm on the outskirts. Or I don't feel essential to the process. I think when my dignity at work might be more compromised when maybe I don't feel like a valued part of the team. It doesn't have to be in a big capacity, but whatever I contribute is like a valued part (Participant F3EX501, 00:46:37).

Participant M4MM201 is an accounting manager in a small, regional office of a large, global financial services corporation. Near the beginning of the interview, he was asked if he ever experienced the concept of human dignity coming into play in the workplace. In his response, he referred to not being taken seriously or heard, and connected these experiences to the sense that his dignity is not being respected.

If [leaders] are not taking you seriously or if you're not being listened to, I think that's a way you could feel you don't have dignity, or you're not being treated with the proper respect level (Participant M4MM201, 00:06:10).

This theme persisted in the discussion with M4MM201. Later in the interview, he discussed his experience with a project to upgrade their accounting system. He mentioned that he felt trusted by his leaders. In experiencing that trust, he felt valued because they were relying on him to “figure out the best way.” Their trust in him conveyed value, the sense that he mattered to them and to the success of the project. In his reflection on this experience, he conveyed a sense of mattering that was connected to his sense of dignity in the workplace.

So, yeah, I think being treated that way, I think just knowing you're valued in that way and you're appreciated [...] There's the trust aspect, too. We had the experience from the prior system. The people in [the corporate office] had the experience with the current system. And it was up to us to figure out the best way to move us over to that system based on our prior experience [...] I think anyone that had that experience would still have the same sense of dignity (Participant M4MM201, 00:50:43).

Participant F2IC401 is a coordinator for a graduate medical education programme at a large university. In her interview, she expressed a clear connection between the concepts of membership, dignity, and inclusion. As she expresses below, her sense of dignity is closely related to her sense of being respected. In addition, she connects this dignity-respect experience with the idea that her opinions matter as an employee. She does not expect that decisions will always lean her way, but she does perceive that being heard is an element of workplace mattering and an aspect of being respected.

I mean I think the whole respect thing...dignity respect. So, feeling that I am a respected employee...that my opinions matter...not necessarily that things have to go my way but that I'm being heard (Participant F2IC401, 00:28:42).

For participant F2IC401, dignity at work involves having pride for one's work and others respecting that work as well. The implication is that leaders can respect her dignity by acknowledging that her work matters and, by extension, that she matters. When asked how leaders can contribute to her sense of dignity in the workplace, she explained,

Yes, and this is because, you know, this is also taking pride in the things that you do. So, I would say yes, [leaders] can influence my dignity because I am proud of a project I worked on. [Leaders can] show compassion and care that [employees] are becoming better humans (Participant F2IC401, 00:33:57.2).

Participant F3MM305 is an HR professional with an organisation that serves a consortium of colleges and universities. When asked about a project in which she felt her dignity was respected in the workplace, she reflected on a headquarters initiative in which she advocated for the inclusion of field office directors that would not normally be included in corporate HR decisions. Her advocacy resulted in good outcomes for the project and served to establish good relationships with leaders in both the field offices and the headquarters. Her responses are interesting because they not only indicate her own sense of dignity and mattering (i.e. "I felt personally valued"), but also the appreciation for the field directors that had been included in the process.

I felt just personally, and I think for those directors of our sites, I felt personally valued. Sometimes it was directed at me and sometimes at my boss. "Thank you for including us. We've never been included in decisions before." (Participant F3MM305, 00:51:20).

Participant F2IC403 is a coordinator for a graduate medical education programme at a large university. She believes that all humans have inherent dignity that cannot be taken away, but it can be disrespected. In discussing her experience with human dignity in the workplace, she emphasised that leaders can contribute to the sense that an employee does not matter very much and, in so doing, can cause the person to doubt their value and dignity. She explained that, in her previous role, it was easy for leaders to ignore her because her work was primarily administrative and procedural. While she felt valued in one sense, she also felt that the leaders did not respect her dignity because they did not make an effort to make her feel included as one that mattered to them. She says,

There were times when I would go a whole day without talking with someone in my previous role. Knowing that I do have dignity and respect here and value but [was] not being affirmed in that in any way. I think it's hard for a human to know their dignity if there are [no] actions that match that from the organisation (Participant F2IC403, 00:08:00.0).

When asked what a leader could do to contribute to her sense of human dignity in the workplace, she explained that even small gestures are very helpful to her and indicate that she matters.

Anytime I was given any form of verbal affirmation or anytime I was asked to come to a meeting, although it didn't involve me, you know, "this would be cool for you to come along and see what we are doing." You're not participating in the meeting but just learning to grow and "I can see the potential in you to grow [...] Your presence is wanted." (Participant F2IC403, 00:10:00.2).

She continued,

Anytime [I] get feedback, [...] good or bad [...], it makes me feel valued and that they're willing to take time to think about your work and give that feedback (Participant F2IC403, 00:11:31.1).

4.4.2 Indirect References to Mattering

Participant M4IC304 is a department leader in a higher educational services organisation with both teaching and administrative responsibilities. As noted in Chapter 5, he explained that, for him, inclusion in the decision-making process is a recognition of the unique challenges of his role and respect for his ability and willingness to deal with those challenges. This not only reflects a sense of being known and seen by the leader, but of mattering to that leader. He indicates that he matters not only for the work he does, but for the fact that he is willing to carry burdens for the organisation and, presumably, for the leader personally. In this quote, he is speaking as if he is the dignity-respecting leader.

If I'm in your shoes, it's got to be hard to do what you do [...] Thank you for what you're doing. It's acknowledgement that I see you. I see other burdens you carry. I'm grateful that you carry them for the reasons that you carry them (Participant M4IC304, 00:48:57).

Participant F3IC303 is the editor of a magazine for a higher education administration non-profit. In her comments about being included in decisions, she introduces the idea that feeling trusted is an important aspect of her relationship with leaders. For her, trust is connected to

the sense of mattering in the workplace. When she is trusted to do her job, that is when she is not excluded from decisions about articles for the magazine, she takes this to be an indicator that she is perceived to be good at her job. When she is excluded, on the other hand, she feels degraded (i.e. loss of dignity). Connecting these ideas, it is clear that the participant is conveying a relationship between trust, mattering, and dignity that is part of the leader-follower experience for her.

If [the article is] being understood by the people who are writing it as it comes to fruition, then I feel valued because you're being understood and acknowledged. It helps me think I'm good at my job. [When I am told what to do rather than being allowed to collaborate in the decisions,] I'm not being trusted to fully observe these trends and decide how we should tackle it. More collaborative involvement vs having those conversations and not being understood or having the project fall on its face or just having it be dictated to me. Partially because in that latter sense, it never ends up being exactly how it happens. Interviews and articles always go in different directions. That can also make those kinds of article trickier. [...] When I feel like I'm less empowered to make a decision to shift an article in this direction or not have this article at all, where it is dictated to me from on high, I don't have that kind of authority. Particularly to me in my role, that would feel degrading because I've had that authority in a lot of other ways (Participant F3IC303, 00:41:46).

Participant F6EX101 is the vice president of HR for a mid-sized, global data services company. She has more than 40 years of experience and, at the time of this interview, was approaching retirement. During the interview, she described a corporate acquisition project in which she played an active role. As described in Chapter 5, she explained that she and the organisation's president (i.e. her manager) had worked together for a long time and had developed a deep and mutual sense of trust. It was important for her to be included in this acquisition project because 1) it was the company's first corporate acquisition, 2) she perceived that she had unique knowledge and experience to contribute, and 3) she was the only woman on the executive team. She expressed that being invited to lead key decisions about the acquisition reflected the trust the president had in her. In spite of her approaching retirement, the inclusion and trust were very important to her because it reflected that she still mattered to him as a key member of the executive team. She said,

So, I think when a lot of people get to the end of their career, they begin to feel superfluous and perhaps not essential to the equation. [This project] allowed [me] to feel an incredible sense of worth and freedom and dignity. [...] It afforded [us the opportunity] to feel really relevant and good and like [we] had contributed to a positive outcome (Participant F6EX101, 00:50:26.3).

Participant F3IC402 is a coordinator for a graduate medical education programme at a large university. She experienced a connection between the sense of mattering and the sense of dignity that extends beyond her time of employment. In a previous job with a different organisation than her current employer, she helped a regional health service receive accreditation from government health inspectors. She explained that her role in the accreditation process gave her exposure at all levels of the organisation. She felt that her dignity was respected by the employer because she was respected for the work she did and because she was responsible for work that mattered to them. Her comments are interesting because a nickname given to her during the process that could easily have had a negative meaning for her. Because of the overall experience she had of being entrusted with something important and, by extension, perceiving herself to matter to the organisation, she received the nickname positively. Even now, she feels that same appreciation even years later.

I did feel valued. Even recently, I went back to visit [...] and someone referred to me as “accreditation girl” even though I left that position a long time ago. [...] So, at least they remembered me for something, and it was good (Participant F3IC402, 00:24:11.3).

Participant M2IC404 is a coordinator for a graduate medical education programme at a large university. He has experienced significant hardship in his working life. As a recent immigrant from the Philippines, he has some difficulty with the English language that has made work difficult. In addition, he did not feel accepted in his previous employment role because he is in a homosexual relationship. In the interview he explained that, for him, being known and accepted on a personal level as well as being equipped for the work itself are important ways a leader can contribute to his sense of dignity and sense of meaning in the workplace. For him, these are indications that he matters to the leaders and is valued and accepted. He explains it this way,

The people in positions of power must always be very vigilant of the way their workers feel. And to me, it's very important to be acknowledged, knowing whether or not they are giving us equipment and proper training for a job, or whether or not you are conscious of the workload that we have (Participant M2IC404, 00:12:04.3).

In discussing his marriage and sexual orientation, he explained that having leaders that accept him means that he is more likely to stay with the organisation.

I am actually married. I'm gay. So, at my previous employment I was not out to them. So, this is the larger reason I am still here because I feel like this was the more open environment for me (Participant M2IC404, 00:14:03.2).

4.5 Summary of Findings

This chapter has provided an extensive set of responses from the field interviews. Interview participants consisted of nineteen executives, mid-level managers, and individual contributors in non-profit and for-profit organisations. As presented above, three prominent themes emerged in the findings of this study: 1) the inner life of values and attitudes, 2) inclusive decision-making, and 3) the perception of mattering. Analysis and discussion of these prominent themes, along with the implications for the research aim and research questions will be considered in the next chapter.

5 Analysis and Discussion

5.1 Introduction

This research explores the connection between human dignity and the leadership behaviours that, according to spiritual leadership theory, lead to the fulfilment of higher-order needs and a sense of well-being in the workplace. In this chapter, the research findings presented in Chapter 4 are analysed and discussed in the context of the research aim and research questions presented in Chapter 1, the literature review presented in Chapter 2, and the theoretical framework described at the end of Chapter 2. The causal flow of spiritual leadership theory provides a lens for the analysis and discussion of the theory itself as well as the findings presented in Chapter 4. An abstraction of this causal model also provides the theoretical framework for exploring and critical analysing the topics of human dignity and well-being in the context of spiritual leadership theory and practice.

Following the analytical approach described in Chapter 3 and as presented in Chapter 4, three prominent themes emerged from the findings: 1) The inner life of values and attitudes, 2) inclusive decision-making, and 3) the perception of mattering. These themes correspond to elements of the causal structure of spiritual leadership theory, namely that leader behaviours such as inclusive decision-making are perceived by participants to stem from the inner values and attitudes (i.e. inner life) of the leader. Similarly, inclusive decision-making is perceived by participants to be a causal contributor to the sense of mattering of leaders and followers. Each of these themes is analysed and discussed in detail in Sections 5.2, 5.3, and 5.4. The final section of this chapter, Section 5.5, provides a brief summary of the analysis and discussion of the findings.

5.2 Theme 1 – The Inner Life

Leaders of organisations across the globe face tremendous pressure to perform well at the first bottom-line, often at the expense of the second and third bottom-lines (Elkington, 1994; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Hindle, 2009; Slaper and Hall, 2011; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013). Given this pressure, it is reasonable to explore why some leaders seek to achieve results on the second and third bottom-lines and, specifically, why they pursue the intermediate outcomes

of spiritual leadership, the sense of calling and membership for themselves and their followers in the organisation. It is proposed that these questions can be answered, at least in part, by exploring the thoughts, values, and attitudes of leaders that practice aspects of spiritual leadership. Fry refers to these thoughts, values, and attitudes as part of the leader's "inner life" (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). As noted in Chapter 2, the concept of the leader's inner life was added in the second version of the theory (Figure 5-2) and expanded in the third version (Figure 5-3) as a way to explain and account for the leader's motivations to create an others-oriented, inclusive, service-minded organisational culture. This section will explore the relationship between the leader's inner life and leadership behaviours that contribute to well-being in the workplace (i.e. the sense of calling and membership). It will also explore the relationship between inner values and attitudes about human dignity and outward spiritual leadership behaviours.

As discussed in Chapter 2, the ultimate outcome of spiritual leadership theory involves success on the three aspects of the triple bottom-line: profit, people, and planet. This suggests that spiritual leaders care about more than instrumental outcomes at the first bottom-line. They also care about second bottom-line outcomes, including those that impact followers in the organisation as well as other stakeholders. This care for others, or altruistic love, is an integral part of the intrinsic motivation model of spiritual leadership (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). It reflects inner values of the leader marked by concern for the other person and desire for them to flourish. These values are part of the inner life of the leader in what Fry refers to as the "spiritual realm of purpose and meaning, values and beliefs, emotional and moral development, and self-understanding" (Fry, 2009, p. 79). In the most recent version of spiritual leadership theory (Figure 5-3), Fry moves the inner life of the leader from within the intrinsic motivation model to the left of it, indicating that as the causal model flows from left to right, inner life is the source of spiritual leadership behaviours (Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). He notes,

"The source of spiritual leadership is an inner life or spiritual practice that, as a fundamental source of inspiration and insight, positively influences development of 1) hope/faith in a transcendent vision of service to key stakeholders, and 2) the values of altruistic love" (Fry and Slocum, 2008, p. 80).

Referencing the work of Vaill (1998), Fry adds that the inner life “speaks to the feeling individuals have about the fundamental meaning of who they are, what they are doing, and the contributions they are making” (Fry, Latham, et al, 2017, p. 24). Integrating these elements of the theory, it can be seen that Fry is proposing that spiritual leaders not only see and pursue this sort of meaning in their own lives, in what he calls a quest (Fry, Latham, et al, 2017), but also in the lives of followers and other stakeholders. Careful examination of Fry’s approach reveals that spiritual leaders are motivated by altruistic love and concern for their followers because they recognise something of value in them, value that is not simply about instrumental outcomes, but about the transcendent outcomes of meaning and purpose realised in a sense of calling and membership. Recalling from Chapter 2 that there is a strong link between the concepts of human dignity and human value, one could argue that when leaders recognise the transcendent value of their followers in this way, and not just their ability to contribute to instrumental outcomes, they are, in fact, respecting the dignity of those followers. These connections will be explored in more detail in Section 5.2.2 below.

The inner life has been a growing area of interest in the leadership literature. It is closely linked with the concept of ethics, values, meaning-making, authenticity and, for some, spirit (Palmer, 1998; Moxley, 2000; Bolman and Deal, 2001; Ciulla, 2004a; Cameron, Mora, et al, 2011; Holden, 2012; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017; Hicks, 2018). Lee Bolman of the University of Missouri and Terrance Deal of the University of Southern California, researchers exploring the connection of spirituality and work, define *spirit* as “the internal force that sustains meaning and hope” (Bolman and Deal, 2001, p. 22). Spirit and the transcendent inner life are thought by some to offer a way to integrate meaning, existence, and livelihood (Fox, 1994). In their book, *A Spiritual Audit of Corporate America: A Hard Look at Spirituality, Religion, and Values in the Workplace*, Mitroff and Denton describe spirituality as “a belief in the interconnectedness of life or the basic desire to find ultimate meaning and purpose in one’s life and to live an integrated life” (Mitroff and Denton, 1999, p. 16). In the context of spiritual leadership, and as noted above, Fry defines *inner life* as the “spiritual realm of purpose and meaning, values and beliefs, emotional and moral development, and self-understanding” (Fry, 2009, p. 79). In these and other cases, researchers are making a connection between the inner life and transcendent meaning, values, and self-understanding.

These ideas can be extended to the role of the leader as he/she helps to create an environment in which leaders and followers realise these ideals in the workplace. For example, Kyle et al

(2017a) proposed that spiritual leadership is built upon an implicit assumption of human dignity as a matter of inner values and source of meaning-making for those that exhibit spiritual leadership behaviours. Others have suggested a similar connection between one's sense of "meaningfulness of work" as an inner mindset and one's level of commitment and engagement in the workplace that can be influenced by organisational leaders (Morrison et al, 2007). Organisations that incorporate people-centred values into their culture initiatives are better able to engage the hearts and minds (i.e. inner life) of followers when such initiatives connect meaningfully with their interests, values, and motivations and when those values are promoted and exemplified by senior leaders (O'Reilly and Pfeffer, 2000; Pfeffer, 2010). Leaders that demonstrate inner values in their outward behaviour, such as integrity, honesty, and humility, tend to have more success as leaders (Reave, 2005; Pfeffer, 2010). Even so, instrumental success is not always the main thing employees see in managers even when they are successful leaders. Sometimes employees "look not only at what is done, but also at the motivations and beliefs that underlie management approaches" (Pfeffer, 2010, p. 29).

As discussed in Chapter 2, altruistic love is rooted in the acknowledgement of and appreciation for the inherent value of the object of that love. The definition of altruistic love used in spiritual leadership is the "care, concern, and appreciation" for the other person (Fry, 2003, p. 712). Care, concern, and appreciation are inward sentiments one has for another person that are realised as altruistic love displayed through actions (Wojtyla, 1981). In other words, the sentiment of altruistic love toward another person, which is an aspect of the inner life, is realised (i.e. demonstrated) through outward behaviour. When a person receives demonstrated love, they can, as a result, experience a sense of mattering. This sense of mattering, as discussed in Section 5.4, contributes to the sense of well-being by addressing higher-order needs of membership (Maslow, 1943), affiliation (McClelland, 1961; 1985), and relatedness (Alderfer, 1969).

The sense of calling and membership, the two intermediate outcomes of spiritual leadership are, themselves, framed by one's life experiences and defined by the values and expectations of one's inner life. For example, in the first version of spiritual leadership, Fry (2003) referenced the work of Ashmos and Duchon who advocate for organisations to recognise that individuals have "an inner life that takes place in the context of community" (Ashmos and Duchon, 2000, p. 139). Holden argues that leaders that fail to make an effort to engage the

inner life do so at their own peril. He says the expectations and customs of the professional workplace

“[...] train us to keep our inner life to ourselves, but these ragged, emotional and spiritual issues deepen our leadership and humanity, impacting followers long after our tenure as leaders is over. They yield leaders who speak from a full, authentic self. When these interim dynamics are unexamined or kept silent, people, performance and culture suffer”
(Holden, 2012, p. 16).

Reflecting on the revised theory of spiritual leadership and Fry's decision to include the inner life of the leader, Beehner remarks, “Spiritual leadership begins internally because it is difficult to lead others unless we first learn to manage ourselves” (Beehner, 2019, p. 62).

5.2.1 Analysis of the Findings on the Inner Life

The findings on this theme reveal an important aspect of the leader-follower relationship: the inner life is perceived to influence outward behaviour in a causal manner. In addition, one's views on human dignity are part of the inner life of values and attitudes about others. This concept was expressed, in one form or another, by every participant of this research project. How the inner person relates to his/her surroundings is complex and, in a broad sense, beyond the scope of this research. To understand consciousness and the nature of the mind is arguably a grand challenge of human civilisation. For the purpose of this research, we accept as an aspect of critical realism that the inner thought life and interaction with a tangible world are real, lived experiences of the interview participants (Bhaskar, 1978; Keller, 1992; Lenk, 2003; Barrad, 2007; Blaikie, 2007; 2010; Maxwell, 2012). Their thoughts and perceptions of both the inner life and outward behaviours in the workplace are valid aspects of the leader-follower relationship. In spite of widely varying cultural, educational, and professional experiences, the findings reveal that, for the most part, the participants favour the idea that human dignity is an inherent human trait that cannot be taken away but can be disrespected or violated. This section uncovers several aspects of the inner life theme by exploring the general views of human dignity expressed by the participants, the sources of their views on human dignity, and the relationship between the inner life and outward behaviour in the workplace. This section also includes an analysis of the views expressed by the senior executives that participated in the research. The section concludes with a number of

perceptions and experiences shared by the participants related to violations of dignity, because these are often connected to one's sense of value.

The findings on this theme reveal a remarkable consistency among the participants with respect to views on human dignity. Virtually all of them consider human dignity to be an inherent trait of the human person. In conveying these ideas, many of them expressed thoughts that are very close to the Kantian ideal that human dignity is a matter of inherent value or worth that commands an appropriate level of respect (Kant, 1996a; 1996b). For example, Participants F2IC403, M5IC401, F3IC303, F3EX501, M4EX302, and F6EX101 included the ideas of value and worth in their personal definitions of human dignity. Consistent with the Categorical Imperative (Kant, 1996a; 1996b), virtually all participants expressed that human dignity implies normative standards in our treatment of others. For example, the participants suggest that since humans have dignity, they are due respect and high regard. Several participants (i.e. F3IC105, M5IC104, F3IC303, M2IC301, F4IC103, M4MM601, F3EX501), in considering the implications of dignity in relationships, expressed that having a warm sentiment about another's dignity is not enough and that service to others is an aspect of respecting their dignity. Most participants conveyed a complex thought about whether or not we can lose our dignity when something bad happens to us. The most common view among the participants is that since human dignity is an inherent aspect of being human, we cannot lose it, regardless of what happens to us. However, they suggest that it can seem or feel that we have lost our dignity. That is, one person cannot take another person's dignity away, but they can make them feel that it has been taken. Every participant expressed that human dignity is a factor in the workplace and, especially, in the leader-follower relationship. Correspondingly, they expressed that a leader's acknowledgement of a follower's dignity implies that certain behaviours are then expected in the way the follower is treated. This is consistent with the model proposed by Hicks (2018), namely that dignity is acknowledged inwardly and respected outwardly.

