

**THE INFLUENCE OF WORKPLACE ISOLATION ON THE  
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SERVANT LEADERSHIP,  
SELF-EFFICACY AND JOB OUTCOMES**

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I dedicate this dissertation to my parents

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## ABSTRACT

Recently, many insurance companies have engaged teleworkers for their business development. Despite the effectiveness of teleworking, reduced social interaction with colleagues and supervisors caused workplace isolation among teleworkers which affects their job outcomes. Literature has accredited the role of servant leadership and self-efficacy in reducing workplace isolation among teleworkers. However, little attention has been paid to analyze the relationship of servant leadership, workplace isolation, self-efficacy and job outcomes in the context of insurance companies. The study investigated the relationship of servant leadership and job outcomes with mediating role of workplace isolation between servant leadership and job outcomes. Besides that, the moderating effect of self-efficacy on the relationship of servant leadership and workplace isolation among teleworkers of insurance companies in Pakistan was also studied. The current study employed a quantitative research design using self-administrated questionnaires to collect data from a random sample of 550 teleworkers of Pakistani insurance companies. After initial data screening, 388 questionnaires were deemed usable for further analysis. Structural equation modeling (SEM) using AMOS 21 software was employed to test the hypotheses of the study. The results showed that servant leadership has a positive influence on job outcomes and is negatively related with workplace isolation. In addition, workplace isolation has a negative effect on job outcomes and it mediates the relationship of servant leadership with job outcomes. The study has shown that self-efficacy moderates the relationship between servant leadership and workplace isolation. Based on the findings, managers of insurance companies are suggested to practice servant leadership to reduce workplace isolation among teleworkers.

## ABSTRAK

Kebelakangan ini, banyak syarikat insuran telah melibatkan ramai tele-pekerja bagi pembangunan perniagaan mereka. Walaupun tele-perkhidmatan menunjukkan keberkesannya, namun kurangnya interaksi sosial antara rakan sejawat dan penyelia boleh menyebabkan pemencilan tempat kerja dalam kalangan tele-pekerja yang boleh memberi kesan terhadap hasil kerja mereka. Sumber literatur telah menunjukkan peranan kepimpinan pelayanan dan efikasi sendiri dalam mengurangkan pemencilan tempat kerja dalam kalangan tele-pekerja. Walau bagaimanapun, tidak banyak perhatian diberikan dalam menganalisis hubungan kepimpinan pelayanan, pemencilan tempat kerja, efikasi sendiri dan hasil kerja dalam konteks syarikat insurans. Kajian ini mengkaji hubungan kepimpinan pelayanan dan hasil kerja dengan peranan pemencilan tempat kerja sebagai pengantara antara kepimpinan pelayanan dan hasil kerja. Di samping itu, kesan moderator efikasi sendiri ke atas hubungan kepimpinan pelayanan dan pemencilan tempat kerja dalam kalangan tele-pekerja syarikat insurans Pakistan juga dikaji. Kajian ini menggunakan reka bentuk kuantitatif dengan mentadbir sendiri soal selidik bagi mengumpul data daripada 550 tele-pekerja yang dipilih secara rawak daripada syarikat-syarikat insurans di Pakistan. Selepas penyaringan awal data, hanya 388 soal selidik yang boleh diguna pakai untuk analisis lanjutan. Pemodelan persamaan struktur (SEM) dengan perisian AMOS 21 telah digunakan untuk menguji hipotesis kajian. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa kepimpinan pelayanan mempunyai pengaruh positif ke atas hasil kerja dan kaitan secara negatif dengan pemencilan tempat kerja. Selain itu, pemencilan tempat kerja mempunyai kesan negatif ke atas hasil kerja dan ia mengantara hubungan kepimpinan pelayanan dengan hasil kerja. Kajian ini menunjukkan efikasi sendiri menyederhana hubungan antara kepimpinan pelayanan dengan pemencilan tempat kerja. Berdasarkan kajian ini, pengurus syarikat insurans disarankan agar mengamalkan kepimpinan pelayanan bagi mengurangkan pemencilan tempat kerja dalam kalangan tele-pekerja.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

JO	-	Job Outcomes
SERV	-	Servant Leadership
EFE	-	Self-efficacy
WPI	-	Workplace Isolation
JS	-	Job Satisfaction
JP	-	Job Performance
SPSS	-	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
AMOS	-	Analysis of Moment Structure
EFA	-	Exploratory Factor Analysis
CFA	-	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
VIF	-	Variance Inflation Factor
TW	-	Teleworkers
MSA	-	Measure of Sampling Adequacy
KMO	-	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy
BTS	-	Bartlett's Test of Sphericity
CMIN	-	Minimum Chi-square
GFI	-	Goodness of Fit Index
RMR	-	Root Mean Square Residual
RMSEA	-	Root Mean Square Error of Approximation
NFI	-	Normed Fit Index
TLI	-	Tucker Lewis Index
CFI	-	Comparative Fit Index
AGFI	-	Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index

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## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Background of the Study**

Over the past few years, there have been greater advancements in technology to a point whereby currently we entirely rely on the internet for many purposes beyond communication. Many organizations have adjusted to ever growing capabilities of the internet and are reaping the rewards of these advancements. Especially the organizations with remote work settings are increasingly using internet based technologies to communicate with their teleworkers.

Nilles, (1998) introduced the term ‘telework’ or a work arrangement where employees could choose to work from the comfort of their home or other locations so as to reduce commuting time. Moreover, telework is a system that being employed by organizations to ensure that operational costs are minimized, while at the same time offering employees an opportunity to manage their work and families better. In the current corporate world, this form of work arrangement has been made much easier by technological advances such as Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs), laptops, smart phones and wireless internet. The workplace environment has really changed due to increased use of technology and globalized economy. Organizations are using different means of communications for collaboration of professionals in different parts of the world (Ghods and Boyce, 2012). The teleworking world has provided face-to-face communication to professionals through video and teleconferencing using web applications such as WebEx and Skype.

Despite the effectiveness of technology in teleworking, it caused certain challenges for teleworkers that might be noted with concern. Bailey and Kurland (2002) deduced that social interaction and lack of face-to-face contact among employees in a teleworking environment leads to a feeling of workplace isolation. In previous studies, researchers have engrossed on the effects of workplace isolation among employees. For example, Pinsonneault and Boisvert, (2001) and Fonner and Roloff (2010) contended that telework leads to many benefits to employees including a healthy balance between work, life, reduced commuting time and personal independence. Despite these benefits, teleworkers who work far away from the conventional office environment have a feeling of social isolation from the organization and their colleagues.

When teleworkers feel that they are deprived of social support from colleagues and supervisors, ultimately result in feeling of workplace isolation (Mulki and Jaramillo, 2011). Teleworkers who feel isolated from workplace are less likely to be satisfied with their jobs. According to Stewart *et al.* (2010) job satisfaction is the workers' attitude towards an organization, colleagues, their job and other psychological factors within the working environment. Adler and Kwon (2002) argue that the positive approach from a person towards a job is regarded as job satisfaction. Numerous studies have been accompanied to determine some of the factors that in one way or the other influence job satisfaction. For instance, working in remote setting creates a feeling of monotony and dissatisfaction among teleworker (Goggins, 2014; Macintosh and Krush, 2014).

Moreover, Rego and Cunha (2008) bought the same idea but went further to illustrate the importance of such dispositional factors and job satisfaction. In the present corporate world, employee satisfaction has become very crucial because of competitiveness in the market and its benefits like improved job performance and job satisfaction (Faris *et al.*, 2010). Motowidlo (2003) characterized job performance as the efficiency of individual attitudes and behaviors that donate to organizational objectives. Furthermore, Mulki and Jaramillo (2011) claimed that teleworkers feel themselves as being isolated from the workplace which results in poor job performance.