To understand the participant's views on human dignity, the interviews not only asked about their views on the topic, but also about the source of those views. When and how are these ideas formed? Who has influenced your thoughts on the value of the human being? As noted in Chapter 2, philosophers and theologians have been considering the concept of human dignity for centuries. Even though several participants expressed views that are consistent with ancient ideas on dignity, most of them credited their family upbringing, role models, and

educational experiences for their current views on this topic. None of them referenced ancient philosophers by name, but a few referred to religious teachings. With only a few exceptions, participants indicated that their ideas and views on human dignity stem from family upbringing, role models, religious and other educational experiences, and other life experiences. For example, Participants F6EX101, M6EX102, F3EX501, M4MM601, F4IC103, and M5IC104 referred to family upbringing as a key source of their ideas about human dignity. Among them, Participants F6EX101, F4IC103, and M5IC104 referred to specific role models – father, mother, grandmother – as being influential in this area. Participant M4EX302 made reference to his religious faith as a source of his views on human dignity, while M6EX102 and M4MM601 referred to the ideas of religion and spirituality in more general terms. Participants M6EX102 and M4EX302 referred to their formal education as a source of their views on human dignity. Several participants described other sources of their ideas on human dignity, such as discussions with domestic partners and experiences in the workplace. In summary, views on human dignity are deeply held and considered to be part of one's inner life of values and attitudes, formed over many life experiences.

The responses of essentially all participants reflect a belief that a leader's inner life of values and attitudes leads to outward leadership behaviours. This concept is not new in the leadership literature and is a theme among many current leadership theories (Palmer, 1998; Moxley, 2000; Fry, 2003; Ciulla, 2004a; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). Participants were consistent in conveying that the inner life leads to outward behaviours, specifically when those behaviours show respect or disrespect for the dignity of others. For example, Participant F6EX101 described inner values instilled by her father that result in her desire to treat everyone equally and with respect. Participant F4IC103 went a step further by saying that she was taught to treat others *better* than she treats herself. Participant M6EX102 explained his inner motivation to respect others stems from teaching received in childhood that all humans are special. Participant F3EX501 expressed that she and her husband are drawn to care for outcasts and the underserved because they want to respect the inherent dignity of those people. Participant M4MM601 extended that sentiment by suggesting that even those that cannot return love should be respected as human beings. Participant M4IC103 provided a mental image of the inner life-outward behaviour concept by describing an iceberg, some of which is unseen below the water (i.e. the inner thoughts and values) and some of which is seen above the water (i.e. the actions stemming from those inner thoughts

and values). Each example given here suggests that participants accept the concept that the value of human dignity as an element of the inner life leads to corresponding outward behaviour.

Connecting the knowledge of human dignity as an element of the inner life with the responsibilities of leadership, Hicks has suggested the leader must be awakened to the idea of human dignity in the workplace, something she calls, “dignity consciousness.” She argues that it involves “understanding the complex, often conflicted state of our inner worlds and the emotional challenges we face daily.” (Hicks, 2018, p. 7). As noted previously, inward and outward alignment in a leader is important since followers look not only at leader behaviours but also leader intention and motivation when evaluating leader success (Pfeffer, 2010). This offers a potential explanation for the suggestion that leaders that lack awareness of their inner life are less likely to experience success as a leader (Palmer, 1998; Moxely, 2000; Fry, 2003; Sweeney and Fry, 2012). The alignment of the inner life and outward behaviour also has implications in the domain of leadership ethics. In suggesting that ethics is the heart of leadership, Ciulla (2004a) proposes that the inner life of values guides decisions and actions and is the means by which leaders and followers distinguish between right and wrong in actions, intentions, and character. In proposing the theory of spiritual leadership, Fry suggests that “leaders must get in touch with their core values,” indicating that the theory is designed to help them do just that (Fry, 2003, p. 710). Spiritual leadership rests on the assumption that leaders genuinely care about followers and desire them to flourish in and beyond the workplace. This assumption, in turn, implies that leaders have an inner regard for their followers that transcends the instrumental expectations of the workplace. Following the thrust of this research, this inner regard might be called acknowledgement of dignity. It is important to emphasize that every participant in this research, each in their own way, made a connection between human dignity as an inner life value that could, if followed, guide the decision and actions of leaders toward good outcomes for individuals and organisations.

Several participants referred to dignity violations in the workplace as part of their lived experience. In her research on the lived experience of human dignity, Hicks (2018) found that the interview participants in her research tend to relate more stories about dignity violations than dignity affirmation. While this was not true with this research project, several participants did refer to perceived dignity violations. For example, Participants F6EX101, F4EX502, and F4IC103 mentioned that their ideas about human dignity, especially in the

workplace, have been shaped in part by the fact that they are women. Participant F3EX501, a Korean American, and Participant F4IC103, an African American, mentioned that their ideas of human dignity have been shaped in part by their experiences as ethnic minorities.

Participant F3EX501 referred to her experiences learning about shame and honour as a child growing up in a Korean American home, two ideas closely related to the lived experience of human dignity. Participant F3IC303 referred to her experience as a member of the Millennial Generation, namely that her contemporaries sometime struggle with boredom and monotony in the workplace, and that she felt they might connect those experiences to a dignity violation in the sense of the good work movement (Ackroyd, 2007; Barber, 2007; Coats, 2007; Philpott, 2007; Bolton, 2010; International Labour Organisation, 2015; Gilabert, 2016).

Participant M2IC404 referred to his own experiences of disrespect and humiliation in the workplace because of his sexual orientation. Interestingly, most participants chose not to describe their personal dignity violations in detail, choosing instead to speak about them in general terms or even by reference to situations they have observed involving others.

Participants F3EX501, F4EX502, and F4IC103, for example, referred to their status as women, ethnic minorities, or as older workers without giving the details of specific dignity violations they may have endured. Participants F3IC303 and F3IC105 relayed stories of colleagues, presumably those with whom they feel a sense of connection, that have had their dignity denied in the workplace. Participant M2IC404 was the only one to speak in detail about his experience with a workplace dignity violation. As noted below in Section 4.6, there is a significant opportunity to explore the role of gender, ethnicity, and generational identity as aspects of future research in human dignity as an aspect of the leader-follower relationship.

This research included interviews with five senior executives. One of them, Participant M6EX102, is the CEO of a global data services company. Participants F6EX101, F3EX501, F4EX502, and M4EX302 are executives at the vice president level that report directly to the CEOs of their respective organisations. To a large degree, the responses of these senior leaders are very similar to the responses of the others that took part in this research. This consistency of thought might suggest a common ground for organisation-wide discussions about human dignity in the leader-follower relationship. All of the executive participants felt that human dignity is an inherent human trait, although Participant F3EX501 expressed that it might, at times, feel that one's dignity has been taken away by their circumstances or by oppressors. Similarly, all five executives cited family upbringing and education as the main

sources of their views on human dignity. All of them expressed, in one form or another, that one's thoughts and ideas (i.e. inner life) about human dignity impact one's outward actions as a leader. Among the executives in the research, only Participant M6EX102 commented on the potential for conflict between the desire to respect the dignity of every individual in the organisation and the need for the organisation to meet its performance objectives. Otherwise, and even including Participant M6EX102, the executives noted that respect for human dignity is an aspect of the leader-follower relationship that involves the leader acknowledging the worth and value of individuals beyond their contributions toward instrumental outcomes. It is noteworthy that the executives in this project, contrary to some stereotypes of senior leaders, clearly conveyed sentiments of compassion toward the individuals in their organisations. For example, Participant F6EX101 expressed concern for those whose employment has been terminated. Participant M4EX302 explained that, for him, listening is an important leadership skill because "People can be deeply hurt simply by not being acknowledged." Participant F3EX501 expressed concerns that stakeholders might be commodified or objectified as "dollar signs." Participant F4EX502, whose organisation works with disabled children, expressed concern for the person that cannot return love. Compassion as an organisational value has been shown to positively impact organisational performance (Cameron, Bright, et al, 2004; Cameron, Mora, et al, 2011; Worline and Dutton, 2017).

5.2.2 Discussion on Spiritual Leadership and the Inner Life

Spiritual leadership involves inward values and attitudes that result in specific leader behaviours. Recall the definition of spiritual leadership:

"[...] the values, attitudes, and behaviors that are necessary to intrinsically motivate one's self and others so that they have a sense of spiritual survival through calling and membership. This entails 1) creating a vision wherein the organization members experience a sense of calling in that their life has meaning and makes a difference; 2) establishing a social / organizational culture based on altruistic love whereby leaders and followers have genuine care, concern, and appreciation for both self and others, thereby producing a sense of membership and feel understood and appreciated" (Fry, 2003, p. 694).

As noted in Section 4.1 above, many leadership researchers have emphasised the importance of the inner life of the leader as the source or root of leadership practice (Palmer, 1998;

Moxley, 2000; Bolman and Deal, 2001; Ciulla, 2004a; Cameron, Mora, et al, 2011; Holden 2012; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017; Hicks, 2018). Similarly, spiritual leadership theory envisions that the spiritual leader's inner life includes a level of concern, love, and respect for their followers that guides the leader to create a culture and environment in which leaders and followers are intrinsically motivated and experience a sense of calling and membership as two elements of well-being (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). In other words, the inner life of the spiritual leader is the source of motivation for practicing spiritual leadership. Building on this idea, Fry refers to spiritual leadership as a "higher-order construct" to indicate that the theory deals with transcendent, inner life concepts (Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). In describing the inner life aspects of the theory, Fry provides examples of practices such as mindfulness, meditation, religious practices, journaling, and other activities that, when applied to one's personal and professional development as a leader, might increase self-awareness and situational consciousness (Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). The inner life of spiritual leadership is not simply about habits and personal practices. It is also about inner values and attitudes. In fact, a careful evaluation of the theory reveals that it is primarily a set of inner life elements that lead to outward behaviours. Four distinct elements of the inner life can be identified in the theory of spiritual leadership: 1) the values and attitudes of the leader, along with practices listed above, 2) intrinsic motivation, as distinguished from external motivation, itself an aspect of inner life, 3) the intermediate outcomes of spiritual leadership, consisting of the inner sense of calling and membership, and 4) commitment to the organisation that, while an aspect of inner life, is also an ultimate outcome of the theory.

The inner life is not limited to values and attitudes about leadership. It is also where we find, among other values and attitudes, ideas and ideals about human dignity, memories of lived experiences that inform these ideas and ideals, and emotional awareness of ourselves and others. The inner life is where we hold views on the value of the human being. It is where we wrestle with the questions of inherent vs. earned dignity. It is where we choose to respect or deny the dignity of another person. And, as a result, it is in the inner life aspect of spiritual leadership theory that we might consider an advancement related to human dignity. In describing his choice of the word "spirit" in the name of the theory of spiritual leadership, Fry describes an intimate relationship with the "inner self of higher values and morality as well as the recognition [...] of the inner nature of people." (Fry, 2003, p. 702). It has been

argued that spiritual leadership theory rests on the assumption of leaders holding a high view of the human and demonstrating that view through an outward expression of care and concern for followers (Kyle et al, 2017a; 2017b; Kyle and Wond, 2018). In other words, this inner life, including values related to human dignity, guides the leader toward outward action.

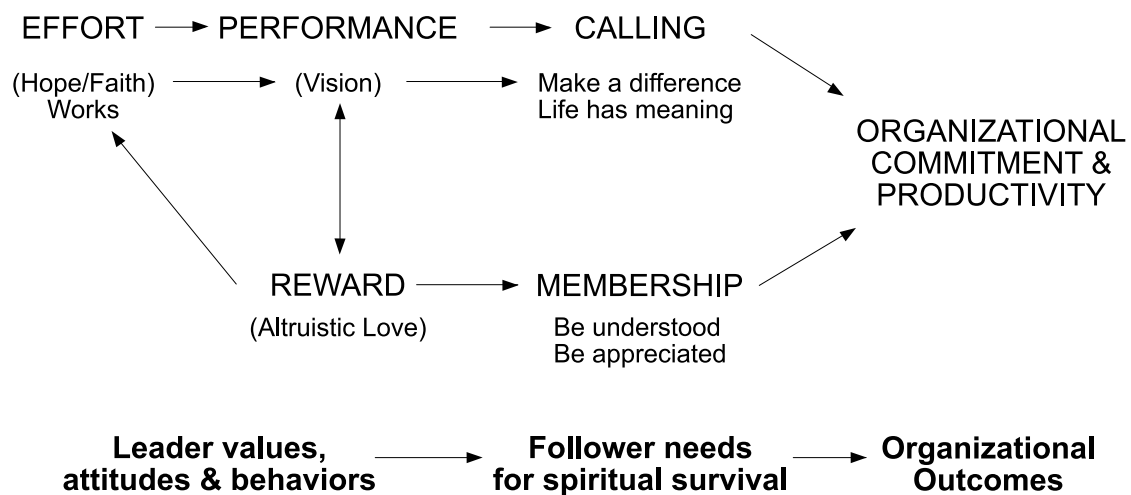


Figure 5-1: Spiritual Leadership, Version 1 (Fry, 2003)

As discussed in Chapter 2, the theory of spiritual leadership has undergone two major revisions since its initial publication in 2003, both of which involved the inner life of the leader. The initial theory is depicted in Figure 5-1. Note that the inner life does not play a prominent role in this early depiction of the theory. In the second version of the theory, the leader’s inner life was introduced as a core part of the intrinsic motivation model, as shown in Figure 5-2 (Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013). This addition was intended to reflect the idea that a leader’s motivation to create the workplace environment envisioned by spiritual leadership is driven by his/her inner values and attitudes. In the third, and current, version of the theory, the inner life of the leader was emphasised even more (Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). As shown in Figure 5-3, inner motivation was moved to the left of the intrinsic motivation model to emphasise that the inner values and attitudes of the leader are the motivation for his/her actions. These changes reflect the foundational role of the inner life to the theory of spiritual leadership and its causal structure.

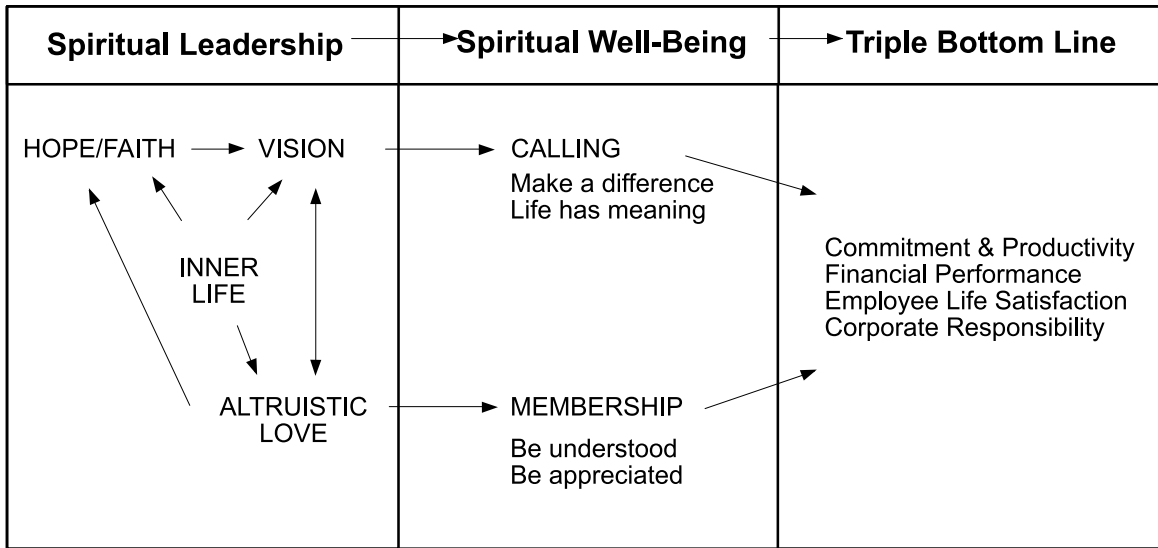


Figure 5-2: Spiritual Leadership, Version 2
(Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013)

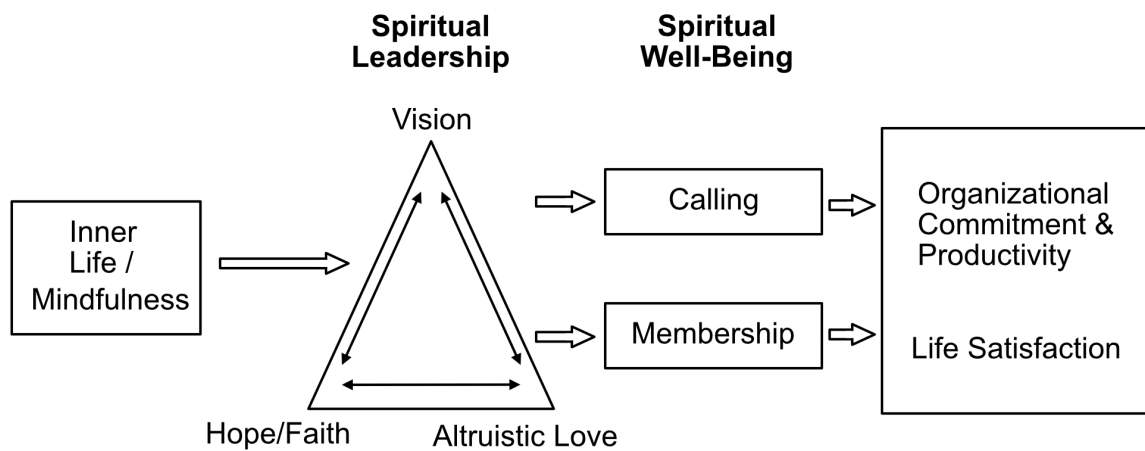


Figure 5-3: Spiritual Leadership, Version 3
(Fry, Latham, et al, 2017)

5.3 Theme 2 – Inclusive Decision-making

5.3.1 Introduction to the Theme

A key finding of the research is that inclusive decision-making is perceived by participants to be a leadership behaviour that contributes to the sense of dignity and leads to well-being in the workplace. Many participants mentioned that being included in the decision-making process is an important way, in their experience, that leaders respect the dignity of followers in the organisational context. Careful analysis of the findings reveals that for many of the interview participants, having a role in the decision-making process has important human dignity implications for leaders and followers. Connecting these perceptions to the elements and causal structure of spiritual leadership, as was done in the interviews, the findings also suggest that inclusive decision-making is perceived to be a spiritual leadership behaviour that is linked to human dignity, but not explicitly described as such in the various published iterations of spiritual leadership theory (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). As such, the findings suggest that an advancement can be made to the theory of spiritual leadership that makes explicit the otherwise implicit references to human dignity. Proposals for advancing the theory will be offered in Chapter 6.

Inclusive decision-making is an integral, albeit implied, aspect of the shared vision and faith/hope components of the intrinsic motivation model of spiritual leadership (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). To establish a shared vision for an organisation in the spiritual leadership model, leaders and followers must collaboratively decide on the elements of that vision, including mission, objectives, and metrics. Without collaborative decision-making, the vision and objectives are not truly shared and spiritual leadership is not actually being practiced. In a similar way, achieving a personal sense of calling associated with hope/faith as described by Fry (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017), requires leaders and followers to work collaboratively in such decision areas as work assignment and performance evaluation. Following this logic, inclusive decision-making is an integral aspect of spiritual leadership in that it plays a significant role in establishing an environment of intrinsic motivation and in meeting higher-order needs by establishing one's

sense of calling and membership in the organisation (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). Relatedly, it has been found that establishing a shared vision, and subsequent pursuit of that shared vision, is particularly important in employee perceptions of meaningfulness of the work (Saripudin and Rosari, 2019). The findings presented in Chapter 4 suggest that human dignity plays an important role in the linkage between inclusive decision-making as an element of intrinsic motivation and the intermediate outcomes (i.e. individual well-being outcomes) of calling and membership found in spiritual leadership theory.

Organisational decision-making is a complex subject that is framed by the larger context of human autonomy and agency which also have metaphysical links to human dignity. To analyse the findings of this research, decision-making itself must be considered along with its relationship to human dignity. Decision-making in the organisational context is an important area of leadership research that carries significant implications for the leader-follower relationship. Arguably, research on human dignity in the leader-follower relationship would be incomplete if it did not consider decision-making, inclusive or otherwise, as part of that relationship. As noted in Chapter 2, spiritual leadership ties collaborative decision-making as an element of intrinsic motivation to individual well-being and improved organisational outcomes (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017).

5.3.2 Analysis of the Findings on Inclusive Decision-making

The findings presented in Chapter 4 indicate that many, indeed most, of the participants consider inclusive decision-making to be a leadership behaviour that acknowledges and respects human dignity in the workplace. The analytical challenge is to understand the linkage between these lived experiences and the theory of spiritual leadership. Section 5.3.3 below explores an issue related to decision-making and its relationship to human dignity on a theoretical level. The Kantian tradition links autonomous decision-making and human agency to human dignity. As explained below, some have suggested that limiting another human's ability to make autonomous rational decisions not only violates their dignity but hinders their ability to flourish. This leads to an apparent conflict in the organisational context since decisions often involve a complex array of human interactions, not simply isolated,

individualistic autonomy. This section is framed as a critical discussion of the apparent conflict between isolated autonomy and relational autonomy, arguing that the relational form of autonomy is more aligned with the lived experiences of the participants as well as the intrinsic motivation model of spiritual leadership theory.

Having addressed this apparent conflict at a conceptual level, Section 5.3.4 explores the linkage between inclusive decision-making as a leadership behaviour that respects dignity and the lived experience of workplace well-being as an intermediate outcome of spiritual leadership theory. Spiritual leadership suggests that certain leadership behaviours can create an inclusive decision-making environment which, in turn, leads to a sense of well-being in the workplace (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). The theory addresses two elements of well-being, calling and membership, as human needs that stem from an environment of intrinsic motivation. So, Section 5.3.4 will explore the relationship between the research findings and the linkage between human dignity, inclusive decision-making as a spiritual leadership behaviour, and the achievement of workplace well-being as an intermediate outcome of spiritual leadership theory.