Marshall *et al.* (2007), argued that leadership style plays a critical role in determining the degree to which teleworkers feel that they are members of an organization. Further they proposed that teleworkers' problems can easily be alleviated through servant leadership approach. Servant leadership has been referred to a leadership style that is moral laden, service oriented, holistic minded and employee oriented (Smith *et al.*, 2004) and linked with many productive attributes such as accountability, ethics, spirituality and authenticity (Russell and Stone, 2002). Servant leadership is centered on an aspiration to serve others through leadership instead of being served by others.

According to Sendjaya and Sarros (2008), servant leaders are very much ready to relinquish the superior status that comes with leadership and adopt prominence through serving others. This makes servant leadership different from other leadership styles where leaders want to be ahead of others to demonstrate their superiority. Servant leaders are always ready to serve others when there is a reasonable need to do so, irrespective of the service being delivered, the person being served or even the servant leader's moods. According to Greenleaf (1996), servant leaders are always thinking of how to create change in their followers, make them grow healthy, wise, free and more independent.

Moreover, the individual behavior of a teleworker is very important in reducing their feelings of isolation in teleworking environments (Lomo-David and Griffin, 2001). Mulki and Jaramillo (2011) analyzed the linear relationship of self-efficacy and found that it is least expected that self-efficacious teleworkers view themselves as they are isolated from the workplace. Bandura (1982) claims that the judgement of individuals, that what can be achieved by the help of available skills can be termed as self-efficacy rather than just individual skills. Mulki *et al.* (2008) indicated that a teleworker will view his job environment as less stressful when he has belief in his own competency. Judge *et al.* (2004) found that individuals with self-efficacy will have high internal locus of control, self-esteem and positive affectivity. The researcher feels that such traits can help teleworkers to effectively deal in demanding work conditions with nominal support. Thus, the current study intended to investigate the relationship of servant leadership, workplace isolation, job

satisfaction and job performance among teleworkers along with the moderating effect of self-efficacy as a personality trait.

## **1.2 Issues in Insurance Sector of Pakistan**

Pakistani insurance sector started working since inception. Five insurance companies were working at the time of independence and within five years this number increased to seven. Insurance Association of Pakistan (IAP) was established in 1948 as a body to determine tariff. The main purpose of Insurance Association of Pakistan is to create a link between the private insurance companies and the government agencies. As per Year Book 2006-2007 of IAP, thirty one non-life insurance companies and five life insurance companies were functioning in Pakistan (IAP, 2008). Life insurance and general insurance are the two categories of insurance companies working in Pakistan. As far as life insurance is concerned it is functioning in two areas: group life insurance and individual life insurance. The share of individual life insurance is 79%, which is the greatest in the business of life insurance. According to Economic survey of Pakistan (2013) these both types of insurances constitutes 99% of the life insurance profession. There is plenty of growth potential in both of these insurance businesses in Pakistan because they can provide people with some protection against the economic downturns.

The insurance industry of Pakistan is facing with a number of challenges and problems. In a country like Pakistan which is densely populated, the performance of insurance industry is not very impressive. By the end of fiscal year 2014-15 the main insurance companies have insured only less than 15 million people out of total population of 160 million (Pakistan and Gulf Economist, 2015). Furthermore, despite the vast scope, this sector is unsuccessful in attracting large number of entrepreneurs. Behind the low performance of this sector there are many reasons. Most important of all is the problem of sales force that is ineffective (Aqil *et al.*, 2014). For the development of insurance sector the sales force role is very important. No doubt the major reason for lowest ranking of Pakistani insurance sector in terms of poor per capita on life insurance is the lack of trust, awareness, long term investment concept

and religious beliefs, but it is important to recognize that if sales force ineffectiveness is addressed properly, most of the problems can be solved.

The performance of this sector is directly associated with the teleworkers' performance. For the insurance companies these teleworkers mainly function as a direct channel of selling. The word "teleworker" is defined by Insurance Association of Pakistan (2008) as follows: "A teleworker is a representative of an insurance company in soliciting and servicing policyholders". Moreover, IAP further explains about the significance of a teleworker that teleworker's know how regarding an insurance deal is said to be the knowledge of the insurance company as well. Company is responsible for the wrongful acts of its teleworkers; these bind the customer to the company. As per IAP (2008) if a policy holder gives a notice to the teleworker it will be considered as a notice to the company as well. It is evident from the above mentioned statement that teleworkers play a vital role for representation of the company. The performance and competency of teleworkers have a direct influence upon sales and profit of an insurance organization.