5.3.3 Discussion on the Apparent Conflict between Isolated and Relational Autonomy

Immanuel Kant's formulation of human dignity rests on a conception of human autonomy and the individual's ability to make rational, moral decisions (Kant, 1996a; 1996b). Emphasising individualistic agency, Veltman (2016) defines human autonomy as self-determination or self-governance, including the ability to make and pursue plans and to shape our own lives. She argues that autonomy defined this way is integral to human flourishing (i.e. well-being). She suggests there is a connection between Kantian dignity and the Aristotelian ideal of human development toward a good life (i.e. well-being). Similarly, Hill (1992) argues that respecting the dignity of a person involves respecting his/her power and inclination to "set ends" (i.e. decide things such as the plans and direction of one's life). Connecting the Kantian conception of autonomy to education and work, White (1997) proposes that work chosen autonomously has outcomes that constitute major life goals. By contrast, he proposes that "heteronomous work" is defined by outcomes that are not associated with major life goals. White writes, "Heteronomous work is work whose end product has not been chosen as a major life goal. It is work which for some reason one has to

do, is constrained to do” (White, 1997, p. 234). He goes on to write, heteronomous work “covers virtually all paid employment” (p. 234). In other words, White is suggesting that only when a person is able to make perfectly independent decisions, is their dignity being fully respected. White connects this idea of independent decision-making to his suggestion that autonomously chosen work is personally significant (i.e. meaningful) and heteronomous work is not. By suggesting that virtually all paid employment is heteronomous work, he is, in turn, implying by extension that that dignity cannot be respected in the workplace.

Without further consideration, the arguments of Hill (1992), White (1997), and Veltman (2016) might suggest that it is not possible to fully respect human dignity in the workplace since there will always be competing ideas among colleagues, not all of which can be pursued. In addition, it may seem that the hierarchical power structure of the workplace inherently denies dignity since not everyone can autonomously make every decision. Hill (1992), White (1997), and Veltman (2016) seem to suggest an intractable situation for human dignity in the workplace since the demands and complexity of organisational decision-making and human autonomy seem incompatible. The reality is that healthy organisations will always pursue, and even require, competing ideas, options, and compromises. If, as suggested by Veltman (2016), human dignity can only be respected if the individual has the autonomy to make decisions independently, then the workplace would also seem inherently unable to facilitate human well-being through the achievement of higher-order needs. If human well-being depends exclusively upon self-determination and self-governance, is there any hope for true well-being in the workplace where decisions are often made at the top or in teams? If human well-being, as Veltman (2016) suggests, rests upon self-determination, how can leaders and followers experience well-being in the workplace since not everyone can make every decision autonomously? Hill (1992) and Veltman (2016), and to a lesser extent White (1997), suggest that only through *isolated autonomy* (i.e. truly individualistic decision-making), can one’s dignity be truly realised in the Kantian sense. And, since an organisation requires a more complex array of decision-making structures than perfectly isolated autonomy, human dignity and human well-being seem lofty at best and unattainable at worst as workplace ambitions.

In practice, and contrary to this line of thinking, workplaces that employ participative management and inclusive decision-making practices generally benefit from higher employee morale and better organisational performance (Likert, 1967; Lowin, 1968; Hackman and

Lawler, 1971; Katz and Kahn, 1978; French et al, 1982; Kanter, 1982; Sashkin, 1982; Jackson, 1983; Kim, 2002; Fry, 2003; Angermeier et al, 2009; Benioli and Somech, 2010; Ogbeide and Harrington, 2011; Pardo-del-Val et al, 2012; Saripudin and Rosari, 2019). Perhaps this is because perfectly isolated autonomy is a relatively narrow understanding of autonomy for humans as social beings and arguably implausible in the organisational context given that organisations are social structures (Kagitcibasi, 1996; Walter and Ross, 2014). Many would argue that the healthiest workplaces are ones marked by open expression and healthy competition of ideas, and also by decisive leadership that efficiently and effectively leads the decision-making process in such environments (Likert, 1967; Lowin, 1968; Hackman and Lawler, 1971; Katz and Kahn, 1978; French et al, 1982; Kanter, 1982; Sashkin, 1982; Jackson, 1983; Pardo-del-Val et al, 2012).

The approach to autonomous decision-making articulated by Hill (1992), White (1997), and Veltman (2016), which we have called *isolated autonomy*, is not only inconsistent with the intrinsic motivation model in the theory of spiritual leadership (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017), but it ignores the possibility that colleagues may adopt the ideas and proposals of others as an aspect of their own autonomy and self-determination. Referring to the seemingly contradictory human needs of autonomy and mutually beneficial relationships, Kagitcibasi (1996) goes one step further by proposing that isolated autonomy is not a healthy psychological situation. Instead, she proposes that the “autonomous-relational self” is a healthy psychological synthesis developed in normal relationships involving interdependence. Addressing the problems of *isolated and individualistic autonomy* from a philosophical standpoint, many have advocated for a *relational autonomy* that takes relationships into consideration as a grounding factor in the process of autonomous decision-making (Christman, 2003; Mackenzie, 2008; Walter and Ross, 2014).

Analysis of the theory of spiritual leadership (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017) as well as the findings of this research suggest that the seemingly intractable situation described above only exists in concept. The theory of spiritual leadership rests upon a shared decision-making model that is collaborative and participative rather than isolated and individualistic (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). Several research projects

have shown that spiritual leadership, with its inclusive decision-making approach, is an effective leadership strategy (Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry, Matherly, Ouimet, 2010; Ayranci and Semercioz, 2011; Bodia and Ali, 2012; Chen and Yang, 2012; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017), which undermines the theoretical argument of Hill (1992), White (1997), and Veltman (2016). In addition, the findings of this research suggest that the participants believe they can employ an inclusive, collaborative approach to decision-making that respects the dignity of leaders and followers. As such, the research findings suggest that the intrinsic motivation model in spiritual leadership encourages inclusive decision-making as a leadership behaviour, built upon an idea of *relational autonomy* (Christman, 2003; Mackenzie, 2008; Walter and Ross, 2014) rather than the more individualistic notion of *isolated autonomy* described by Hill (1992), White (1997), and Veltman (2016). In addition, and again contrary to Veltman (2016), the findings of this research suggest that inclusive decision-making as a leadership behaviour contributes to a sense of employee well-being in the perceived sense of calling and membership, which together, are the intermediate outcomes of the theory of spiritual leadership and indicators that higher-order needs are being met.

It is worth noting that none of the participants of this research project mentioned the apparent conflict between isolated autonomy, human dignity, and human well-being. In fact, to the contrary, most described a positive association with and desire for relational autonomy in leader-follower and peer-to-peer relationships involving inclusive decision-making. As noted above and each in their own way, participants M4IC106, F3IC303, M4IC304, F3EX501, F4EX502, and F6EX101 clearly made the connection between human dignity, inclusive decision-making, and human well-being. Participant M4IC106 not only favours inclusive decision-making as an approach that respects his dignity in the workplace but considers this behaviour to be an indication that the leader really knows him. As such, Participant M4IC106 expressed that this idea of being known by the leader helps foster a trust-based relationship between them. Participant F6EX101 also mentioned trust as an important element of the leader-follower relationship that respects her dignity. Most other participants made similar connections favouring relational autonomy, though not always as clearly articulated.

5.3.4 Discussion on Inclusive Decision-making as a Contributor to Dignity and Well-being

Spiritual leadership theory suggests that, among other things, an inclusive decision-making environment leads to a sense of well-being in the workplace (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). The theory addresses two elements of well-being, the sense of calling and the sense of membership as human needs stemming from an intrinsic motivation environment. This section explores the relationship between the research findings and the linkage between human dignity, inclusive decision-making as a spiritual leadership behaviour, and the achievement of workplace well-being as an intermediate outcome of spiritual leadership. The findings suggest that human dignity is a critical, and yet previously undocumented, aspect of spiritual leadership theory. The findings also suggest that perceptions of human dignity in the workplace is an area worthy of further research as an aspect of the leader-follower relationship.

As noted in Chapter 2, spiritual leadership incorporates an intrinsic motivation model based upon the self-determination theory proposed by Deci and Ryan (1985; 2000). Self-determination theory is a hybrid content-process theory of motivation that incorporates other theories of motivation. Specifically, these include content theories of motivation proposed by Maslow (1943) and Katz and Khan (1978) as well as process theories of motivation proposed by Adams (1963), Vroom (1964), and Locke (1968). The intrinsic motivation model of spiritual leadership integrates these underlying theories. It suggests that when people find meaning and purpose in their work, they are intrinsically motivated toward that work (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). According to the theory, people are intrinsically motivated toward their work when they have 1) a collaborative role in determining organisational vision and objectives (i.e. shared vision), 2) a collaborative role in work assignment such that their sense of personal capabilities and potential contributions to outcomes are aligned with those assignments (i.e. hope/faith), and 3) a sense that their work serves a cause greater than themselves (i.e. altruistic love).

Spiritual leadership theory addresses decision-making, and by extension human autonomy, in at least two key elements of its intrinsic motivation model (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008;

Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). First, and as previously noted in Chapter 2, leaders and followers are intrinsically motivated when they have a role in deciding upon shared objectives. Second, they are intrinsically motivated when they participate in decisions about work assignments and can see that their own efforts positively contribute to the end results. Fry argues that the elements of intrinsic motivation work together to establish in leaders and followers an elevated state of personal satisfaction, organisational commitment, productivity and continual improvement, that in turn, support the employee's sense of calling and membership (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). Putting this together, the theory suggests that spiritual leadership behaviours inspire intrinsic motivation that leads to an increased sense of well-being in the workplace and better performance on the triple bottom-line (i.e. profit, people, planet). The key to understanding this linkage is that intrinsic motivation requires inclusive and participative decision-making which, as has been shown in the findings above, is considered by the interview participants to be a leadership behaviour that contributes to their sense of dignity. In other words, the research provides a unique insight into the perceptions of participants suggesting that respect for human dignity, as demonstrated by inclusive decision-making, is an integral aspect of spiritual leadership that was previously unpublished.

A significant body of published research suggests that organisations benefit from participative management practices and are harmed if they do not employ them (Likert, 1967; Lowin, 1968; Hackman and Lawler, 1971; Katz and Kahn, 1978; French et al, 1982; Kanter, 1982; Sashkin, 1982; Jackson, 1983; Kim, 2002; Angermeier et al, 2009; Beniol and Somech, 2010; Ogbeide and Harrington, 2011; Pardo-del-Val et al, 2012). Summarising the work of Hackman and Lawler (1971) and Katz and Kahn (1978), Sashkin (1984) suggests that employees have basic work needs of autonomy, achievement, and interpersonal contact. These needs are collectively satisfied, at least in part, when employees participate in setting goals, making decisions, solving problems, and making organisational changes. Sashkin's (1984) list of basic work needs largely align with Maslow's higher-order need of self-actualisation (Maslow, 1943). The ideas and findings of Sashkin (1984) and the others mentioned here suggest that when employees participate in decision-making, their well-being in the workplace is improved and the organisation benefits. As noted above, the research findings also align with Sashkin's list of basic work needs since inclusive decision-making

was cited by most participants as a leadership behaviour that respects human dignity in the workplace.

Membership is an element of personal well-being in the workplace and has been defined as the transcendent sense that one belongs to something greater than oneself, and that they are appreciated and valued in the community (Pfeffer, 2010). Fry (2003) argues that people achieve a transcendent sense of membership and belonging through meaningful, mutually supportive relationships in the workplace. Many of the content and process theories reference membership, relatedness, and sense of community as key components of motivation (Maslow, 1943; McClelland, 1961, 1985; Alderfer, 1969; Katz and Kahn, 1978; Deci and Ryan, 2000). In the third version of spiritual leadership theory, Fry and Nisiewicz incorporate the language of employee well-being:

“[workers] seek leadership that provides 1) interesting work that permits them to learn, develop, and have a sense of competence and mastery, 2) meaningful work that provides a sense of purpose, 3) membership through a sense of connection and positive social relations with their coworkers, and 4) the ability to have an integrated life, so that one’s work does not conflict with who they are as human beings” (Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013, p. 197).

For the interview participants, membership is not a theoretical aspect of personal well-being, but an important element of lived experience in the workplace and, specifically, in the leader-follower relationship. Eleven of the fourteen participants that made a direct or indirect connection between human dignity and spiritual leadership behaviours, referred to the sense of membership as a contributor to their personal sense of well-being. Participants M2IC301, M4IC304, F3IC105, F6EX101, and F3IC303 described the sense of membership as an outcome of leadership behaviour that involves trust and empowerment. Participants M4IC304, F4EX502, F3EX501, M3MM106, M4MM201, F2IC401, F3IC105, and F6EX101 expressed that membership in this context involves the feeling that they matter and that their ideas and opinions matter in the workplace. These expressions ranged from general concepts of being appreciated and recognised to the more subtle and personal concepts of being seen, heard, and taken seriously. Mattering in the workplace implies gravitas and unique value, which is closely related to the concept of unique human value in the Kantian formulation of human dignity. This idea of workplace mattering will be addressed in Chapter 6. Mattering is mentioned here because it is also related to the idea of inclusion in decision-making. That is, if someone doesn’t matter in the workplace, there is no need to include them in decisions,

even if those decisions impact them. Lampersky (2018) suggests that mattering as a lived experience in the workplace contributes to one's psychological well-being through improved self-esteem, sense of efficacy, and sense of purpose and meaning (i.e. calling). Bluestein suggests that working is an "inherently relational act" and a main contributor to the sense of "meaning, matter, and dignity" (Bluestein, 2011, p. 1). In making this connection he establishes a relationship between workplace mattering and the sense of membership and inclusion.

5.4 Theme 3 – Human Dignity and the Perception of Mattering

5.4.1 Introduction to the Theme

Mattering is a higher-order human need connected to membership and self-actualisation. It has been the subject of recent research in multiple disciplines (Dixon Rayle, 2006; Jung, 2015; Lampersky, 2018; Bucher et al, 2019; Matera et al, 2019; Reece et al, 2019). A key finding presented in this thesis is that mattering is perceived by participants to be linked to one's sense of human dignity in the workplace. Several participants perceived a link between their sense of mattering, their sense of dignity, and their sense of well-being and that these, in turn, are positively influenced by spiritual leadership behaviours. During the interviews, several participants mentioned that being seen, appreciated, known, and included, as explored in Section 5.2 and 5.3, contributed to their sense of dignity in the workplace and, in turn, their sense of calling and membership, the two intermediate outcomes of spiritual leadership theory (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). Careful analysis of the findings reveals a number of interesting links between the perceptions of human dignity, workplace mattering, and employee well-being. The findings suggest that spiritual leadership behaviours can contribute simultaneously to one's sense of mattering and one's sense of dignity in the workplace. This linkage is not explicitly described as an element of the published iterations of the theory of spiritual leadership (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). This research suggests, then, that an advancement can be made to the theory of spiritual leadership that makes explicit the otherwise implicit references to human dignity in the realm of workplace mattering.

Dixon Rayle provides a helpful and succinct definition of mattering, connecting it to human need, “the fundamental need that individuals have to feel important and significant to others” Dixon Rayle (Dixon Rayle, 2006, p. 483). Mattering has been studied in the fields of adolescent development, higher education, social and organisational psychology, and marriage and family counselling. These studies have suggested a positive relationship between one’s sense of mattering and various measures of mental and social well-being (Dixon Rayle, 2006; Jung, 2015; Lampersky, 2018; Bucher et al, 2019; Matera et al, 2019; Reece et al, 2019). Rosenberg and McCullough (1981), two of the early researchers in this area, proposed that there are two types of mattering, interpersonal and societal. Rosenberg defined interpersonal mattering as “the individual’s feeling that he or she counts, makes a difference” (Rosenberg, 1985, p. 215). Correspondingly, he defines societal mattering as “the feeling of making a difference in the broader scheme of socio-political events – of feeling that one’s thoughts and actions have an impact, create ripples, are felt.” (p. 215). It has been suggested that the social complexity of the workplace makes it an environment in which individuals can experience both interpersonal and societal mattering (Jung, 2015). The findings outlined in Chapter 4 suggest an opportunity to add the concept of perceived value and worth to these definitions, linking them with the concept of inherent dignity.

Researchers have developed various, and often overlapping, dimensional frameworks to describe the aspects of mattering. Rosenberg (1985), for example, suggested that mattering consists of three dimensions: attention, importance, and dependence. Jung explains these dimensions in terms that are consistent with the findings of this research. She writes,

“Attention is the most elementary form of mattering [...] when older people say that they often feel invisible, they are acknowledging that the most basic form of mattering is not being met. The second dimension, importance, is to know that others care about your needs, thoughts, and behaviors. [...] Dependence refers to knowing that others depend on you and also that you are being held accountable to your team or group”
(Jung, 2015, p. 196).

Schlossberg et al (1989) proposed an additional dimension of mattering, ego-extension, that describes the phenomenon of interpersonal connection in which one person’s actions might make another person proud or embarrassed. Building on the work of Rosenberg and McCullough (1981) and Rosenberg (1985), Elliott et al (2004) proposed a new structure of mattering involving importance and reliance in bi-directional relationships. In this framework, importance (i.e. “you are important to me”) involves supporting and being

concerned for the welfare of the other person. Reliance (i.e. “I am reliant upon you”) implies that one person looks to the other for the satisfaction of needs and wants. Stephens et al (2011) propose that a “high-quality” interpersonal connection contains three dimensions: vitality, positive regard, and mutuality. Relational vitality involves positive psychological arousal and a heightened sense of positive energy in the relationship. Positive regard involves the sense of being known, loved, respected, and cared for. Mutuality suggests that it is a “two-way” relationship involving mutual vulnerability and responsiveness resulting from mutual participation and engagement in the relationship. Each of these dimensional frameworks point to a relational richness and robustness that is not simply transactional. When one person matters to another, there is a bond of mutual knowledge, concern, and appreciation that extends beyond the level of acquaintance. As noted in Chapter 4, the language and sentiments of these dimensional frameworks are echoed in the interview responses of the participants, indicating that these are familiar and real aspects of their lived experience in the workplace.

Several researchers have explored the role of interpersonal and societal mattering in the workplace (Schultheiss, 2007; Blustein, 2011; Jung, 2015; Dixon, 2016; Bucher et al, 2019; Reece et al, 2019). Jung (2015) has identified two lines of thought in the current research on workplace mattering: 1) as it relates to job satisfaction, and 2) as an element of the relational theory of working. Building on the theory that humans are meaning-making creatures (Naylor et al, 1996; Krishnakumar and Neck, 2002; Fairholm and Gronau, 2015; Cunha et al, 2017; Kyle et al, 2017b;), the latter views relationships as the primary reason for working and includes critical analysis of the role of diversity, family obligations, etc. Related research in workplace mattering has been done recently at the Positive Psychology Centre at the University of Pennsylvania. Researchers at that centre have proposed an additional term, organisational mattering, which they define as an “employee’s opinion of whether their completed work (i.e. work product outcomes) is valued by the company or co-workers” (Lampersky, 2018, p. 23). Organisational mattering is less about receiving attention and being seen and is more about being appreciated for your work product and ability to contribute on an instrumental level, a distinction they equate to self-esteem vs. self-efficacy (Reece et al, 2019)¹. Building on the work of Blustein (2011) and others, Lampersky (2018)

¹ Reece et al (2019) distinguish between “feeling-oriented” mattering and “action-oriented” mattering. They suggest that, while existential mattering is not unimportant (i.e. I matter because I am human), their main focus

proposes that interpersonal, societal, and organisational mattering should be considered together as a holistic view of workplace mattering, which she refers to as “workplace namaste.” With these definitions and frameworks as a guide, the next section provides an analysis of the findings on the theme of mattering.

5.4.2 Analysis of the Findings on Human Dignity and the Perception of Mattering

There are four main reasons people are perceived to matter in the workplace: 1) because of what they do – high performer, good outcomes, dedication, culture fit, etc., 2) because of what they are capable of doing – an employee in development that is a good culture fit but is not yet a high performer, 3) because of their station, power, influence, and/or reputation – these may transcend their ability to perform (for example, if they own the company), and/or 4) because they are human – a transcendent concept that a person has value in a way that is distinct from what they do; it is more about who they are. These four reasons can be summarised into two broad reasons: because of who they are (i.e. being human) and because of what they do (or will do). The participants of this research project described experience with both of these reasons. Some emphasised the former while others referred to both. Only one participant, F4EX502, focused on the sense of mattering based on their humanity alone. Six participants expressed that their sense of mattering in the workplace was a combination of being human and producing good outcomes (i.e. M3MM106, F3IC105, F2IC401, F2IC403, F6EX101, and M2IC404). Six others referred to their sense of mattering in the workplace as a combination of being human and producing good outcomes. The other

in organisational mattering is the sense that one is contributing to measurable results that are recognised by the organisation. They overstep somewhat in their criticism of previous mattering research by suggesting that the work of Rosenberg, Elliot, and others is synonymous with self-esteem. They write, “Research on this feeling-oriented mattering looks much like the literature on self-esteem. [...] There is already a very large literature on self-esteem, and it is not clear that advances in theory or measurement of feeling-oriented mattering would add anything, so that is not our focus.” (Reece et al, 2019, p. 2). Ten years prior to the publication of their research, however, Elliott (2009) had already clarified that mattering and self-esteem are not the same thing. He notes, “There are important distinctions between mattering and self-esteem. In its essence, mattering is a purely cognitive process, an attribution of one’s connection to the social order. To be sure, the inference about whether one matters does not occur in a vacuum. The social and structural contexts of people’s existence will play a large role in their understanding of their social significance. To know that I matter means that others take note of me and relate to me in ways that evince my connection to them, but there is no immediate evaluation of the self-involved in this awareness.” (p. 9). In a more recent publication, Matera et al (2019) also distinguished between self-esteem and mattering. They write, “If self-esteem is the evaluation of one’s described self, mattering is the individual perception of being recognised as important by others, necessarily implying a relational aspect.” (p. 1).

participants either did not address this distinction directly or their responses did not differentiate them enough to be considered. Regardless of these differences, all thirteen of these participants expressed that leaders can contribute to their sense of mattering in the workplace by conveying a positive regard toward them (Stephens et al, 2011). Most of these participants also indicated that leaders that contribute to their sense of mattering, through the same behaviours, contribute to their sense of dignity and well-being.

Regarding membership and mattering in the workplace, the research findings are consistent with reports from other researchers. For example, Lampersky (2018) found that having a sense of mattering in the workplace contributes to one's overall psychological well-being through improved self-esteem, sense of self-efficacy, and sense of purpose and meaning. She also suggests that having a sense of mattering in the workplace leads to increased job satisfaction and decreased job stress and burnout. Schieman and Taylor (2001) observed that individuals with a sense of mattering in the workplace enjoy a positive self-perception of acknowledgment and relevance in the lives of co-workers. In proposing a relational theory of work, Bluestein (2011) suggested that working is an "inherently relational act" (p. 1) and a main source of attaining "meaning, matter, and dignity" (p. 4). Trust and empowerment, as mentioned by some participants, can also be seen as logically connected to the idea of mattering. A person that is trusted and empowered to make an autonomous contribution and/or participate in key decisions matters by definition. If they were not perceived to matter, they would not be included and, correspondingly, they would only be included if they were known to be able/worthy (i.e. seen, heard, appreciated) to make a contribution. The participants conveyed that leaders that trust and empower them also contribute to their sense of dignity.