Life insurance sector's progress and survival is heavily and positively depend on the performance of teleworkers. Moreover, the turnover rate among sale force of the insurance companies was observed high. One major reason for this high turnover is dissatisfaction of these workers from their job and occupation (Aqil *et al.*, 2014). Mostly, insurance sale force work in remote setting and considered as teleworkers. Sense of detachments from their office and physical environment of their workplace may lead them to perceived isolation from their workplace (Mulki *et al.*, 2007; Weisenfeld *et al.*, 2001). This results into higher levels of dissatisfaction, lower job performance and high turnover intentions (Aqil *et al.*, 2014). Thus, it is required to pay attention to counter this situation. The current study focused on aforementioned issues.

### 1.3 Problem Statement

In certain countries, telework is a fairly new form of work style. According to Fonner and Roloff (2010), there are many advantages associated with working in far locations other than a traditional office environment. Globally, 2.6% of the working population is employed as teleworkers in different organizations, 25% of them are working as full time teleworkers (www.marketresearch.com). This implies the rate of increase in teleworkers by 4.3% per year. Topical study showed that between 10 to 20 percent of managers across a range of developing countries work away from traditional office. Teleworking has shown a growth of 79% between the time period of 2005 to 2012 with 3.2 million workers and 2.6% of the global workforce (Watson, 2012). Teleworking is engaging more workforces particularly in Indo-Pak subcontinent where more than 50% of workforce likely to work virtually, followed by 34% in Indonesia, 30% in Mexico, slightly less in Argentina, South Africa and Turkey (Kim, 2013). However, developed countries like United Kingdom, Sweden, Japan, Canada and Australia are the least enthusiastic about teleworking. According to Mulki *et al.*, (2011), approximately 65% people around the globe thought teleworkers are productive because of flexibility which enables them to have more control over their work life. This shows the significance of teleworking for the organizations. However, Twenty one percent of people said it is not a possibility for them because their job requires them to be in the workplace all the time (Vega *et al.*, 2015). According to the Insurance Association of Pakistan (2014), insurance sector engages more than 150 thousand teleworkers in Pakistan. This employability of teleworkers made this sector more attractive for the new entrants. However, majority of the people are not well suited for this form of work (Fonner and Roloff, 2010).

Teleworking requires one to be highly disciplined in maintaining one's work schedule, not get distracted by the environment within which one works, and be able to work for long hours without having any direct or face-to-face interaction with colleagues and supervisors. Several individual differences may have an impact on the job outcomes of teleworkers. For example, people who are motivated by interacting with others at work might not be effective teleworkers, since one of the implications



of teleworking is lack of face-to-face interaction (Caillier, 2014; Weisenfeld *et al.*, 2001). Organizations have been implementing telework programs without necessarily selecting the most suitable employees for telework (Verbeke *et al.*, 2008). However, limited literature reported serious consequences of workplace isolation for the organization as well as employees .

Goggins (2014) argues that the more commonly quoted concerns of teleworkers is segregation from their coworkers and office. This increases the teleworker's trust in self-abilities and they feel less vulnerable to the isolation. Research shows that when employees feel a deficiency of support from their managers, supervisor or organization, then their sense of belonging will be lower (Mulki and Jaramillo, 2011; Eisenberger *et al.*, 2002). Conversely, the servant leaders are effective and augment employees' satisfaction as they are able to adopt behaviors that aid in overcoming deficiencies in their subordinate's work environment (De Clercq *et al.*, 2014). Therefore, to address aforementioned issues related to perception of workplace isolation there is need to investigate the relationship of servant leadership with workplace isolation. Mulki and Jaramillo (2011) conducted a study in USA on teleworkers and supervisors of pharmaceutical companies and stipulated a research question that does servant leadership has a significant impact on workplace isolation?

Subsequently, another issue that requires close attention by management scholars is to identify the influence of workplace isolation on job outcomes (satisfaction and performance). According to Mulki *et al.* (2008) workplace isolation has been documented as a critical issue facing salespeople in field offices. Studies have acknowledged that teleworkers are physically and psychologically isolated, but there is little empirical research on the effects of perceived isolation on important job outcomes. Furthermore, employees who feel isolated, report significant reductions in job satisfaction (Judge *et al.*, 2001; Derue *et al.*, 2011). Such outcomes have been reported by Fonner and Fonner (2010) based on comparative study of 89 teleworkers and 103 office-based sales employees. Their results suggested that those employees with higher sense of belongingness to their organization are more satisfied than those

with less sense of belongingness. They warranted that future study should address job satisfaction among those sales people who feel isolated.

Similarly, Illegems and Verbeke (2003) identified several remote work settings' impacts on job outcomes; for example lower performance, job stress and low level of job satisfaction. Thus they recommended studying the effect of workplace isolation on job outcomes of teleworkers. In addition, Mulki and Jaramillo (2011) conducted a study in USA and found a strong impact of perception of workplace isolation on satisfaction with supervisor. They further suggested that in future studies, more attention is required to explore this relationship. Further they recommended that the relationship between perception of isolation and job performance must be investigated in different work settings and in different cultures. Therefore, the researcher feels there is a need to address this issue among teleworkers of insurance sector in Pakistan. In order to meet the future directions regarding theoretical and contextual gaps, current study gravitates around the central research question that how workplace isolation significantly effects the job satisfaction and job performance of teleworkers.

For the managers there is also a need to adapt effective leadership style to be productive in remote work environment (Anderson 1993). While an increasing trend is of remote offices, organizations are ardent on recognizing the leadership styles that are matched best for managing teleworkers. At the same time, it is also interesting to determine by the managers that what type of characteristics make some employees much more adaptable than others in the telework environment. Perception of workplace isolation (WI) is a major issue in the teleworking environment. Prior research shows that isolation perceptions originate from reduced chances for informal interactions with colleagues as well as supervisors (Marshall *et al.*, 2007). Salespeople with higher levels of isolation perceive that they are 'out-of-sight' worker force and as such, consider themselves as 'out-of-mind' in the their organization (Marshall *et al.*, 2007).

Several leadership styles are available which are acknowledged for helping employees at workplace. For example transformational leaders are considered as

change agents in organizations (Burton and Peachey, 2013). They facilitate their employees to adopt change to survive in the dynamic business environment. Similarly, another emerging concept of leadership is ethical leadership which focuses on the building of moral and ethical characteristics within their followers (Smith *et al.*, 2004). However, mostly these leadership styles are related to a particular organizational environment in which they perform. Aims of the current study is to analyze workplace isolation, thus selection of leadership style is crucial. Thorough study of the characteristics of more than 20 leadership styles, the current study found servant leadership as most suitable style for mitigating sense of detachment among teleworkers. Servant leadership has ability of emotional healing and putting subordinates first, which helps servant leaders to emotionally recover the sense of detachment or isolation among teleworkers. These characteristics are rare in all other leadership styles that make servant leadership most suitable for the current study. Particularly in the case of Pakistani culture which is a collective culture, employees tend to more socially linked with their colleagues and supervisors (Schwartz, 1994; Hofstead 1984).

Servant leadership comportment generates a universal social context that definitely affects attitudes and behavior of the employees. This behavior of the leader offers situational signs from which followers' interpret and comprehend their environment (Takeuchi *et al.*, 2009). While these perspectives show how behavior of the leader toward the group impacts subordinates, social exchange theory elucidates why followers react to the behavior of their leader. As per social exchange theory the quality of social connections brings unwritten obligations to return favors to persons who have acted in one's interest. This relationship is reciprocal in which people pursue to repay favors until a perceived balance of exchange exists (Blau, 1964). Likewise, Marshall *et al.* (2007), found that the skill of a worker to adapt to situations in teleworking differ with employees. Though many employees like the flexibility and lack of a commute, others have stated lower work–life conflicts and morale.