While the sense of mattering is tied to the sense of membership, it is not exclusively about membership. Another aspect of mattering in the workplace simply involves the internal sense that one's work matters and is making a difference in the world. The sense that one's work matters contributes to one's sense of meaning and purpose. When someone has a sense that their work matters, they also have the sense that *they* matter. The theory of spiritual leadership refers to these concepts as the sense of calling (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). The participants quoted in Chapter 4 expressed an internal sense of value and worth stemming from being acknowledged either for their inherent value or for

their instrumental contributions to the organisational outcomes. Each in their own way, and in their own context, participants expressed the idea that being acknowledged and valued contributes to their personal sense of meaning and purpose. These sentiments include the broad sense of feeling valued for doing something of value, making a successful contribution, and the experience of feeling like a key (i.e. highly valued) member of the organisation. These are indications that they are achieving a unique sense of purpose and meaning in their work as unique individuals. In summary, participants found that being acknowledged and considered to matter by leaders contributes to their sense of dignity in the workplace by contributing to their sense of well-being as valued co-workers that make meaningful contributions. As with the sense of membership, an important linkage can be seen between leadership behaviours that acknowledge and respect dignity and the sense of well-being experienced by employees.

This causal linkage is apparent in the intrinsic motivation model of spiritual leadership as well as its intermediate outcomes of calling and membership. Intrinsic motivation is a key part of spiritual leadership because it is associated with better learning, performance, and well-being driven by the need for competence, autonomy, and relatedness (Deci and Ryan, 1985; Fry, 2003). Hope/faith is an aspect of the intrinsic motivation model that involves one's sense that the work can be done successfully (i.e. is realistic within the shared vision), the individual's efforts will make a positive contribution to those ends (i.e. my work matters in the context of the shared outcomes), and the commitment to ensure that the effort is successful (i.e. "doing what it takes") (Fry, 2003, p. 714). Fry connects these elements of spiritual theory to a clear and compelling vision that is shared by leaders and followers. "Doing what it takes," in this context, relates to the element of well-being that "gives one a sense of making a difference and therefore that one's life has meaning." (Fry, 2003, p. 714). In other words, Fry is connecting effective work toward shared ends to a contributor's personal meaning-making which is, in turn, motivated by one's desire to matter and to make a difference. The argument is that the need to matter and make a difference is a key aspect of intrinsic motivation in spiritual leadership. As shown in Chapter 4, the participants confirmed these connections by suggesting that spiritual leadership behaviours contribute simultaneously to their senses of dignity, mattering, and well-being. Finally, altruistic love, another element of the intrinsic motivation model of spiritual leadership, can also be seen as a factor in one's sense of mattering. Leaders that exhibit behaviours of genuine care and concern for their followers, that is the same behaviours that convey to someone that they

matter, can be seen as acts of altruistic love (Fry, 2003; Brouns et al, 2020) and/or positive altruism (Irani, 2018).

Looking beyond the content of the interview responses, it should be noted that most participants were remarkably forthcoming. In most cases, they offered open and insightful responses that revealed, at times, very personal experiences with workplace relationships. This openness and willingness to engage in the conversation is interesting because the interviewer was not known to most of the participants prior to the interviews. In other words, they had no *a priori* reason to be comfortable and less guarded with him. Nearly all interviews were conducted on-site at the participants' places of work, which might not be considered by the participants to be safe and neutral ground for speaking about personal matters involving the employer. In addition, qualitative research interviews always involve some degree of power asymmetry, which often lead to participants giving guarded answers (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009). In this research project, the participants were asked to describe specific projects and relationships with leaders and co-workers. Given the reasons that participants might be guarded and careful with their answers, the responses were remarkably forthcoming. Most participants were open about their personal relationships in the workplace, especially regarding their relationships with leaders, as well as their personal experiences with mattering and the sense of dignity. The openness of the participants may reflect the use of questions and semi-structured research design. In other words, the *process* of the interviews may have facilitated a conversational experience that led the participants to feel comfortable and, in turn, willing to share personal thoughts and feelings. We must also consider the possibility that the topic itself – the *content* of the interviews – is one that inspires forthcoming participation. In this research, the participants were asked questions that encouraged them to describe and explain their experiences with being known and appreciated in the workplace, particularly by leaders. Being known and appreciated are powerful human needs (Connolly and Myers, 2003; Corbière and Amundson, 2007; Dixon, 2016) that could, simply, by their importance to the individual, be topics that inspire deep reflection and a willingness to share. It cannot be overlooked that the interviewer himself was seeking to know and understand something about the participants in the context of the interviews. This is not to suggest that the interview results are somehow less valid than if the interviews had been less open and less personal. To the contrary, it is simply a recognition that, epistemologically, qualitative interviewing involves the social construction of knowledge (Berger and Luckmann, 1966; Maxwell, 2005; 2012; Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009; Seidman,

2013) that is not independent of the interviewer. And, it is a recognition that the interviews themselves may have touched on the participants' need to be feel known, understood, and appreciated, if even by the interviewer. It should not be lost that through their participation in the interviews, and by sharing their personal experiences with the ideas of mattering and dignity, the participants mattered greatly to the researcher and to the outcomes of the research.

5.4.3 Discussion on the Connections between Human Dignity, Mattering, and Well-being

Reflecting upon the various ideas of workplace mattering presented in Sections 5.4.1 and 5.4.2 above, we can now consider the question, why does someone matter at work? It is proposed here, in light of the previous work cited and the findings explored in Chapter 4 and discussed in Section 5.4.2 above, that a person might be perceived to matter at work for at least four reasons. First, a person might be perceived to matter because of the contribution they make to the team or organisation. This may be related to their role in creating specific work product outcomes, or possibly for more intangible reasons such as contributing to a good environment, being empathetic, etc. Second, a person might be perceived to matter in the workplace because of the contribution or role they are expected to make in the future. These might include new employees, new hires that are still in training, or those that are in transition from one role to another. Third, it is also possible that a person might be perceived to matter at work simply because of their position or station (e.g. the owners of the business or a someone in a key leadership role). Fourth, it could be argued that someone matters in the workplace simply because they are human and, as most participants suggest in the findings, because they have dignity.

By connecting the typology of human dignity explored in Chapter 2 and the definitions of mattering described in this chapter, a link can be seen between human dignity and human mattering. In fact, these two ideas are very closely related. If one accepts that human dignity is an aspect of being human and an expression of inherent worth, it follows that humans matter to one another simply because they have dignity. If one accepts an objective reality that humans have dignity and therefore matter to one another, one is then faced with the question: How should we treat one another? Having established a logic for human dignity and, arguably, human mattering, Kant (1996a) answered this question by proposing the

Categorical Imperative as a moral code for how we should treat one another. Contemporary thinkers and researchers have, to a large extent, adopted inherent dignity as the prevailing paradigm and, correspondingly, a number of social and moral implications of dignity (Schachter, 1983; Meyer, 1992; Baumann, 2007; Waldron, 2009; Riley, 2010; Kateb, 2011; Mattson and Clark, 2011; Shultziner and Rabinovici, 2012). Even Schopenhauer (1995), who denied Kant's argument for a transcendent moral code of respect for the dignity of others, finds a way to make an argument for mutual respect and compassion. He argued that while there is disagreement about the basis of dignity, there is agreement about the implications of it. More recently, McCrudden (2013), building on the work of Schlink (2013), has argued that human dignity provides a unifying rallying point among those seeking a better world. This research finds a synergy between these theoretical and philosophical notions of dignity and mattering. As explained above in Section 5.4.2, the lived experience of several participants not only involves an acceptance of human dignity and human mattering, but a set of expectations for how humans should treat one another that leads to mutual well-being. Several researchers in the mattering domain have referred to a concept called "anti-mattering," which is the sense that one doesn't matter, in general or in a particular social context such as the workplace. The dimensions of anti-mattering are basically the opposite of the dimensions of mattering: not being seen, not feeling important/relevant, not feeling that anyone depends on you, and not feeling that anyone is proud of you. Some of the interview participants refer to experiences with these dimensions of anti-mattering and relate them to situations in which they felt their dignity was violated in the workplace.

There is general agreement in the research literature that humans have the need to be wanted, appreciated, and enfolded by others (Dixon Rayle, 2006; Elliott, 2009; Jung, 2015; Dixon, 2016; Flett, 2018; Matera et al, 2019). There is also agreement that humans have a need for significance and a desire to be appreciated in community as an aspect of their sense of self-esteem and self-efficacy (Connolly and Myers, 2003; Corbière and Amundson, 2007; Dixon Rayle, 2006; Elliott, 2009; Jung, 2015; Dixon, 2016; Flett, 2018; Matera et al, 2019). These needs are encapsulated in the individual well-being outcomes of spiritual leadership theory, calling and membership (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). It has been suggested that these needs are part of one's sense of mattering and are two of the objects of motivation experienced by workers (Jung, 2015; Reece et al, 2019). In other words, since we have the desire for significance and community, we are motivated to pursue activities and

behaviours that will satisfy those desires. Seen in this way, calling and membership are closely linked to the concept of workplace mattering. As a leader or follower experiences a sense of significance in their work (i.e. I am needed here, my work is important, etc.), and as they experience a sense of mattering to others, not only for their work product but also for their contribution to the culture and positive environment of the workplace, they will have achieved at least some sense of calling and membership as described in the theory of spiritual leadership (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017).

Mattering is generally accepted as an important element of the leader-follower relationship (Flett, 2018; Lampersky, 2018; Bucher et al, 2019). Writing about transformational leadership and the connection between mattering and motivation in the workplace, Flett notes,

“The leader who demonstrates that the people he or she is leading actually matter to him or her is someone who will have dedicated people who are joining on a shared mission. [...] Small considerations that highlight a sense of concern and convey an interest in nurturing the individual will be highly motivating and will generate extensive positive affect and goodwill in the work setting” (Flett, 2018, p. 253).

Flett is suggesting that leadership behaviours that promote a sense of mattering are a distinguishing mark of transformational leadership as described by Burns (1978) and Bass (1985). Given the interpersonal nature of spiritual leadership and its generational relationship to transformational leadership (Fry, 2003; Fairholm, 2011), the connection made by Flett (2018) extends to spiritual leadership as well. Specifically, Flett refers to the role of mattering in motivation toward shared mission, which is the first of the three elements of the intrinsic motivation model of spiritual leadership (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). The implication is that leader behaviours, whether labelled as transformational or spiritual, can have a significant impact on a follower’s sense of mattering. In turn, one’s sense of mattering is closely related to one’s sense of calling, membership, and dignity. Bucher et al (2019) suggests that even the sense of mattering experienced by digital labourers, those who may easily feel disconnected and insignificant in an organisation, can be positively influenced through inclusion in what she calls a “positive contribution narrative.” Her point is that even those with very loose connections to the organisation (e.g. remote working

scenarios, crowdsourced labour, digital microtask work assignments, etc.) can develop a sense of workplace mattering when they are included in the narrative of significance.

Addressing this aspect of mattering in the leader-follower relationship, Lampersky (2018) proposed two specific leadership behaviours that contribute to a sense of mattering among followers: 1) coaching to overcome “thinking traps”, and 2) coaching focused on the strengths of the followers. Coaching to overcome thinking traps involves efforts by the leader to help followers see how their sense of workplace mattering depends on a clear vision of themselves (i.e. not doubting that they do, in fact, matter in the workplace). Coaching focused on the strengths of followers is intended to help them see the value they create in the organisation. Together, these coaching suggestions could be considered aspects of spiritual leadership behaviours that contribute to faith/hope, an element of the spiritual leadership intrinsic motivation model. If a leader can help a follower see that they can and do make a difference in the organisation, the follower will have an increased sense of mattering and, arguably, an increased affirmation of calling and membership, the two intermediate outcomes of spiritual leadership theory. These efforts on the part of the leader are perceived as intentional affirmations of the follower, which makes them consistent with a concept of altruistic love that has been applied in the social sciences (Post, 2002). It is also worth noting that while leadership behaviours convey the degree to which followers matter to the leader, Rosenberg and McCullough (1981) suggest that one’s sense of workplace mattering is not entirely the responsibility of the leader. Instead, they suggest that one’s sense of mattering is an internal perception based upon life experience and situational observations. Lampersky’s (2018) approach provides a helpful model in this regard by emphasising a shared responsibility among the leader and follower for the follower’s sense of mattering. It may also address the concern raised by Western (2013) that spiritual leadership might become unhelpfully paternalistic in some organisations.

5.5 Summary of Analysis and Discussion

Careful analysis of the findings presented in Chapter 4 reveal three prominent themes: 1) inner life of the leader, 2) inclusive decision-making as a spiritual leadership behaviour, and 3) the perception of mattering as an element of well-being. Analysis of these themes in the context of spiritual leadership reveals that participants perceive a causal connection between the inner life of the leader, the behaviour of the leader, and well-being outcomes perceived by

leaders and followers in the organisation. As part of the analysis, it was shown that the participants identified the acknowledgement of and respect for dignity to be an important aspect of the inner life of the leader. In addition, they perceived these values and attitudes to be causally related to inclusive decision-making as a spiritual leadership behaviour. Further, they perceived inclusive decision-making, along with other spiritual leadership behaviours, to be causally related to their sense of mattering in and beyond the workplace. Intertwined with this causal structure, the participants perceived a strong conceptual linkage between their sense of dignity and their sense of mattering, both of which are perceived to be important aspects of well-being in the workplace. In other words, when one senses that they matter, they correspondingly sense their own value and worth, which are definitionally linked to one's sense of dignity. In the next chapter, the conclusions, implications, and future directions for the research will be explored.

6 Conclusions

6.1 Summary

Spiritual leadership theory suggests that by fostering a culture and environment of intrinsic motivation, leaders can achieve positive instrumental outcomes as well as an increased sense of well-being among employees (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). The theory also suggests that some leaders are motivated to pursue such outcomes because of inner values and attitudes about people and the world around them. For example, one of the foundational concepts of spiritual leadership is “the primacy of people” (Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013, p. 223). This foundation implies another element of the theory that is not explicitly stated: that members of the organisation, both leaders and followers, have value and worth. Value and worth are demonstrated not only in their contributions to instrumental outcomes, but simply in the fact that they are human. The idea that humans have transcendent value and worth is also the foundation of most contemporary thoughts on human dignity (Schachter, 1983; Meyer, 1992; Waldron, 2009; Riley, 2010; Mattson and Clark, 2011; Mea and Sims, 2019). This sequence of ideas, namely that the value and worth of people is established and held as inner life values and attitudes of leaders that, in turn, inspire leader behaviours reveals an intersection between human dignity and spiritual leadership theory. This research reveals that by exploring the intersection of human dignity and spiritual leadership, there is an opportunity to advance our understanding of the leader-follower relationship with significant benefits for organisations and individuals.

Through a series of semi-structured interviews, this research has investigated aspects of the complex and subtle role human dignity is perceived to have in the leader-follower relationship. Consistent with previous research findings, the interview participants perceived human dignity to be an important and tangible aspect of that relationship (Lucas 2015; 2017; Thomas and Lucas, 2019). Even though most interview participants did not directly refer to the most well-known definitions of human dignity or quote Immanuel Kant’s Categorical Imperative (i.e. that since a human has dignity, he/she should not be treated as a means to an end) (Kant, 1996b; 1996b), they expressed that human dignity is a deeply held concept and aspect of their lived experience in the workplace. Analysis of the interview transcripts

revealed three distinct themes: 1) spiritual leadership behaviours that acknowledge and respect the dignity of others are related to inner life values and attitudes, 2) inclusive decision-making is perceived to be a spiritual leadership behaviour that contributes to the sense of dignity and well-being as well as the sense of calling and membership, and 3) spiritual leadership behaviours that contribute to one's sense of mattering in the workplace are also linked to one's sense of dignity. As noted throughout this thesis, spiritual leadership theory makes implicit, but not explicit, reference to human dignity. For example, the theory states,

“[...] the organization exists to serve people and not to make people serve it. Therefore, human beings are more than human capital or human resources [...] The primacy of people is essential to implementing [spiritual leadership]” (Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013, p. 223).

In addition to other contributions to the field, this research proposes two advancements to spiritual leadership theory that makes human dignity an explicit, rather than implicit, aspect of the theory. These advancements, which is described in detail in Section 6.4 below, involves the incorporation of human dignity as an explicit aspect of the causal structure of the theory. The proposed advancements rest on the proposal established in Chapter 5 that human dignity is an implicit, and yet substantial, aspect of spiritual leadership theory. As such, a key proposal of the thesis is to make explicit this otherwise implicit element as an advancement to the theory.

The remainder of this chapter provides an integrative conclusion to the research presented in the preceding chapters. Section 6.2 presents a review of the research aim, research questions, and theoretical framework in light of the findings and analysis of the research. Section 6.3 presents a summary of conclusions following the three major themes identified in the research: inner life, inclusive decision-making, and mattering. Section 6.4 integrates and synthesises the findings and analysis by presenting the implications of this research for spiritual leadership theory. This section also provides two proposed advancements to the theory based on human dignity. Section 6.5 provides an outline of implications for organizational leadership practice and leadership development. Finally, Section 6.6 provides a look ahead to potential future research opportunities built upon the findings and analysis of this research.

6.2 Review of Aim, Research Questions, and Theoretical Framework

As introduced in Chapter 1, there is significant opportunity and need to explore human dignity in the workplace, specifically in the leader-follower relationship. This research has endeavoured to explore these areas with an eye toward theory advancement and practice improvement. To this end, and as described in Chapter 1, the aim of this research is:

To critically examine human dignity as an element of the leader-follower relationship, as a factor of employee well-being, and as a basis for potential enhancements to spiritual leadership theory and practice.

The research aim has provided context for the development of the research questions, the literature review presented in the body of Chapter 2, and the theoretical framework explained at the end of Chapter 2. It has also guided the qualitative study itself, described in Chapter 3, as well as the analysis and interpretation of the findings, as presented in Chapters 4 and 5.

The research questions described below serve as a foundation for research inquiry presented and explored throughout this thesis (Blaikie, 2010). Recall from Chapter 1 that the research questions are structured as *what* questions (i.e. descriptive), *why* questions (i.e. causal and teleological), and *how* questions (i.e. interventional). The answers to the research questions are spread throughout the thesis, but summaries are provided here for the sake of completeness.

1. *What literature is available to address the intersection of spiritual leadership, human dignity, and workplace well-being? What does the literature reveal about the ways and to what extent the ethos and structure of spiritual leadership connects with ideas of human dignity and well-being?*

In Chapter 2, the literature review revealed a rich connection between the foundations and elements of spiritual leadership, human dignity, and workplace well-being. Analysis of the literature revealed, for example, that spiritual leadership makes implicit assumptions about leader and follower values and attitudes toward human dignity as an aspect of workplace well-being. This assumption, in light of thorough analysis of the human dignity and other literature, involves the inherent value of the human person and desire for them to flourish in and beyond the achievement of instrumental outcomes as measured on the first bottom-line.

It is worth noting that the literature review is inherently multidisciplinary, drawing on knowledge and research from domains such as leadership studies, organisational behaviour, psychology, sociology, metaphysics, and other disciplines.

2. *What are some of the perceptions of human dignity and well-being in the leader-follower relationship? Specifically, what perceptions, if any, do leaders and followers have of the relationship between spiritual leadership behaviours and the sense of dignity and well-being? Why do individuals hold these views and perceptions?*

The participants in this research, as well as many researchers and thought leaders discussed in the literature review, overwhelmingly view the acknowledgement of and respect for human dignity to be an important aspect of the leader-follower relationship. Some differences exist in how individuals understand and relate to the concept of human dignity, but in general, this research found it to be universally accepted among the interview participants. The participants described a causal link between the inner life values and attitudes of leaders and their outward behaviours they exhibit. They perceive leaders that have a high regard for human dignity to demonstrate that regard through spiritual leadership behaviours such as inclusive decision-making. Participants indicated that spiritual leadership behaviours rooted in respect for human dignity also contribute to their sense of calling and membership, affirming the overall causal structure of spiritual leadership theory. Several participants conveyed that their own views of human dignity were formed in childhood and reinforced through role models and the practice of their own value system.

3. *In what ways do leaders and followers express their ideas about and experiences with human dignity in the workplace? Why do leaders choose to employ dignity-affirming and dignity-denying behaviours as an expression of those ideas?*

The participants of the research indicated that leaders and followers express their ideas about and experiences with human dignity through explicit and implicit action. For example, some leaders encourage and invest in followers through inclusive behaviours that reinforce the perception of mattering. Some participants expressed that they receive these expressions as impressions and intentions, not only as overt actions. Leaders and followers reported that they choose to acknowledge and respect the dignity of others based on deeply rooted and presuppositional moral ideals (e.g. the sense that it is the right thing to do). Beyond the moral

drive to affirm dignity, many participants also referred to a desire for others to flourish in the workplace.

4. *How might the leader-follower relationship be improved through dignity-affirming leadership behaviours? Specifically, how might spiritual leadership theory and practice be applied and improved, if at all, toward dignity-affirming practices in the workplace and away from dignity-denying practices in the workplace?*

As presented in Chapter 4, interview participants described several ways in which leaders can improve the leader-follower relationship through the acknowledgement of and respect for human dignity. As discussed in Chapter 5, behaviours such as inclusive decision-making and personal acknowledgement are indications of a leader knowing and appreciating the contributions of others. These interventional questions are intended to look forward by exploring routes to the advancement of theory and practice. This set of questions has led to two proposals toward theory advancement presented in Sections 6.4. These proposals tie together the aim, research questions, and findings of the research following the foundation of the theoretical framework discussed at the end of Chapter 2. In addition, a number of potential advancements to leadership practice are discussed in Section 6.5 below.

As noted at the end of Chapter 2, the causal structure of spiritual leadership theory provides the theoretical framework for this research. This framework is the lens through which the research space is viewed and the foundation upon which the research is conducted and understood. The causal structure connects the inner life of the mind and heart, first, to leadership behaviours and then to intermediate and ultimate outcomes of those behaviours. This casual framework not only provides a lens to view spiritual leadership theory, but also to view the lived experience of human dignity in the leader-follower relationship. Values and attitudes about human dignity are part of the inner life which, in turn, guides dignity-respecting behaviours and that ultimately result in the perception of dignity acknowledged or denied as a lived experience and as an element of workplace well-being.

6.3 Thematic Conclusions

6.3.1 Introduction

As presented in Chapter 4 and discussed in Chapter 5, the research uncovered three prominent themes in the interview data. Some or all of these themes were discussed by virtually all interview participants, regardless of role, rank, or demographics. First, the interview participants noted the role and importance of inner life in the formation and application of attitudes and values regarding human dignity and well-being in the leader-follower relationship. Second, inclusive decision-making was identified as a leadership behaviour associated with both human dignity and workplace well-being. Third, mattering was expressed by many participants as one of the lived experiences of dignity acknowledged and respected in the workplace. Each of these themes are also closely linked to the elements of spiritual leadership theory (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Sweeney and Fry, 2012; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). The implications of these three prominent themes are discussed in the following subsections.

6.3.2 Theme 1 – Inner Life

As explained in the literature review presented in Chapter 2, some leaders are motivated to create a cultural environment that promotes the well-being of employees in part because it has been shown to produce good instrumental outcomes. The findings of the research suggest that, at least for this group of participants, some leaders are also motivated by a broader set of values and attitudes that drive spiritual leadership behaviours. Fry refers to these thoughts, values, and attitudes as part of the leader's "inner life" (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Sweeney and Fry, 2012; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). This concept of the leader's inner life was added by Fry in the second version of spiritual leadership theory and expanded in the third version as a way to explain and account for the leader's motivations to create an others-oriented, inclusive, service-minded organisational culture. Perhaps Edward Hopper (1882-1967), the American realist painter, offers helpful insight on this point. He said, "Great art is the outward expression of an inner life in the artist" (Hopper, 1959, p. 5). Based on the findings of this research, we might similarly conclude that great leadership is the outward expression

of the inner life of a leader. Perhaps it can be said that inwardly held values about human dignity lead to the outward expression of spiritual leadership behaviours.

This research reveals a perceptual connection between human dignity and the inner life of leaders and followers. Nearly all of the participants, regardless of their rank or role, expressed the view that humans have inherent dignity that should be respected in the workplace. Most participants consider dignity to be something a person cannot lose, but something that can be violated or disrespected. All of the participants expressed that human dignity comes into play in the workplace and, especially, in the leader-follower relationship. Virtually all participants have as part of their inner value systems, the view that humans have dignity as a matter of being human and, as a result, can expect a certain level of respect in the workplace and beyond. In other words, they expressed the idea that inner life values (e.g. respect for the dignity of others) lead to behaviours that reflect those values. Participants expressed that their values and attitudes about respect for human dignity are deeply rooted, the result of their upbringing as children, mentoring by role models, or connected to cultural norms or elements of religious faith or other personal belief systems. Sweeney and Fry connect these experiences with the formation of identity, “Reflections on personal experiences, feedback from others, and observations of role models also provide individuals with insights into their identities” (Sweeney and Fry, 2012, p. 99). In summary, critical analysis of the findings reveals that the interview participants lean strongly toward the idea that one’s values and attitudes toward human dignity result in leadership behaviours that are consistent with the ideals of spiritual leadership theory.

In proposing the theory of spiritual leadership, Fry (2003) envisioned a workplace culture in which leaders and followers would experience a form of well-being stemming from a sense of calling and membership. As noted in Chapter 2, Fry defined spiritual leadership as

“[...] the values, attitudes, and behaviors that are necessary to intrinsically motivate one’s self and others so that they have a sense of spiritual survival through calling and membership. This entails 1) creating a vision wherein organization members experience a sense of calling in that their life has meaning and makes a difference, and 2) establishing a social/organizational culture based on altruistic love whereby leaders and followers have genuine care, concerns, and appreciation for both self and others, thereby providing a sense of membership and feel understood and appreciated” (Fry, 2003, p. 694).

The theory of spiritual leadership suggests that it is the values and attitudes of the inner life that lead to outward, spiritual leadership behaviours that contribute to intrinsic motivation, employee well-being, and triple bottom-line outcomes (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). In proposing the theory, Fry suggests that “leaders must get in touch with their core values and communicate them to followers through vision and personal actions” (Fry, 2003, p. 710). The theory does not give an extensive list of what those core values are¹, but it does suggest that they include “the universal spiritual values of humility, charity, and veracity.” (p. 710). This research has explored the possibility that acknowledgement of and respect for human dignity might be values found on such a list.

Spiritual leadership theory proposes that leaders create an organisational culture in which leaders and followers share a vision and expectations for outcomes that they believe will make a difference to the organisation and to the world. The theory also envisions an environment in which leaders and followers share a genuine care, concern, and respect for one another that transcends the instrumental expectations of the organisation (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). Implied in these elements of the theory is the idea that leaders and followers find value in one another as human beings and as “whole people”, not as means to instrumental ends, not simply as occupiers of organisational roles (Maslow, 1971; Deci and Ryan, 2000; Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, 2010; Paloutzian et al, 2010; Miller and Ewest, 2013; Benefiel et al, 2014; Schein and Schein, 2018). This idea is consistent with the acknowledgement of and respect for human dignity (Hicks, 2018). In creating a shared vision and set of expectations, in sharing a hope/faith that collaborative work will create good outcomes, and in sharing the desire to love and serve others, leaders and followers together establish an environment of mutual respect, care, and concern. When asked about their experiences in actual leader-follower relationships, most participants expressed sentiments that are aligned with these ideals. They also affirmed the connections between spiritual

¹ It should be noted that while not proposing a list of spiritual leadership values and attitudes, Lean and Ganster (2017) proposed a list of spiritual leadership behaviours. Some of these behaviours could be considered values and attitudes, however, so they those are listed here: 1) is guided by spiritual values or principles, 2) values others, 3) nourishes opportunities for an inner life among employees, 4) respectful.

leadership behaviours and the values and attitudes of the inner life that acknowledge and respect the dignity of others.

This research involved interviews with participants about their lived experience in the workplace in the context of the ideas discussed here. Since human dignity is not a common topic of discussion in the workplace, the questions were designed to help participants explore and discuss these ideas in their own words and through the lens of actual lived experience in the workplace. As noted in Chapter 4, most participants were able to connect these ideas to lived experiences while clearly relating them to their personal value systems regarding dignity and well-being.

6.3.3 Theme 2 – Inclusive Decision-making

Fry (2003) argues that the theory of spiritual leadership is an approach that could help organisations achieve the status of “learning organisation” envisioned in *The Fifth Discipline* (Senge, 1990). According to Senge, learning organisations are dynamically able to deal with the complexity and uncertainty of the modern world. Fry writes,

“The fundamental building block of learning organizations is the self-directed, empowered team. Therefore, strategic leaders also need to establish a culture and ethical system within empowered teams that embodies the organization’s culture, values, and ethical system. Empowerment is power sharing, the delegation of power and both authority and all but symbolic responsibility to organizational followers”
(Fry, 2003, p. 719).

In addressing the ideals of the learning organisation, Fry articulates an approach to power-sharing in the leader-follower relationship that, among other things, involves inclusive decision-making. This research reveals that the interview participants sense a connection between inclusive decision-making, along the with the values and attitudes that support it, and one’s personal sense of human dignity in the leader-follower relationship. The findings reveal a perceptual connection between human dignity, the practice of inclusive decision-making, the fulfilment of higher-order needs, and the sense of employee well-being in the organisation. The participants expressed that they perceive inclusive decision-making to be a leadership behaviour that contributes to their sense of dignity and to two higher-order needs, membership and calling, which together are the elements of spiritual well-being in spiritual leadership theory. With respect to the higher-order need of membership, participants

expressed that being included in decision-making processes contributes to their sense of belonging, being heard, being known, and being trusted, all of which are, for them, elements of having their dignity respected. These findings are not only consistent with the expected intermediate outcomes of the theory of spiritual leadership (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017), but also align with research in the area of participative management (Likert, 1967; Lowin, 1968; Hackman and Lawler, 1971; Katz and Kahn, 1978; French et al, 1982; Kanter, 1982; Sashkin, 1982; Jackson, 1983; Kim 2002; Angermeier et al, 2009; Benioli and Somech, 2010; Ogbeide and Harrington, 2011; Pardo-del-Val et al, 2012). In addition, participants expressed that inclusive decision-making as a leadership practice contributes to their sense of meaning and purpose, which serve as proxies for calling as described in spiritual leadership theory (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). Unlike membership, which is by definition a social need, calling is an internal, transcendent need to achieve a sense of purpose and meaning in one's life. The findings of the research reveal that participants experience a sense of having their dignity respected when they are included in decision-making processes because such inclusion contributes to their sense of doing something significant, making a valuable contribution, and playing a key role.

It is important to note that this research was not designed to test the validity or efficacy of spiritual leadership theory itself. That has been done several times by other researchers (Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry, Matherly, Ouimet, 2010; Ayranci and Semercioz, 2011; Bodia and Ali, 2012; Chen and Yang, 2012; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). Instead, the research was designed to explore the connections between human dignity, which is not an explicit element of the theory, and human well-being as explicit and implicit elements of the theory. As has been shown in the literature review presented in Chapter 2, the concept of human dignity is implied in the theory of spiritual leadership. This research was designed to explore the possibility of making these implied elements explicit and doing so in a way that is not purely theoretical but based on the perceptions of participants in real-world, qualitative research. Inclusive decision-making emerged as one of the key themes of the research. Participants expressed that inclusive decision-making contributes to their sense of dignity as well as their sense of well-being. The participants expressed that having their dignity acknowledged and respected by leaders that employ spiritual leadership behaviours is, in itself, a contributor to their sense of well-being. As a result, the research findings suggest that

spiritual leadership theory, and perhaps other 4th and 5th generation leadership theories (Fairholm, 2011), can be advanced through the incorporation of human dignity as an explicit thematic foundation of the theory. Specifically, these enhancements should include the acknowledgement and respect for human dignity through inclusive decision-making. Two proposed advancements to the theory are discussed below in Section 6.4.

6.3.4 Theme 3 – Perception of Mattering

In proposing the theory of spiritual leadership, Fry (2003) envisioned a workplace culture, cultivated by the leaders, in which leaders and followers would experience a form of workplace well-being stemming from their sense of fulfilled calling and membership. As noted in Chapter 2, Fry defined spiritual leadership as

*“[...] the values, attitudes, and behaviors that are necessary to intrinsically motivate one’s self and others so that they have a sense of spiritual survival through calling and membership. This entails 1) creating a vision wherein organization members experience a sense of calling in that **their life has meaning and makes a difference**, and 2) establishing a social/organizational culture based on altruistic love whereby **leaders and followers have genuine care, concern, and appreciation for both self and others**, thereby providing a sense of membership and **feel understood and appreciated**” (Fry, 2003, p. 694) (Emphasis added)*

The theory of spiritual leadership proposes that leaders and followers will experience a sense of calling and membership because their efforts toward a shared vision and shared outcomes have meaning for them and are perceived to make a difference. In other words, they sense that they matter on an instrumental level through the achievement of mutually meaningful outcomes. In addition, the theory of spiritual leadership envisions an environment in which leaders and followers share a genuine care, concern, and appreciation for one another (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). So, in addition to mattering on an instrumental level, they also sense that they matter on a transcendent level, as humans engaged in shared meaning-making. When asked about lived experiences in leader-follower relationships, several of the interview participants expressed sentiments that are aligned with these ideals. They also affirmed the connections between spiritual leadership behaviours and their sense of human dignity, mattering, and well-being.

The research findings reveal a perceptual connection between human dignity, spiritual leadership practices related to workplace mattering, the fulfilment of higher order needs, and the sense of employee well-being in the organisation. In summary, several of the interview participants expressed that they perceive leader values, attitudes, and behaviours that contribute to their sense of mattering to also contribute to their perception of dignity. Further, they expressed that those values, attitudes, and behaviours contribute to two higher-order needs, membership and calling, which together are the two indicators of well-being in the theory of spiritual leadership. Being known, acknowledged, and appreciated by leaders in both instrumental and non-instrumental ways were considered by participants to be leadership behaviours that contribute to their sense of belonging and sense of being trusted, which are, for them, elements of having their dignity respected. These findings are consistent with the vision and expected intermediate outcomes of spiritual leadership (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). The findings also align with research in the area of mattering (Schultheiss, 2007; Blustein, 2011; Jung, 2015; Dixon, 2016; Bucher et al, 2019; Reece et al, 2019). Unlike membership, which is by definition a social need, calling is an internal, transcendent need to achieve a sense of purpose and meaning in one's life. The research findings reveal that participants experience a sense of having their dignity respected when leaders help them feel that they matter in the workplace because it contributes to their sense of doing something valuable, making a valuable contribution, and playing a key role.

As presented in Chapter 2, human dignity is not an explicit aspect of spiritual leadership theory (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). And yet, the underlying philosophy of the theory reflects an implicit respect for the dignity of both leaders and followers. Perceiving that people matter is an implicit element of why a leader would care about the well-being of anyone in the workplace and, arguably, second bottom-line outcomes.

As explained in Section 6.3.2 above, this research was not designed to test the validity or efficacy of the theory of spiritual leadership itself. That has been done several times by other researchers (Fry, Matherly, Ouimet, 2010; Ayranci and Semercioz, 2011; Bodia and Ali, 2012; Chen and Yang, 2012; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). Instead, the research was designed to explore the existence, relevance, and implications of connections between human dignity, which is not an explicit element of the theory, and human well-

being, which is. Acknowledgement of and respect for human dignity is implied in the theory of spiritual leadership. The research was designed to explore the possibility of making explicit these otherwise implied elements of the theory and doing so in a way that is not purely theoretical but based on the perceptions of participants in a real-world, qualitative study. When they were presented with questions about human dignity in the leader-follower relationship, workplace mattering emerged as one of the key concepts raised by the participants. Several of them explained that spiritual leadership practices related to the intrinsic motivation model of spiritual leadership, such as inclusive decision-making, shared work assignments, and personal acknowledgement (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017), contribute to their sense of dignity as well as their sense of well-being. That their dignity is respected by leaders employing these values, attitudes, and behaviours is, in itself, a contributor to their sense of well-being. So, in this sense, the research findings suggest that spiritual leadership theory can be advanced through the incorporation of human dignity as an explicit thematic foundation. Two theory advancements are proposed in the next section.

6.4 Implications for Spiritual Leadership Theory

6.4.1 Introduction

The three themes discussed above emerged from coding and analysis of the interview transcripts. These emergent themes are reflective of corresponding core concepts of spiritual leadership theory as described by Fry (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Sweeney and Fry, 2012; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). In other words, the research results, speak strongly to a link between the perception of human dignity in the leader-follower relationship and the practice of spiritual leadership. These connections offer new and unique insight into the leader-follower relationship and provide a platform to consider dignity related advancements to spiritual leadership theory and perhaps other leadership theories. Based on the research results and guided by the research aim discussed in Section 6.2 and the theoretical framework presented at the end of Chapter 2, two advancements to spiritual leadership theory are proposed below.

6.4.2 Proposed Advancement 1: Human Dignity and the *Linear* Causality of Spiritual Leadership

Researchers have suggested that by closely relating the design of the research to an existing theory, as has been done in this case, qualitative research results can be used to establish a foundation for theory advancement (Bryman, 1988; Marshall and Rossman, 1999; Ritchie and Lewis, 2003; and Yin, 2003). Based on this premise and the research presented in this thesis, this section proposes an advancement to spiritual leadership theory that incorporates human dignity at the causal level. As discussed in Chapter 2, human dignity is not an explicit aspect of spiritual leadership theory (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). And yet, the underlying philosophy of the theory reflects an implicit respect for the dignity (i.e. value and worth) of both leaders and followers. The participants of this research affirmed this relationship by expressing that, for them, acknowledgement of and respect for human dignity are aspects of inner values and attitudes of leaders.

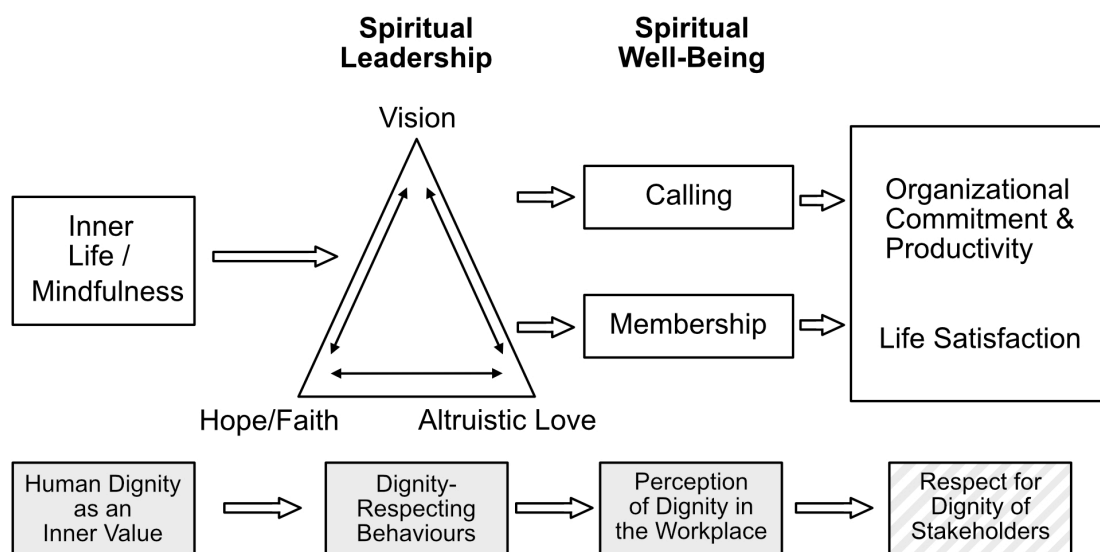


Figure 6-1: Human Dignity and Spiritual Leadership - Linear Causality Advancement

Human dignity as an inner value. Building upon the research findings presented in Chapter 4 and the related analysis in Chapter 5, this research provides new and nuanced language and insight to the causal structure of spiritual leadership theory. As depicted in Figure 6-1, this is

envisioned as a process flow. The top (i.e. unshaded) section of the image is the third and current version of spiritual leadership theory (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). The shaded elements at the bottom of the figure depict the proposed advancement to the theory resulting from this research. Starting on the left, the values and attitudes of the inner life of a leader include acknowledgement of and respect for human dignity. These might include a sense of the intrinsic value of the human being beyond their ability to produce instrumental outcomes at the first bottom-line. It might include the value of listening to a colleague on the grounds that the person has something valuable to contribute from their life experience beyond the workplace. It might involve consideration and respect for the unique workload or family situation of colleagues, or simply an acknowledgement of different views based on gender or cultural identity.

Dignity-respecting behaviours. The inner values and attitudes about human dignity described above result in specific dignity-respecting leadership behaviours, which is the second step in the causal structure. These might include leadership behaviours that contribute to one's sense of involvement in the setting of shared objectives. They might involve relationship-building behaviours that help others feel that they matter (i.e. the self-perception of value or worth) to the leader and, therefore, promote a sense of membership in the organisation. These two examples, inclusive decision-making and the resultant perception of mattering, are themes that emerged from the interview data that were presented in Chapter 4 and discussed in Chapter 5.

Perception of dignity in the workplace. The third step in this causal flow is that leaders and followers actually sense that their dignity has been acknowledge and respected, and that they matter. As ones that matter individuals in the organisation and to the organisation itself, these individuals can, according to the theory of spiritual leadership, achieve a sense of calling and membership (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). It is proposed here that the sense of calling and membership are intertwined with the sense of mattering, which is a self-perception of dignity.

Respect for the dignity of stakeholders. The fourth and final step in the causal flow is that the broader community of stakeholders of the organisation (i.e. customers, neighbours, investors,

etc.) also feel that the organisation has done what it can to respond to their needs, giving them the sense that they matter as well. As a matter of intentional scope control, this research is focused on employees as stakeholders. Interviews of the wider community of stakeholders were not included in this research and remains an opportunity for future research.

In summary, spiritual leadership is described as a causal theory that starts with the inner life of the leader (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). The values and attitudes of that inner life, along with supportive inner life practices, motivate the leader to create a culture and organisational environment that will be intrinsically motivating to colleagues. As leaders and followers collaborate through shared vision and objectives, hope/faith, and altruistic love, both will experience a sense of well-being, through fulfilment of the higher-order needs of calling and membership. These, in turn, will result in organisational commitment, productivity, and life satisfaction that will have benefits for a wide range of stakeholders as triple bottom-line outcomes. It is argued here that this causal flow of spiritual leadership theory can be improved, or at least more completely understood, through the language and concepts of human dignity, as depicted in Figure 6-1. This argument is supported by the findings of the research, which suggest that leaders and followers understand that human dignity is an important element of motivation and meaning-making in the leader-follower relationship.

6.4.3 Proposed Advancement 2: Human Dignity and the *Cycle of Influence in Spiritual Leadership*

Several interview participants expressed that role models and other leaders have influenced their values and attitudes about human dignity. For some, this influence came through formative, childhood experiences. For others, it came through observation of leaders in the workplace. Some participants noted that as they learned from role models, either directly or through passive observation, their own sense of human dignity as an inner value developed over time. Sweeney and Fry (2012) explain a similar linkage by suggesting that reflections on feedback from others and observations of role models become formative to our own sense of identity. While spiritual leadership theory has always been depicted as a left-to-right causal flow, the dynamic of role-model influence introduces a cyclical element to the theory when viewed in light of human dignity.

Spiritual leadership theory suggests that organisational commitment is one of the ultimate outcomes of spiritual leadership practice (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). In addition, as presented in Chapter 4, interview participants perceive a link between respect for the dignity of others and spiritual leadership behaviours. It follows that there may also be a link between organisational commitment, including a commitment to the culture of spiritual leadership, and respect for the dignity of others displayed by leaders. In this sense, the leaders are serving as role models for dignity-respecting, spiritual leadership behaviours which are cyclically reinforced as commitment to the organisational culture. This virtuous cycle of dignity-respecting spiritual leadership behaviour (Henry, 2019) is not explicitly described by any of the participants, but can be derived, as explained here, from careful analysis of the interviews in the context of spiritual leadership theory and the causal flow of the theoretical framework of this research. As such, and in addition to the linear causality enhancement proposed above, an additional enhancement to spiritual leadership is proposed here to address a cyclical reinforcement of human dignity and spiritual leadership behaviours as aspects of an organisation’s culture in which spiritual leadership is practiced. This cyclical advancement to the theory is depicted in Figure 6-2.

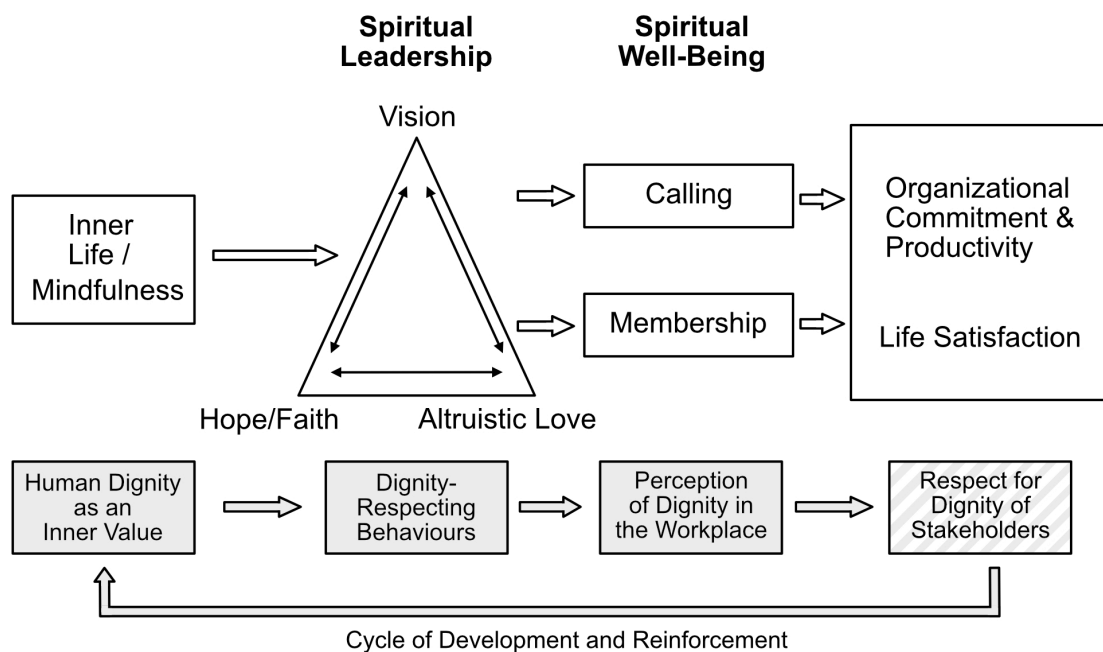


Figure 6-2: Human Dignity and Spiritual Leadership – Cyclical Causality Advancement

Sweeney and Fry (2012) explain that reflections on feedback from others and observations of role models are formative to our sense of identity, which is consistent with the notion of personal and professional development. The virtuous cycle depicted in Figure 6-2 connects organisational commitment to the organisational culture that embraces leadership behaviours that acknowledge and respect human dignity. Leaders, by displaying such behaviours reinforce in others these ideals as inner values and attitudes that are further embraced as part of the organisational culture. Leaders and followers, benefitting from these behaviours through the causal model, become committed to these values through commitment to the organisational culture. This cyclical advancement is not only consistent with the causal framework of spiritual leadership theory but is also reflective of the cyclical nature of professional and personal development in general (Bubb and Earley, 2007; O'Brocta et al, 2012; Chartered Institute of Management Accountants, 2016).

6.4.4 **Other Contributions to Theory**

This research has taken a multidisciplinary approach to explore the intersection of human dignity, spiritual leadership, and workplace well-being. In addition to their relationship to spiritual leadership as described in this thesis, human dignity and workplace well-being are subjects of active research on their own. For the sake of completeness, this section will briefly discuss the contributions of this research to the areas of workplace dignity and workplace well-being as standalone research subjects.

Contributions related to workplace dignity. As noted in Chapter 2, human dignity research is challenged by the lack of a commonly accepted definition and philosophical framework (Meyer, 1992; Waldron, 2009; Mattson and Clark, 2011). While there is general acceptance of the concept in social science research, there is active debate about the source and meaning of human dignity in the various spheres of life, especially its role as a foundation for behavioural norms (Schachter, 1983; Riley, 2010; Mattson and Clark, 2011). As such, human dignity research that draws upon the lived experience of individuals adds to our understanding in this area. The research described in this thesis makes a contribution to that body of knowledge that offers an additional step toward a more complete language and understanding of this social construct in the workplace.

Although individual definitions of dignity and experiences with it varied somewhat among the interview participants, none of them denied the existence of human dignity or considered it to be a bogus concept. All of them considered human dignity to be a tangible aspect of workplace life and, specifically, the leader-follower relationship. The consistency of the research findings in this regard provide additional evidence that this field is open for more investigation. Perhaps this research will inspire related research involving the role of human dignity in other workplace relationships, such as peer-to-peer relationships, employee-to-client relationships, owner-to-executive relationships, and as suggested in Section 6.4.2, the dignity of the broader stakeholder community of an organisation.

Contributions related to workplace well-being. This project has explored several aspects of workplace well-being, specifically calling and membership, which are the elements of spiritual well-being in spiritual leadership theory (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). Calling and membership are higher-order human needs that, when fulfilled, reflect a degree of well-being (Maslow, 1943; McClelland, 1961; 1985; Herzberg, 1964; Alderfer, 1969; Katz and Kahn, 1978; Deci and Ryan, 2000). This research has sought to understand aspects of the leader's ability to influence the sense of well-being, specifically calling and membership, through leadership behaviours that acknowledge and respect human dignity. Critical analysis of the elements of spiritual leadership theory has revealed that calling and membership are not independent of one another when viewed in the context of perceived dignity and leadership influence. For example, one's sense of calling is influenced by the perception that one is being included in the decision-making process and shown to matter by leaders and colleagues, both of which have implications for one's sense of membership. Similarly, the sense of membership is influenced not simply by the existence of organisational relationships, but by the nature of those relationships and the work context in which they exist. For example, one's sense of contribution was shown to influence the sense of membership. This research provides a contribution to knowledge in the area of workplace well-being by exploring aspects of these complex, conceptual, and perceptual connections between human dignity, higher-order needs, altruistic love, and wholeness as elements of the leader-follower relationship.

The interview participants expressed a perceived connection between their sense of dignity in the workplace and their sense of calling and membership. For example, they expressed that

being included in decisions, especially decisions that impact them personally, contributes to their sense of well-being, their perception of being trusted and valued, and their level of commitment to the organisation. According to several participants, inclusive decision-making and other leader behaviours contribute to the perception that they matter instrumentally and conceptually. In turn, this sense of mattering (i.e. the sense of having value and worth) contributes to the sense of well-being. An interesting finding of the research is that these leader behaviours are not limited to overt actions, but also involve the perceived motivations for those behaviours on the part of leaders. In addition to the primary focus of the research, namely spiritual leadership theory, the research contributes generally to our understanding of workplace well-being through these important findings.

6.5 Implications for Practice

6.5.1 Introduction

Leadership theories are of limited value if they are never put into practice or tested in real world settings (Pfeffer, 2015). Many popular texts on leadership explicitly or implicitly connect theory to practice on these grounds (Burns, 1978; Kouzes and Pozner, 2002; Daft, 2005; Western, 2013). Spiritual leadership, the main focus of this thesis, is built on the idea that assumptions and observations of practice lead to theory formation which, in turn, informs practice (Fry, 2016). This interplay of observation, theory development, and practice is an essential part of knowledge creation and human advancement. Leadership theories can be put into practice with current and emerging organisational leaders through systematic and organic leadership development. As such, there is an important link between theory, practice, and development for practice. This section outlines some of the implications of this research for leadership practice. Section 6.5.2 considers the implications of this research for the practice of organisational leadership. Section 6.5.3 considers the implication for the practice of leadership development.

6.5.2 Implications for Organisational Leadership Practice

The advancements to spiritual leadership theory proposed in Section 6.4 suggest that it may be advantageous for organisations to consider revisions to cultural and leadership practice, specifically those related to human dignity, in order to improve spiritual leadership outcomes.

Four potential advancements to practice are discussed in this section: 1) incorporating human dignity into inner life practices, 2) addressing extrinsic incentives and reward systems, 3) addressing power structures and inclusive decision-making, and 4) addressing spirituality, transcendence, and wholeness of the person.

Incorporating human dignity into the inner life practices of leaders. It has been observed that leaders sometimes filter out or ignore aspects of their inner values in the pursuit of personal and organisational objectives (Palmer, 1998; Moxley, 2000). Instrumental objectives sometimes cause leaders to lose sight of transcendent, people-oriented outcomes (Moxley, 2000). To achieve the outcomes of spiritual leadership as described by Fry (Fry, 2003), leaders may need to overcome the tendency to ignore their inner values (Palmer 1998; Moxley 2000). To overcome these tendencies, spiritual leadership theory suggests that leaders may need to incorporate reflective practices of introspection and personal value assessment as part of their inner life (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017). This research suggests these practices might benefit from the inclusion of reflection upon human dignity. In addition, organisations may find it valuable to incorporate these themes (i.e. development of the inner self) into the character development aspects of their leadership selection and training programmes (Fry and Cohen, 2009).

Addressing extrinsic incentives and reward systems. Organisational incentives and reward systems have historically been focused upon instrumental outcomes (Pink, 2009). Even though intrinsic motivation is generally considered to be more powerful than extrinsic motivation, most compensation incentives and rewards are generally required to attract and retain leaders and followers (Fry, 2003; Pink, 2009). Organisations may need to address and revise incentive and reward systems in order to find a balance of intrinsic and extrinsic motivators that are aligned with organisational values that demonstrate acknowledgement of and respect for human dignity. In order for wide-spread adoption to take place, this change to practice may also need to be promoted by advocates of the corporate social responsibility (CSR) movement. Crowther and Davila Gomez (2012), for example, have suggested that human dignity should be included in a broader structure of organisational oversight for CSR.

Power structures and inclusive decision-making. In the organisational context, leader-follower relationships are often defined by hierarchical power structures (McClelland, 1975).

This research has explored the possibility of human dignity advancements to spiritual leadership theory that could also extend to spiritual leadership practice. A key theme emerging from the research is that inclusive decision-making is an element of spiritual leadership (i.e. part of the intrinsic motivation model) that demonstrates acknowledgement of and respect for human dignity. Organisations may find it valuable to re-evaluate the conceptual design and practical operation of their power structures and hierarchies if they wish to encourage a culture that practices spiritual leadership and embraces human dignity as a cultural value. Decision-making practices and procedures should also be re-evaluated in light of the human dignity implications of this research.

Addressing spirituality, transcendence, and wholeness. Many organisations have opted to downplay the role of spirituality in the workplace (Hicks, 2003; Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, 2010; Benefiel et al, 2014). Spiritual leadership and the human dignity advancements proposed in this research would require organisational willingness to embrace the inner life of the individual as an element of leadership practice. This may, in turn, require a cultural openness to workplace spirituality and movement toward seeing employees as whole persons with ideas, values, and beliefs that transcend the boundaries of the workplace (Hicks, 2003; Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, 2010; Miller and Ewest, 2013; Benefiel et al, 2014). As a result, spiritual leadership practice that embraces the human dignity advancements proposed in this thesis may require organisations to consider and adopt new policies with respect to spirituality, transcendence, and wholeness in the workplace.

6.5.3 Implications for Leadership Development

This research proposed two advancements to spiritual leadership. To apply these advancements to the practice of organisational leadership development, organisations and leadership development consultants may find it beneficial to consider changes to their training content and processes. Three potential changes are discussed below: 1) inclusion of human dignity language and constructs into their leadership development and training programmes, 2) inclusion of mattering in leadership development programmes, and 3) inclusion of mindfulness and other practices that contribute to a healthy inner life.

Inclusion of human dignity in leadership development and training programmes. To the extent that organisations and leadership development consultants rely upon spiritual

leadership concepts in their training programmes, it may be advantageous to incorporate the elements of human dignity discussed in the research. For example, a leader in development may be encouraged to explore human dignity, inclusive decision-making, and mattering as elements of one or more professional development cycles (Bubb and Earley, 2007; O'Brocta et al, 2012; Chartered Institute of Management Accountants, 2016). Two potential challenges related to incorporating human dignity into leadership development programmes are 1) the lack of shared definition and agreement on the foundations of human dignity, as discussed in Chapter 2 (Schachter, 1983; Meyer, 1992; Pinker, 2008; Waldron, 2009; Kateb, 2011; Mattson and Clark, 2011; Shultziner and Rabinovici, 2012; McCrudden, 2013), and 2) the conceptual nature of human dignity as a metaphysical concept, which may make the topic seem impractical or too esoteric for real-world situations. To address the first challenge, organisations and leadership development consultants might find it helpful to teach about human dignity using the contested idea framework discussed in Chapter 2 (Rodriguez, 2015). This would allow individuals to disagree about the foundations of human dignity while agreeing about its existence and implications for interpersonal relationships. To address the second challenge, it may be helpful to focus on research results that have involved field-based, evidentiary studies such as those conducted by Lucas and Thomas (Lucas 2015; 2017; Thomas and Lucas, 2019), and the field research discussed in this thesis.

Inclusion of mattering in leadership development programmes. Among other themes, this research has highlighted the role of mattering in the leader-follower relationship. Mattering is the sense of importance or significance and includes the perception that one is valued and appreciated by the people around them (Rosenberg and McCullough, 1981; Dixon Rayle, 2006; Jung, 2015; Lampersky, 2018; Bucher et al, 2019; Matera et al, 2019; Reece et al, 2019). Workplace mattering refers to one's sense that they are valued and appreciated by colleagues in their place of employment. This research explored links between workplace mattering and leadership behaviours that demonstrate an acknowledgement of and respect for human dignity. It has been shown that leaders can positively impact a follower's sense of mattering by employing behaviours such as inclusive decision-making. It follows that if an organisation or leadership development consultant wants to incorporate spiritual leadership into their leadership development programmes, it may be advantageous to also include training on the links between human dignity and workplace mattering. Efforts to help followers have a sense of being known, acknowledged, and appreciated by leaders on both instrumental and non-instrumental grounds were shown in the research to be important to the

interview participants. Such behaviours contributed to the sense of belonging and the sense of being trusted, both of which were shown to contribute to the sense of dignity. As such, leadership development programmes may find it beneficial to incorporate training elements that focus on interpersonal communication, specifically the skills that help to convey a sense of care, empathy, and concern for others.

Inclusion of mindfulness and other practices that contribute to a dignity-respecting inner life.

In the initial publication of spiritual leadership, Fry suggests that leaders may be able to improve their application of spiritual leadership through spiritual practices that contribute to their ability to

“[...] know one’s self, respect and honor the beliefs of others, be as trusting as you can be, and maintain a spiritual practice (e.g. spending time in nature, prayer, meditation, reading inspirational literature, yoga, shamanistic practices, writing in a journal)” (Fry, 2003, p. 704-705).

Understanding that Fry proposed this theory seventeen years ago, we might understand his list of spiritual practices list as mindfulness practices in the contemporary context. Fry advocates for mindfulness practices among leaders as a way for them to become more aware of their present circumstances (Fry and Kriger, 2009).

Mindfulness is an area of rising interest in leadership research, but there is a lack of published results that reveal a relationship between mindfulness practices and leader capability (Baer, Smith, et al, 2006; Baer, Carmody, et al, 2012; Rupprecht et al, 2019). Some recent research is showing some promise in this regard, however. For example, workplace mindfulness training (WMT), which involves structured and sustained use of mindfulness techniques, has been shown to produce transformational change in practitioners. Related to the research published in this thesis, an interesting finding is that WMT can impact a leader’s ability to relate to others (King and Badham, 2018; Rupprecht et al, 2019). Synthesising these findings with the research findings reported in this thesis, mindfulness practice that integrates elements of human dignity might prove beneficial. It is worth noting that several of the research participants credited family upbringing, early education, and role models as key influencers on their ideas about human dignity. WMT that integrates human dignity concepts may need to draw on these life experiences to make the most of this training for leaders, and to develop a deeper sense of empathy as an aspect of emotional intelligence.

6.6 Future Research Opportunities

This research has explored several interesting and important aspects of the relationship between human dignity, spiritual leadership, and workplace well-being. This research also revealed that there is much more work to be done in this and related areas. Described below are some areas for future research that could extend our understanding of human dignity as an element of leadership theory and practice. Section 6.6.1 describes some of the areas in which this research can be directly extended. Section 6.6.2 describes some areas of research that are indirectly related to this research, but that could be advanced by it.

6.6.1 Future Opportunities - Direct Extensions of the Research

Expanding the scope to additional cultures and geographies. This research involved several intentional limitations of scope. For example, the participant community consisted of white-collar professionals, mostly living and working in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area of the United States. These limitations of scope could be expanded to include additional countries, regions, and cultures. The fact that human dignity is considered to be a ubiquitous value and social norm might suggest openness to this research in new venues (Schachter, 1983; Mattson and Clark, 2011). Similarly, spiritual leadership has been studied in several countries and types of organisations, which suggests that there might be interest in the human dignity links to the theory in additional geographies, cultures, and industries (Fry et al, 2005; Fry, Matherly, Ouimet, 2010; Ayranci and Semercioz, 2011; Bodia and Ali, 2012; Chen and Yang, 2012; Jeon et al, 2013; Malik et al, 2017; Saripudin and Rosari, 2019; Wang et al, 2019). There is significant opportunity to explore the similarities and differences of perceptions of human dignity in the leader-follower relationship within and across generational, racial, cultural, and socio-economic groups. This research provides a point-in-time view of its core themes. There is an opportunity to study these themes longitudinally to see how perceptions change or remain the same over time. Using these research findings as a starting point, there is also opportunity to explore these areas with grounded theory to establish more generalizable results.

Expanding the scope to additional workplace situations. Even though there is growing interest in human dignity as a theme of leadership research, it has not been thoroughly explored in the research literature. For example, there is an opportunity to understand the role

and perceptions of human dignity as an aspect of leadership in highly directive environments, highly hierarchical environments such as government agencies and school systems, and highly decentralised environments, such as those involving home-based and mobile workers. This research was scope-limited to participants in office-based, white-collar positions. Further research could also explore the themes in blue-collar occupations and white-collar occupations outside of traditional office settings.

Exploring the implications for traditionally overlooked or oppressed. This area for further research is inspired by comments made by F6EX101 and M2IC404. F6EX101 indicated that it was important to her sense of dignity and to her personal well-being that she matter in the workplace. In making these comments, she used the phrase “as a woman”, referring to the fact that women and others are often overlooked in the workplace and can, as a result, have a sense that they do not matter to their leaders and co-workers. Interestingly, participant F6EX101 is a senior executive that reports directly to the CEO. Her feelings might suggest that the sense of being overlooked and not mattering may not go away simply because she had reached the upper levels of the management hierarchy. In a similar way, participant M2IC404 explained during the interview that leaders have not always responded well to his sexual orientation. He appreciates his current employer because he feels known and seen in this regard. The comments by participants F6EX101 and M2IC404 suggest that there is an opportunity for additional research, perhaps in the feminist research paradigm (Blaikie, 2007; 2010), to explore the lived experiences of historically overlooked, underrepresented, and oppressed groups with these concepts of workplace mattering, human dignity, and well-being, and spiritual leadership behaviours.

Testing the cyclical advancement proposal. Figure 6-2 depicts a proposed advancement to spiritual leadership theory based on human dignity and the cyclical impact of organisational commitment, specifically the commitment to human dignity as a cultural value. This advancement is based upon interview responses that referred to the impact of role models and leaders in the formation of their inner values and attitudes about human dignity in the workplace. While this advancement fits the causal structure of spiritual leadership theory and the cyclical nature of professional development (Bubb and Earley, 2007; O’Brocta et al, 2012; Chartered Institute of Management Accountants, 2016), it has not been tested in the field.

Dignity, mattering, and leadership behaviours. Inconsistent results in field studies on workplace mattering have resulted in a call for better instruments to measure mattering (Jung, 2015), such as the Mattering to Others Questionnaire (Marshall, 2001) and the Organisational Mattering Scale (Reece et al, 2019). This research may suggest possible advancements to these instruments involving the self-perception of mattering as well as the perception of the mattering of others. There is also opportunity to explore these improvements in the context of human dignity perceptions and lived experiences.

The role of leader inner life. It has been suggested that leaders are sometimes out of touch with their inner values and attitudes in the workplace (Palmer, 1998; Moxley, 2000). As an area for future research, there is opportunity to explore the personal, cultural, and relational underpinnings of this pattern. Is it, for example, a wilful rejection? Does it have roots in cultural norms? There is an opportunity to investigate the relationship between inner life and leader behaviours, framed by the ideas and lived experience of human dignity as an inner value.

Interaction of calling and membership. Saripudin and Rosari (2019) suggest that calling and membership are not equal contributors to well-being in a spiritual leadership environment. Further, this research revealed that calling and membership are not perfectly independent as aspects of workplace well-being. These observations raise interesting questions about the relationship between calling and membership as intermediate outcomes of spiritual leadership in general. The relationship between these two intermediate outcomes may be more nuanced and complex than described in the current theory formulation. There is opportunity to explore calling and membership in more detail, specifically their respective connections to human dignity.

Perceived dignity violations involving higher-order needs. Using the lens of spiritual leadership, there is an opportunity to explore the impact of perceived dignity violations in the workplace. This might involve an emphasis on the tendency to ignore or mask inner values and attitudes about the value and worth of human beings. It might include experiences with discouragement, demotivation, and turnover as potential outcomes of dignity violations. Additionally, such research could explore dignity violations perceived by historically overlooked or oppressed groups such as females and ethnic minorities. Such research could

pay specific attention to the sense of mattering and perceptions of inclusive decision-making by these groups.

Dignity and inclusion in information-constrained environments. The research findings suggest a link between the perception of dignity in the workplace and inclusive decision-making. Information-controlled environments, such as those involving classified or personally identifiable information (PII) might be a challenge to inclusive decision-making. In some cases, leaders may have to choose between sharing sensitive information about individuals and choosing to involve a colleague in an important decision about those individuals. There is an apparent tension here regarding the dignity of those involved with decisions and those whose data is involved in those decisions. The concept of human dignity may provide new opportunities to explore the role and structure of organisational “need to know” policies.

Ill-defined, unexplored, and contested themes. This research has involved several areas that lack universal definitions and general agreement on foundations: altruistic love, employee well-being, human dignity, mattering, spirituality at work, and stakeholder theory etc. Given the complexity of human relationships, such ambiguity may be inevitable. Even so, this ambiguity offers valuable points of entry for on-going research in and beyond the context of this thesis.

Inclusive decision-making and employee voice. The research has explored a link between dignity and inclusive decision-making. There may be value in extending this exploration to employee voice research, which has largely focused on labour relations (Freeman et al, 2007; Mowbray et al, 2015). Employee voice practices are often well-received by managers because of the potential for positive, instrumental outcomes. They are not always received well by labour, because they can sometimes be perceived to increase the power-distance between management and labour (Wilkinson et al, 2004; Viveros et al, 2018). Inclusive decision-making as a leadership behaviour might offer a new and helpful approach to employee voice that introduces the idea of human dignity into the dialogue.

Mattering as the perceived experience of dignity honoured. Mattering in the workplace, and its connection to perceived human dignity and leadership behaviours is open for much more research. For example, Jung (2015) argues that there is a “dearth of research explaining work mattering with specific groups” (p. 204). Citing inconsistent results in field studies related to

matter at work, she has also called for the advancement of psychometrically valid instruments for measuring mattering. What does it mean to “matter” to someone else, to an organisation, or even to oneself? Like human dignity and well-being, the word “mattering” is ill-defined and broadly used in various contexts. And yet, to perceive oneself to matter is an important aspect of self-esteem and self-perception (Jung, 2015). As proposed by Jung (2015), one aspect of this work might involve the further development and testing of psychometrically valid instruments for assessing mattering such as the Mattering to Others Questionnaire (Marshall, 2001) and the Organizational Mattering Scale (Reece et al, 2019). There is an opportunity to understand and improve these instruments in the context of human dignity, workplace well-being, and leadership behaviours. Specifically, additional research might consider how mattering scales can be improved and updated with an element of human dignity.

Advancement of the Workplace Dignity Scale. Lucas and Thomas have undertaken multiple quantitative studies of human dignity in the workplace and, specifically, in the leader-follower relationship (Lucas 2015; 2017; Thomas and Lucas, 2019). The Lucas team has been developing a human dignity assessment for the workplace that could be applied to the domain of inner values and attitudes that are expressed in specific leadership behaviours. The assessment addresses tangible matters associated with workplace indignities, such as those related to perceived dirty work and income insufficiency (Thomas and Lucas, 2019). In addition to these tangible matters, it also includes elements related to organisational respect and meaningfulness of work that might have more direct application to the study of spiritual leadership or the 4th generation leadership models (Fairholm, 2011).

6.6.2 Future Opportunities - Indirect Extensions of the Research

Workplace spirituality and wholeness of the individual. Workplace spirituality, expressions of the inner life, and the exploration of religious ideas in the secular workplace have often been off-limits in the business research community (Hicks, 2003; Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, 2010; Benefiel et al, 2014). As new leadership theories lean toward well-being and wholeness of the human person, this gap may become more pronounced. Given the results of this research, the exploration of human dignity as an aspect of workplace spirituality and one’s sense of wholeness as an individual represents an opportunity for future research.

Connections to positive leadership theory. There are strong conceptual connections between positive leadership theory and spiritual leadership theory. For example, positive leadership asserts that a leader is responsible to create, among other things, positive meaning for followers (Cameron, 2008). In spite of these links and in spite of the fact that these are contemporaneous theories, they make no mention of each other in the literature. This notable gap is an opportunity to compare and contrast the two theories, their underlying assumptions, and to examine possible areas for collaboration in theory and practice.

Exploring connections with research on compassion in the workplace. The outward behaviours that reflect the inner value of human dignity may be displayed in many ways in the workplace. Some of those behaviours might be interpreted by colleagues as compassion. Worline and Dutton frame compassion as the inward attitudes and outward actions that help alleviate suffering in the workplace (Worline and Dutton, 2017). Their argument is that suffering is a common experience in the workplace due to “downsizing, restructuring, change processes, stress of heavy workloads, performance pressure, feeling devalued, disrespectful interactions, and other organizational sources” as well as other personal problems that weigh on the minds of workers (Worline and Dutton, 2017, p. 8). They encourage leadership practices that promote compassion by emphasizing that members of an organisation are worthy of compassion (i.e. those organisational members have value) and are members of a larger shared humanity. Overall, views and experiences of the executive participants in this research were consistent with the views and experiences of the mid-managers and individual contributors. There is opportunity to integrate the themes of human dignity and compassion in the leader-follower relationship that may advance research in all three areas.

The psychology of mattering in the leader-follower relationship. The perception of being known and seen, two key elements of mattering, can vary greatly from person to person. This leads to a third area for further research: the psychology of workplace mattering. This is a broad area that might include exploration of the role of psychological disorders as well as positive psychology. For example, are there people in the workplace, that consider themselves to be more important than they actually are? Someone with Narcissistic Personality Disorder (NPD), for example, might experience an inappropriate level of self-importance in the workplace. What are the implications for spiritual leadership with respect to the mattering, dignity, and well-being of these individuals and those with whom they work? Someone with NPD may, for example, sense that they are not given enough attention

when in fact their behaviour leads them to getting even more attention than others. Narcissism may prevent someone from being able to demonstrate altruistic love to another which may make them incapable of practicing spiritual leadership behaviours (Brouns et al, 2020). As another consideration of the need to matter in the workplace, further research may also explore psychological manipulation that has been raised by Bolton (2010) as a concern about spiritual leadership. Can our need to matter be manipulated and, if so, what controls should be considered to manage the risk of abuse? Looking at the idea of being known and seen from a more positive viewpoint, Schein and Schein (2018) propose a model of “humble leadership” that might also be helpful for further research into workplace mattering as an element of the leader-follower relationship. In their model, they encourage leaders to consider employees not simply as people in professionally distant roles, but as “whole people”. This process, which they call “personisation,” involves leaders developing personal relationships with followers around shared goals and experiences, two ideas that are closely related to the intrinsic motivation model of spiritual leadership (Fry, 2003; Fry and Slocum, 2008; Fry and Cohen, 2009; Fry, Matherly, and Ouimet, 2010; Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013; Fry, Latham, et al, 2017) and also to the “whole person” aspect of research in the field of spirituality at work (Hicks, 2003; Paloutzian et al, 2010; Miller and Ewest, 2013; Benefiel et al, 2014).

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Appendix

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A. Request for Ethics Approval



Request for ethical approval for research undertaken by staff, post-graduate research and post-graduate professional students

Please submit your completed form to the chair of your college research ethics committee (CREC)

Your Name	John W. Kyle	
College	Business, Law and Social Science	
College Research Ethics Committee		
Staff ID		
Student ID	100351041	
Unimail address	j.kyle1@unimail.derby.ac.uk	
Programme name / code	PhD	
Name of supervisor(s)	Tracey Wond	
Title of proposed research study		
An exploration of human dignity as a foundation for spiritual leadership theory.		
Background information		
Has this research been funded by an external organisation (e.g. a research council or public sector body) or internally (such as the RLTF fund)? If yes, please provide details.	No	
Have you submitted previous requests for ethical approval to the Committee that relate to this research project? If yes please provide details.	No	
Are other research partners involved in the proposed research? If yes please provide details.	No	
Signatures		
The information supplied is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, accurate. I clearly understand my obligations and the rights of the participants. I agree to act at all times in accordance with University of Derby Policy and Code of Practice on Research Ethics: http://www.derby.ac.uk/research/uod/ethics/		
Signature of applicant	Signature removed for privacy	
Date of submission by applicant	June 4, 2018	
Signature of supervisor (if applicable)		
Date of signature by supervisor (if applicable)		
<i>For Committee Use</i> Reference Number (Subject area initials/year/ID number)		
Date received	Date considered	
Committee decision	Signed	



1. What is the aim of your study? What are the objectives for your study?

The overall aim of this doctoral project is to explore the connections between human dignity and the theory of spiritual leadership as proposed by Fry (2003). This effort involves the exploration of theoretical and philosophical connections as well as phenomenological connections experienced by leaders and followers in workplace settings. Ultimately, an objective of this doctoral project is to recommend, as a unique contribution to the field, an advancement to the theory of spiritual leadership that explicitly incorporates human dignity.

In support of these general aims and objectives, this study aims to gather and analyse primary, perceptual data from participants (regarding human dignity and spiritual leadership), in order to identify and evaluate points of synthesis between human dignity and spiritual leadership as experienced by leaders and followers in various work environments. Three objectives have been identified for this research aim:

1. Identify and summarise perceptions of human dignity concepts (formal and colloquial) held by leaders and followers in various work environments.
2. Identify and summarise perceptions of spiritual leadership theory concepts held by leaders and followers in various work environments.
3. Critically evaluate, compare, and contrast explicit and implicit links between human dignity and spiritual leadership as experienced perceptually and semantically by leaders and followers in various work environments.

2. Explain the rationale for this study (refer to relevant research literature in your response).

The concept of human dignity is broadly accepted by most people groups as a core social construct and expression of human value (Schachter, 1983). It is a normative principle in western society and encapsulated in many national and international laws (Riley, 2010). In spite of its ubiquity, the meaning and application of human dignity is the subject of much debate. The philosophical constructs and anthropological legacy of human dignity are not familiar to the typical management practitioner and can be difficult to understand and apply. The lack of a universally agreed definition is one of the key challenges facing researchers in the human dignity domain.

Management researchers have made some attempts to explore human dignity in the workplace (Abrams, 2002; Ackroyd, 2007; Bolton, 2007, 2010; Coats, 2007; Hodson, 2001; Philpott, 2007; Sayer, 2007; Vettori, 2012). These efforts have primarily focused on unionisation, worker's rights and practical workplace matters such as safety and compensation. Some work has also been done to explore human dignity in specific occupational fields, such as health care. Very little, however, has been done to explore the connections between human dignity and *leadership* studies. To address this gap, this investigation intends to identify, describe and critically reflect upon the philosophical and phenomenological (i.e. lived experiences and perceptions) connections between human dignity and the theory of spiritual leadership. Further, an intended outcome of the research is to propose advancements to the theory of spiritual leadership based on its implicit assumptions of human dignity. The study will primarily focus on the theory of spiritual leadership as defined and developed by Fry (2003) but will also



include elements of an ethics-based theory of spiritual leadership developed by Fairholm (2011). Three promising connections will be explored: altruistic love and mutual flourishing, wholeness of the human person, and service to others as a reflection of perceived worth.

A comprehensive literature review and corresponding critical analysis will provide the basis for the theoretical connections (Saunders et al, 2007) between human dignity and spiritual leadership in the workplace context. The literature review will identify current and past work in the field, identify gaps in the research, and build a conceptual framework for understanding the perceptual connections gathered during the research phase of this project (Easterby-Smith et al, 2008). An exploration of the theoretical connections between human dignity and spiritual leadership would be interesting in itself, but such a study would be incomplete without investigation of the perceived and lived experiences of real people. Kvale and Brinkmann (2009), Maxwell (2012), and Seidman (2013) suggest that to grasp the lived experiences of others, researchers cannot rely solely on numerical data gathering. Instead, they argue, researchers must gather contextual, phenomenological data through other means such as in-depth interviews. Such interviews allow participants to describe lived experiences from their own perspectives, which, in turn, allow the human story to be uncovered (Seidman, 2013). So, a purpose of this research initiative is to describe and explore phenomenological connections between human dignity and spiritual leadership, by gathering and analysing interview data involving the perceptions and lived experiences of participants. Even though the concepts of human dignity and leadership have application in virtually all aspects of human social life, this investigation is focused on the specific context of the workplace. Exploring the perceptual connections between human dignity and spiritual leadership will require interaction with leaders and followers (i.e. participants) in the workplace (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009; Seidman, 2013). To gather and analyse these perceptual connections, it is proposed that interaction with participants will be through face-to-face, in-depth, phenomenological (Seidman, 2013) interviews.

This research initiative seeks to pursue the following research questions:

1. What research and scholarly groundwork has been done that connects human dignity as a metaphysical concept to the theory or practice of leadership?
2. What conceptual and theoretical connections can be critically identified between human dignity and Fry's theory of spiritual leadership (Fry, 2003)?
3. What perceptions and lived experiences do leaders and followers have with the ideas and concepts of human dignity and spiritual leadership?
4. What conclusions about these perceptions and lived experiences can be made for groups and subgroups of leaders and followers?
5. Based on the research findings and conclusions, what advancements can be made to the theory of spiritual leadership that incorporates the metaphysical concept of human dignity?

3. Provide an outline of your study design and methods.

Research Design

Research Strategy. This investigation will follow the inductive research strategy (Blaikie 2007, 2010) that begins by gathering data. Once gathered, the data is analysed. The product of the analysis consists of one or more



generalisations about the people and relationships studied. The inductive research strategy is suited to this investigation for four reasons which are supported by the fact that this is the first study of its kind and that no data currently exists to inform a starting point for the study. First, very little work has been done previously to connect the theories of human dignity with the theory of spiritual leadership. As such, there is no existing data from which to form a credible hypothesis that may be tested using the deductive strategy. Second, the iterative theory testing of the abductive strategy also assumes that the initial findings will result in a theory worthy of iterative testing. Without initial data, this approach presents risks that are unwarranted for an initial study. Until an initial set of data can be gathered, the abductive strategy should be held for a future investigation. Third, the retroductive strategy is not appropriate for this investigation. The underlying mechanisms of human dignity have been disputed for centuries. It is unrealistic that this investigation will resolve centuries-old arguments about the nature and underlying mechanisms of human dignity sufficiently to form and test a single model of it. In addition, the retroductive strategy begins with an "observed regularity" (Blaikie, 2007). Since this is the first study of its kind, there is no observed regularity from which to launch the investigation. Fourth, the inductive strategy logically fits the situation. There is no existing data, but there is opportunity to acquire observations from participants via in-depth interviews. From these observations basic generalisations can be formed to answer the foundational, exploratory, and "what" questions of this investigation.

Theoretical Considerations of the In-depth Interview Method. In this investigation, data gathering will be through in-depth interviews with leaders and followers in the workplace. Seidman proposes the purpose of in-depth interviews "is not to test hypotheses, and not to 'evaluate' as the term is normally used. At the root of in-depth interviewing is an interest in understanding the lived experience of other people and the meaning they make of that experience." (Seidman, 2013, p.9). He goes on to suggest, "At the heart of interviewing research is an interest in other individuals' stories, because they are of worth." Remembering that Kant (1785, 1797) equates human dignity with human worth, it is fitting for this study to employ a research methodology that itself is rooted in an appreciation of human worth. In addition, Seidman (2013) and Kvale and Brinkman (2009) argue that it is this notion of human worth that should inspire a researcher to develop his or her craft as an interviewer.

Easterby-Smith et al (2008) and Saunders et al (2007) propose three categories of interviews: *structured* (consisting of pre-defined, questionnaire-style questions), *semi-structured* (consisting of open-ended questions, some of which may be omitted or asked out of order), and *unstructured* (consisting of no pre-defined interview questions). Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) and Seidman (2013) use the term in-depth and semi-structured interchangeably to indicate that the interviews will consist of pre-determined, open-ended and conversational questions. In addition, in-depth and semi-structured refer to the investigator having the flexibility to ask questions out of order and to ask an unlimited number and range of ad hoc follow-up questions. This investigation will follow this definition and use the term "in-depth".

Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) contrast the practice of in-depth interviewing with structured interviews and questionnaires. The latter approach, they argue, is aligned with a positivist paradigm. The former approach, on the other hand, is consistent with a research paradigm chosen for its ability to produce social knowledge. As a result, the investigator and participant form a social, conversational and "reflexive" (Hammersley and Atkinson,



2007, p. 16-22) relationship that is “contextual, linguistic, narrative, and pragmatic” (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009, p. 18). Similarly, Seidman (2013) recommends the use of “open-ended questions” along with conversational exploration of the participants’ responses to those questions. The goal of this method is phenomenological (Seidman, 2013) in that it is intended to reveal and explore the lived experiences of the participants as well as the meaning they make of those experiences. Schütz (1967) refers to this as the “subjective understanding” of the participant.

The risk of in-depth interviewing is that, if not managed well, the data gathered during the interview will be disorganised and muddled which, in turn, would hinder the investigator’s ability to perform thorough analysis. To prevent this situation, and in the spirit of good interviewing craft, this investigation will follow a seven-stage approach to interviewing: 1) thematising, 2) designing, 3) interviewing, 4) transcribing, 5) analysing, 6) verifying, and 7) reporting (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009).

Thematic Interview Design and Base Questions. Thematising the interview involves the formulation of preliminary research questions based on the themes of the investigation (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009). These preliminary, or base, questions are then developed further within the context of each interview as needed by the investigator (Jones, 1985). This approach requires the investigator to be very familiar with the topic and themes of the research (Easterby-Smith et al, 2008; Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009). The interviews for this investigation will consist of a set of thematic, base questions upon which the investigator can develop additional and follow-up questions depending on the situation and direction of each interview. The interview questions are attached as Interview Questions.

Data Collection

Introduction and General Plan of Data Gathering. The primary method of data collection for this study will be in-depth interviews. As noted above, the interviews will use a system of base questions. The investigator will have the option to ask planned, ad hoc, and follow-up questions during each interview. The interviews will be in-person and one-to-one, in a private meeting space in locations convenient to the participants. Audio recordings will be made of the interviews and the investigator will also take notes to capture non-verbal communication and other impressions at the time of the interview. The intent is to complete approximately forty interviews over a six-month period. Additional interviews will be added as needed, using the snowball sampling approach (Easterby-Smith et al, 2008; Saunders et al, 2007). The interviews will begin within a month of confirmation from the university ethics review board.

Design of the Instrument. Each interview will last approximately 60-minutes. The participant will be asked the base interview questions described in Section 4.3, and may be asked additional follow-up and ad hoc questions. The participant will be given a packet of materials to read and sign at the outset of the interview including: 1) a participation release form, 2) a participant description form that contains demographic questions, 3) a biographical description of the investigator, and 4) a summary of the interview process. The participant will be asked to read the packet, sign the release, and complete the forms at the beginning of the interview. An audio recording of the interview will be made. The investigator will keep notes about nonverbal communications and any other relevant



observations.

Method of Transcription. With forty 60-minute interviews, there will be up to 2,400 minutes of interview audio recordings contained in mp3 files. It is estimated that each session will contain five minutes of irrelevant audio content, for example while the participant is reading and filling out forms. Irrelevant audio content will not be included in the transcript of each session. This reduces the estimated relevant recording time to approximately 2,200 minutes. It is the intent of the investigator to purchase transcription support software, such as Express Scribe from NCH Software (NCH Software, 2016). Even with the use of software, transcription of the interviews will require approximately 60 hours to complete. For the sake of expediency, the investigator may use a transcription service.

Data Reduction and Analysis

Introduction. Analysis of natural language, in-depth interviews can be difficult. The volume of data combined with the complexity and subtlety of verbal and nonverbal language makes the analysis of qualitative data challenging. In order to extract meaning from the text, the investigator must code and condense the text (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009). Coding and condensation are used to form a manageable structure upon which analysis can be performed. Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) propose a hermeneutic approach to analyse the language, the discourse in the language, and the meaning derived from the two. Coding involves the application of thematic keywords to sentences and text sections that will be used in a later stage of the analysis process. Data-driven coding, as opposed to concept-driven coding, will be used in this investigation since no pre-existing data is available from which to construct, a priori, conceptual codes (Gibbs, 2007). In addition to coding, the text will be condensed into "meaning units" that can further simplify the process of analysing the text (Giorgi, 1975). Meaning units are textual simplifications of the thematic points discussed by the participant. Coding and condensation allow an investigator to analyse the interview text with an eye for both the "letter and spirit of intent" (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009). Software such as Atlas.ti (Atlas.it, 2016) or NVivo (QSR International, 2016) will be used to support and simplify the more tedious aspects of coding and condensation.

Analysis of Meaning. In the analysis of meaning of interview text, Kvale and Brinkmann (2009, p. 207) indicate the investigator "goes beyond what is directly said to work out structures and relations of meanings not immediately apparent in the text." In so doing, the investigator places the de-contextualised coding and text into the broader context of the research goals and objectives. In the work of analysis, the investigator's presuppositions may lead to a specific interpretation of the text even though that interpretation may differ with interpretations offered by other researchers viewing the same text. In the realist paradigm, there is room for multiple interpretations of the text (Maxwell, 2012). The burden is on the investigator to keep an open mind to alternative meanings. Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) distinguish between *biased subjectivity*, which results from "sloppy and unreliable work" (p. 213) and *perspectival subjectivity*, which results from rigorous, open-minded interpretive analysis.

Analysis of Language. In-depth interviews involve human language, which consists of verbal and non-verbal language, complex communications patterns, colloquial speech, "filler" words (e.g. "um"), and other complexities. Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) suggest that hermeneutical language analysis has three primary components:



linguistic analysis, narrative analysis, and discourse analysis. Each of these forms of analysis is intended to provide insight into the meaning and intent of the participant's answers to questions. Linguistic analysis deals with the grammar and linguistic forms and may involve the examination of "active and passive voice, personal and impersonal pronouns, temporal and spatial references, implied speaker and listener positions, and the use of metaphors." (p. 220). The focus of conversation analysis is the back-and-forth of human interaction (Garfinkel, 1967). By focusing on the pattern of "turn-taking" between the investigator and the participant, the analysis can reveal areas of emphasis, frustration, and interest on the part of the speaker. Conversation analysis is perceived by some (Parker, 2005) to be too subjective to be of value and others warn that its complexity can lead to interpretive errors (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009). Narrative analysis focuses on the stories that are told by participants. Seidman (2013) emphasises the concept of story as the essence of the interviewing methodology. The essence of narrative analysis is to focus on characters, plot, and genre (Saunders et al, 2007). It can also involve the analysis of chronology, specifically when the participant places him/herself into the story line. Parker (2005, p. 88) describes discourse as "the organisation of language into certain kinds of social bonds." In discourse analysis, the intent is to determine how language is used to establish and break social bonds. Discourse analysis is most often associated with a subjectivist ontology (Saunders et al, 2007) and postmodern relativism (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009). There is room for discourse analysis in the realist paradigm, however, since mental structures are considered to be real (i.e. conversationally constructed social bonds).

Generalisation. It is widely held that case-based, in-depth interviews do not produce research results that are broadly generalisable (Blaikie, 2007; Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009; Saunders, et al, 2007; Seidman, 2013). However, some researchers allow that by closely relating the investigation to an existing theory, qualitative research results of this type can be used to establish a foundation for theory advancement (Bryman, 1988; Marshall and Rossman, 1999; Yin, 2003). This is the intent of the fifth research question: *Based on the research findings and conclusions, what advancements can be made to the theory of spiritual leadership that incorporates the metaphysical concept of human dignity?*

4. If appropriate, please provide a detailed description of the study sample, covering selection, sample profile, recruitment and inclusion and exclusion criteria.

Participant selection will follow the purposive sampling approach (Saunders et al, 2007; Silverman, 2010). Approximately twenty participants will be chosen from each of two case organisations, one a faith-based nonprofit and one a secular nonprofit. Approximately ten leaders/managers and ten individual contributors will be chosen from each case organisation, representing a range of ages, years of work experience and gender. Following the suggestion of Easterby-Smith et al (2008), the investigator will develop a list of target case organisations with whom he has personal or professional contacts at the senior executive level. While the investigator may secure formal access at the executive level, he may find it difficult to convince individuals to participate. To overcome these challenges, the investigator will employ all of the strategies recommended by Saunders et al (2007) for gaining both formal and informal access: 1) allowing sufficient time to gain access, 2) using existing contacts at the formal and informal levels, 3) providing a clear description of the purpose and type of access required,



<p>4) addressing any organisational concerns that are raised, 5) highlighting possible benefits to the organisation, using case-appropriate language, and establishing credibility.</p>
<p>5. Are payments or rewards/incentives going to be made to the participants? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If so, please give details.</p>
<p>6. Please indicate how you intend to address each of the following ethical considerations in your study. If you consider that they do not relate to your study please say so. Guidance to completing this section of the form is provided at the end of the document.</p> <p>a. Consent All participants will be asked to read and sign a consent form, which is attached as the Participant Consent Form. All participants will be at least 18 years of age. Prior to interviewing the participants, permission will be granted by their respective employers. This permission form is attached as the Location Consent Form.</p> <p>b. Deception Neither overt nor covert deception will be used in this study.</p> <p>c. Debriefing Participants will be given a short oral debriefing at the conclusion of the interview. The text for this debriefing is attached as Debriefing Summary. In addition, participants will be given the opportunity to ask questions about the study and to discuss the interview upon completion. Participants will be asked not to discuss their interview until all interviews have been completed at their workplace location to prevent interference and biasing of other participants.</p> <p>d. Withdrawal from the investigation Participants will be allowed to leave the interview at any time, with or without explanation on their part. They will also be permitted to remove the transcript of their interview from the study dataset up to the date that data analysis begins. The participant will be given an approximate date on which the data analysis will begin. Participants will be given the interviewer's email and mobile number as the best means to communicate their desires in this regard.</p> <p>e. Confidentiality Confidentiality and anonymity of participants will be respected. All participants will receive a confidentiality agreement signed by the investigator. Anonymisation techniques will be used to protect personally identifiable information (PII) of the participants. Other than for administrative purposes (e.g. identifying and scheduling participants within the participating organizations), participant PII will not be conveyed as part of this study</p> <p>f. Protection of participants This study will not engage any participant in activities that will cause physical, psychological, or other harm beyond that experienced in normal life. The questions are of subjects that are considered "normal life" issues in the workplace context. In the highly unlikely case that the participant exhibits signs of psychological or emotional distress during the interview, the investigator will discontinue the interview immediately. The interviews will be conducted at the participant's place of work. Should an unexpected, safety-related event (e.g. fire alarm) disrupt the interview, the investigator will follow the protocol of the</p>



host site and reschedule the interview with the participant at a later date.

g. Observation research

This study involves in-depth interviews only. The investigator may, as appropriate to the interview, make observations of the participants nonverbal communication. Otherwise, there will be no overt or covert observation of the participants.

h. Giving advice

The stance of the investigator is exclusively that of faithful reporter and mediator of languages (Blaikie, 2010). As noted in the Participant Consent Form and as a matter of good interview craft (Kvale and Brinkman, 2009; Seidman, 2013), the investigator will refrain from advising and/or directing the participant in any way.

i. Research undertaken in public places

The interviews will be completed in private meeting rooms at the workplace of the participants.

j. Data protection

The participant will be informed, via the attached Participant Information Sheet, the nature and aims of the study. Participants will be informed of how the information will be gathered (e.g. by audio recording and then transcribed), analyzed, and summarized. They will be fully informed about the length of time data will be retained. They will be given the bio and contact information of the investigator.

The investigator will not intentionally gather personal information of participants other than that required for this study and allowed within the terms of the Participant Consent Form. Should the participant provide additional personal information to the investigator (e.g. during the course of an interview), the investigator will do nothing with such information. Other than for administrative purposes (e.g. identifying and scheduling participants within the participating organizations), participant PII will not be conveyed as part of this study. Information gathered during this study will be anonymized and will remain on an encrypted data storage platform. Anonymized data will be kept indefinitely and will only be used for research purposes. Consent forms and anonymization keys will be stored separately. Information gathered from participants that choose to withdraw from the study will be destroyed, assuming they withdraw within the notice period.

k. Animal Rights

No animals will be involved in this study.

l. Environmental protection

The environmental impact of this study is minimal. Paper will be used for notetaking and for the various forms. The investigator must travel to the location of the interviews. Whenever possible, the interviewer will complete multiple interviews in each site visit to minimize the carbon footprint related to travel.

Are there other ethical implications that are additional to this list? Yes No

7. Have / do you intend to request ethical approval from any other body/organisation? Yes No
If 'Yes' – please give details

8. Do you intend to publish your research? Yes No .
If 'Yes', what are your publication plans?



In addition to publishing the research in thesis form, the investigator will pursue publication of the findings in various leadership journals such as Leadership Quarterly, Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion, and the Humanistic Management Journal. The investigator may, depending on resources, also pursue publication and presentation of these findings at various leadership conferences, such as those associated with Association of Management (AOM) and the International Leadership Association. Finally, the investigator will pursue various lecture and colloquia opportunities at universities.

9. Have you secured access and permissions to use any resources that you may require? (e.g. psychometric scales, equipment, software, laboratory space). Yes No .
If Yes, please provide details.

The investigator will use off-the-shelf software to obtain digital audio recordings, transcription support, and hermeneutical analysis support. These software packages have not yet been acquired.

10. Have the activities associated with this research project been risk-assessed? Yes No

Which of the following have you appended to this application?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Focus group questions | <input type="checkbox"/> Psychometric scales |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Self-completion questionnaire (demographics) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Interview questions |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other debriefing material | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Covering letter for participants |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Information sheet about your research study | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Informed consent forms for participants |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Location consent form | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (please describe) |
| | Investigator Bio and Contact Sheet |
| | References Sheet for CREC |

PLEASE SUBMIT THIS APPLICATION WITH ALL APPROPRIATE DOCUMENTATION

B. Ethics Approval Letter

College of Business, Law & Social Sciences
Kedleston Road, Derby
DE22 1GB, UK

T: +44 (0)1332 590500

John Kyle
Doctoral Student
University of Derby

12th June 2018

Dear John

Re: An exploration of human dignity as a foundation for spiritual leadership theory

This letter is to confirm that your research (as subject line above) has received ethical approval by Chairs Action on behalf of the College of Business, Law and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee.

Note: should your research evolve and further ethical considerations arise you will need to submit an amended ethical application.

Yours sincerely

Signature removed for privacy

Dr Polina Baranova PhD FHEA CMgr MCMI

Senior Lecturer in Strategic Management
Chair of College of Business, Law and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee
University of Derby
Kedleston Road
Derby
DE22 1GB
Tel: 01332 591192
Email: P.Baranova@derby.ac.uk

Vice-Chancellor Professor Kathryn Mitchell
Incorporated in England as a charitable limited company
Registration no 3079282

C. Base Interview Questions

These are the base interview questions. Each participant was asked every numbered question. Most participants were asked the lettered “potential follow-up” questions, depending on their answers to the numbered questions (e.g. the follow-up questions may not have been necessary). As a semi-structured interview, the researcher also asked some participants various *ad hoc* questions not listed here.

Introductory Questions

1. Tell me about yourself – your role here, how long you’ve worked here.
2. Tell me about your work before you worked here.

Theme 1: Perceptions of human dignity. The initial theme of the interview focused on the participants’ perceptions of and experiences with human dignity with the following base questions:

1. In your own words, please define human dignity.
2. Please explain how this idea of human dignity has been formed for you? Where did it come from?
3. Are there words or phrases that you use interchangeably with “human dignity”?
4. Is it possible for a person to lose their human dignity or have it taken away from them or is human dignity something that cannot be taken away no matter what happens to us? Please explain your answer.
 - a. Potential follow-up for those that believe HD can be taken away: In your experience, what are some ways human dignity can be taken away from a person in the workplace? Please explain your answer.
 - b. Potential follow-up for those that do not believe HD can be taken away (including those that believe HD is a bogus concept): In your experience, what is the difference between the idea of human dignity and the idea of respect? Can someone lose respect for another person and, if so, what does it mean to you when it happens? Please explain your answer.
5. In your own experience, does the concept or experience of human dignity come into play at work? If so, can you describe one or two examples of human dignity – either its acknowledgement or its denial – in the workplace. These situations may or may not involve you or this employer directly.

Theme 2: Perceptions of spiritual leadership. The second theme focused on the components of spiritual leadership. While the words “spiritual” and “leadership” are common and have colloquial understanding, it is not expected that participants will be familiar with

Fry's theory of spiritual leadership (Fry, 2003). As such, this section does not focus on spiritual leadership by name, but instead on the central concepts of the theory, namely shared vision, hope/faith, altruistic love, meaning, and membership. The base questions for this theme are:

1. Do you find your work to be personally meaningful to you? Please explain.
 - a. Potential follow-up question: What aspects of your work do you find most and least meaningful? Please explain.
 - b. Potential follow-up question: What aspects of your work provide you with the deepest sense of purpose? Please explain.
 - c. Potential follow-up question: What aspects of the culture of the organisation, your current one or a previous one, contribute to or detract most from your sense of meaning at work. Please explain.
2. Do you feel a sense of membership, or belonging, in your workplace? Please explain.
 - a. Potential follow-up question: What aspects of your work do you find contribute most and detract most from your sense of membership in the workplace? Please explain.

Theme 3: Integrative concept questions. The essence of this research is the connection between human dignity and spiritual leadership. The first two interview themes are intended to set the stage for this integrative theme. The base questions for this theme are:

1. In your experience, what are some of the traits of successful leaders?
2. What are some things a leader can do in an organisation that contributes most to your personal sense of dignity?
3. What are some things a leader can do in an organisation that most detract from your personal sense of dignity?
4. Please describe an experience you have had, as a leader or a follower, in this organisation or a previous one, in which you played a role in crafting a shared vision (i.e. for an organisation, a team, a product, a project, etc.). In this context, shared vision refers to situations in which the leaders and the followers identified shared outcomes and directions. Shared vision, shared objectives, and shared direction can be specific, general, or both.
5. Did you feel valued during this experience? Please explain.
6. Did anything about this experience contribute to your personal sense of human dignity? Please explain.
7. Did anything about this experience contribute to your sense of the human dignity of others? Please explain?
8. Please describe an experience you have had, as a leader or a follower, in this organisation or a previous one, with the sense of hope that your efforts in the organisation or project, would have a significant positive impact on the results.
9. Did you feel valued during this experience? Please explain.

10. Did anything about this experience contribute to your personal sense of human dignity? Please explain.
11. Did anything about this experience contribute to your sense of the human dignity of others? Please explain?
12. Please describe an experience you have had, as a leader or a follower, in this organisation or a previous one, with a sense of loving and/or serving others. For example, how did the sense of serving others make you feel about yourself and your work?
13. Did you feel valued during this experience? Please explain.
14. Did anything about this experience contribute to your sense of human dignity? Please explain.
15. Did anything about this experience contribute to your sense of the human dignity of others? Please explain?

D. Participant Information List

Participant Information List – Individual Contributor

Participant ID	Gender	Age	Race/Ethnicity	Religious Affiliation	Ed. Level	Employer-Type	Employer-Industry	Employer-Size	Role	Function
F2IC403	F	25	White	Christian	B	Nonprofit	Graduate medical school	100-499	Individual contributor	Program coordinator
M2IC301	M	26	White		M	Nonprofit	Higher education admin. services	25-99	Individual contributor	Residential life professional
F3IC105	F	27	White		B	For profit	Global data services	100-499	Individual contributor	Human resources professional
F3IC303	F	28	White		B	Nonprofit	Higher education admin. services	25-99	Individual contributor	Magazine editor
F2IC401	F	29	Latino	None	B	Nonprofit	Graduate medical school	100-499	Individual contributor	Program coordinator
M2IC404	M	34	Asian	Agnostic	B	Nonprofit	Graduate medical school	100-499	Individual contributor	Program coordinator
F3IC402	F	37	Black	Protestant	M	Nonprofit	Graduate medical school	100-499	Individual contributor	Program coordinator
M5IC104	M	37	Caucasian		M	For profit	Global data services	100-499	Individual contributor	Customer support professional
M3IC304	M	42	White	Christian	D	Nonprofit	Higher education admin. services	25-99	Individual contributor	Departmental team leader
F4IC103	F	51	African American		M	For profit	Global data services	100-499	Individual contributor	Human resources professional

Participant Information List – Mid-level Manager

Participant ID	Gender	Age	Race/ Ethnicity	Religious Affiliation	Ed. Level	Employer- Type	Employer-Industry	Employer- Size	Role	Function
F3MM305	F	30	White	Christian	M	Nonprofit	Higher education admin. services	25-99	Mid-level manager	Human resources manager
M3MM106	M	37	Caucasian		M	For profit	Global data services	100-499	Mid-level manager	Product team manager
M4MM201	M	40	White	Roman Catholic	B	For profit	Global financial services corp	1,000-4,999	Mid-level manager	Accounting services manager
M4MM601	M	46	Caucasian		M	Nonprofit	Global NGO	5,000+	Mid-level manager	Int'l development manager

Participant Information List – Executive

Participant ID	Gender	Age	Race/Ethnicity	Religious Affiliation	Ed. Level	Employer-Type	Employer-Industry	Employer-Size	Role	Function
F3EX501	F	41	Asian	Presbyterian	M	Nonprofit	Social services provider	100-499	Executive	VP, development
M4EX302	M	51	Caucasian	Christian	D	Nonprofit	Higher education admin. services	25-99	Executive	VP, academic programs
F4EX502	F	56	Caucasian	Christian	JD	Nonprofit	Social services provider	100-499	Executive	VP, service delivery
F6EX101	F	63	Caucasian	Presbyterian	M	For profit	Global data services	100-499	Executive	VP, human resources
M6EX102	M	67	White		B	For profit	Global data services	100-499	Executive	CEO

E. Participant Consent Form

Human Dignity and Leadership Study – University of Derby

Participant Number: _____

I volunteer to participate in a research project conducted by a Researcher, John W. Kyle, a doctoral student at the University of Derby. I understand that the project will gather information about my experience with human dignity and leadership in the workplace and organizational contexts. I will be one of approximately 40 people interviewed for this research.

1. My participation in this project is voluntary. I understand that I will not be paid for my participation. I may withdraw from participation at any time without penalty. If I decline to participate or withdraw from the study, no one in my organization will be told of my decision. I have the option of removing my interview from the collection of interviews up to August 31, 2017.
2. I understand that this human research study has been reviewed and approved by the College Research Ethics Committee (CREC) of the College of Business, Law and Social Sciences at the University of Derby. Questions and concerns regarding this research project may be directed to Dr. Tracey Wond, Sr. Lecturer, University of Derby - T.Wond@derby.ac.uk.
3. I understand that most interviewees will find the discussion interesting and thought-provoking. If, however, I feel uncomfortable in any way during the interview session, I have the right to decline to answer any question or to end the interview.
4. Participation involves being interviewed by the Researcher. The interview will last no more than 90 minutes. Notes will be written during the interview. An audio recording of the interview and will be made. The recording will be transcribed and analyzed using standard data reduction methods. If I don't want to be recorded, I will not be able to participate in the study.
5. I understand that the Researcher will not identify me by name in any reports using information obtained from this interview, and that my confidentiality as a participant in this study will remain secure. Subsequent use of records and data will be subject to standard data use policies which protect the anonymity of individuals and institutions in human research studies.
6. My employers and colleagues from the hosting organization will neither be present at the interview nor have access to interview notes, transcripts, or audio recordings.
7. I have read and understand the research explanation provided to me. I have had all my questions about this research project answered to my satisfaction, and I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.
8. I have received a copy of this consent form.

_____ My Signature

_____ My Printed Name

_____ Date

For further information, please contact:

John W. Kyle, Doctoral Student, University of Derby

_____ Signature of the Researcher

Email: j.kyle1@unimail.derby.ac.uk Mobile: +1 (703) 626-1462

F. Participant Information Form

The following demographic and other information was gathered from each participant at the time of the interview.

Demographic Questionnaire

Participant Number _____

Age _____

Gender _____

Race/Ethnicity _____

Religious Affiliation, if any _____

Education Level (Check One)

- Completed some high school
- High school graduate
- Completed some college
- Associate degree
- Bachelor's degree
- Completed some postgraduate
- Master's degree
- Ph.D., law or medical degree
- Other advanced degree beyond a Master's degree _____

Marital Status (Check One)

- Single (never married)
- Married
- Separated
- Widowed
- Divorced

Years of Total Work Experience (Check One)

- 0 - 2
- 3 - 5
- 6 - 10
- 11 - 15
- 16+

Years of Experience with This Organization (Check One)

- 0 - 2
- 3 - 5
- 6 - 10
- 11 - 15
- 16+

Employment Status (Check One)

- Full Time (Generally 35 hours a week or more)
- Part Time Less than 35 hours a week
- I am not currently employed

Size of Employer – Number of Total Employees (Check One)

- 1
- 2-9
- 10-24
- 25-99
- 100-499
- 500-999
- 1000-4,999
- 5,000+

Type of organization you work for? (Check All that Apply)

- For profit
- Non-profit – Religious
- Non-profit – Not Religious (Arts, social assistance, etc.)
- Government
- Health Care
- Education
- Other

Which of the following most closely matches your current job title? (Check One)

- Intern
- Entry Level
- Analyst / Associate
- Manager
- Senior Manager
- Director
- Vice President
- Senior Vice President
- C level executive (CIO, CTO, COO, CMO, Etc)
- President or CEO
- Owner

Describe your decision-making authority with respect to employment decisions (i.e. hiring and firing)? (Check One)

- Final decision-making authority (individually or as part of a group)
- Significant decision-making or influence (individually or as part of a group)
- Minimal decision-making or influence
- No input

Which of the following most closely matches your current level of management responsibility (Check One)

- I do not supervise or manage any other employees
- I directly supervise one or more individual contributors, but am not their manager
- I directly manage one or more individual contributors
- I directly manage one or more supervisors
- I directly manage one or more managers
- I oversee others, but do not manage them directly

Please mark the following questions with 1 – 5 (where 1 = no familiarity, 5 = extensive familiarity)

- The works of Immanuel Kant _____
- The works of Aristotle _____
- The works of Louis Fry _____
- The works of Gilbert Fairholm _____
- The works of Sharon Bolton _____
- The works of Randy Hodson _____
- The works of Kristen Lucas _____

G. Invitation to Participate in the Interviews

Doctoral Research Study Overview and Participant Invitation

Topic: Human Dignity and Organizational Leadership Theory
 Research Leader: John W. Kyle, College of Business, Law and Social Science, University of Derby
 Contact Information: +1 (703) 626-1462 – j.kyle1@unimail.derby.ac.uk

Thank you for your interest in this study on human dignity and organizational leadership theory. Your organization has accepted our request to participate in this study. We would be honored to interview you as part of the project. This document is a very high-level introduction to the research project and serves as a preliminary invitation to participate in the study. If you have any questions, please contact the research leader at any time.

Background on the Research

As a potential interviewee for this study, we can only disclose the high-level topic and scope of this research to you. It is not necessary for you to have studied and/or researched this topic prior to our interview together. In fact, we would ask that you not spend much time thinking about it prior to our meeting, so that your ideas can be fresh when we meet with you. For this reason, we will not be providing the questions in advance. Human dignity is a very broad topic that is ubiquitous in the social sciences. This research project is, in many ways, the first of its kind. It seeks to explore both conceptual and lived experiences with human dignity in the context of leadership. These lived experiences will be gathered through semi-structured interviews with leaders and followers in four participating organizations.

Summary of the Request

Each participating organization is asked to provide ten interview participants, five in leadership roles and five in individual contributor roles. Each participant will be interviewed separately and privately for approximately 60 minutes. We ask that you allow 75 minutes. Transcripts of the interviews will be analyzed using standard techniques and summarized into a final report that will be made available to individual participants and participating organizations. The results will also be published in the research leader's doctoral thesis and, possibly, in academic journals.

Ethics Considerations of Human Subject Research

This project has been approved by the College Ethics Review Committee (CERC) of the College of Business, Law and Social Science of the University of Derby. It meets the requirements of the University of Derby Policy and Code of Practice on Research Ethics as well as the standards of ethical research established by the British Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC). The names of the participating organizations will be included or excluded from any public reporting at the discretion of those organizations. Other than for administrative purposes (i.e. scheduling and confirming interviews, etc.), individual participants will remain anonymous throughout the data gathering, analysis, and reporting process. While individual participants will be identified by their respective organizations, each participant will participate on an "informed consent" basis and will have the opportunity to opt out at their own discretion up to the point of data analysis.

Research Leader Bio

John W. Kyle is a doctoral research student at the University of Derby. He has more than 30 years of experience in software, consulting, and nonprofit organizations in the United States, Canada, and Europe. He is the founder and principal of Kyle Venture Advisors, a management and strategy consulting firm serving small and mid-sized companies and nonprofits. Previously, Mr. Kyle served in various leadership roles with ApeSoft, MicroStrategy, EMC, Silicon Graphics, and Cray Research. He holds a bachelor of science degree in computer science from the University of Kentucky, where he is also a member of the College of Engineering Hall of Distinction. In addition, Mr. Kyle holds an MBA from Heriot Watt University and a postgraduate diploma in leadership practice from the University of Derby. This research project is supervised by Dr. Tracey Wond, Sr. Lecturer in the College of Business, Law and Social Science at the University of Derby.