Perception of workplace isolation is an emerging issue teleworkers are facing now. Research suggests that reduced chances for informal contacts with supervisors

and colleagues lead to the perception of isolation (Marshall *et al.*, 2007). Teleworkers that have less chances of interaction with their colleagues often think if they are not in contact with their supervisors they might not be considered for promotion and other development opportunities in the organization (Marshall *et al.*, 2007). Extending the discussion on theoretical issues related to workplace isolation, another important aspect that requires empirical investigation is the role of perception of workplace isolation as a mediating variable. In prior literature on isolation, only one significant study was found in which workplace isolation is explicitly discussed as a mediating variable with different variables in different contexts. A study conducted by Mulki and Jaramillo (2011) in USA found a strong mediating effect of perception of workplace isolation between leadership style and satisfaction with supervisor. Mulki and Jaramillo (2011) further suggested that in future studies the mediating effect of perception of isolation must be investigated in different work settings and in different cultures with different job outcomes.

According to Mulki and Jaramillo (2011), the concept of workplace isolation is new and the moderating variables are yet to be explored in this area. According to Sekaran and Bougie (2011), a moderator is a variable that has a contingent effect on the relationship of independent and dependent variables, and it may strengthen or weaken the relationship of independent and dependent variables. Moreover, according to Baron and Kenny (1986), before investigating moderating effect of any variable, there must be a linear relationship of moderating variable and dependent variable. However, Mulki and Jaramillo (2011) analyzed the linear relationship of self-efficacy and found that self-efficacious teleworkers are less likely to view themselves as isolated from their workplace. Bandura (2012) claimed that self-efficacy is not just about individual skills, but rather the individual's judgment as to what can be achieved with the available skills.

For instance, Mulki *et al.* (2008), narrated that employees who believe in their own competencies are also likely to view their job environment as less stressful. In another instance, Schwarzer (2014) stated that self-efficacious individuals are high in self-esteem and also have greater internal locus of control and positive affectivity. The researcher concludes that these traits may help them to deal with the demanding

work situations with minimal support. Therefore, it is important to fill potential theoretical gap by assessing, self-efficacy can function as a moderating variable on relationship of servant leadership and workplace isolation.

The Pakistani insurance industry was unable to grow as compared to international market. Islamic way of life is rooted in the lives of people of Pakistan being an Islamic ideological state; religious belief of the people regarding validity of insurance is a big hurdle in the promotion of insurance business in the country. However, this is not the only problem associated with low growth of insurance sector in Pakistan. Aqil *et al.* (2014) reported that low salesforce performance and high turnover intentions are also major reasons for this downfall. Mulki and Jaramillo (2011) stated that the lack of face to face presence and detachment from their workplace causes dissatisfaction among teleworkers and results low performance. However, existing literature indicated a lack of studies to understand the phenomenon. Thus, literature provided opportunity to fill the gap to explore the relationship of servant leadership, workplace isolation and job outcomes among teleworkers of insurance companies in Pakistan as the respondents.

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

1. What is the relationship between servant leadership and workplace isolation among teleworkers of insurance companies in Pakistan?
2. What is the impact of servant leadership on job outcomes (job satisfaction and job performance) among teleworkers of insurance companies in Pakistan?
3. What is the relationship among workplace isolation and job outcomes (job satisfaction and job performance) among teleworkers of insurance companies in Pakistan?
4. Does workplace isolation mediate the relationship among servant leadership and job outcomes (job satisfaction and job performance) among teleworkers of insurance companies in Pakistan?

5. Does self-efficacy moderate the relationship of servant leadership and workplace isolation among teleworkers of insurance companies in Pakistan?

### **1.5 Objectives of the Study**

1. To investigate the relationship between servant leadership and workplace isolation among teleworkers of insurance companies in Pakistan.
2. To investigate the relationship between servant leadership and job outcomes (job satisfaction and job performance) among teleworkers of insurance companies in Pakistan.
3. To examine the relationship between workplace isolation and job outcomes (job satisfaction and job performance) among teleworkers of insurance companies in Pakistan.
4. To investigate mediating effect of workplace isolation between servant leadership and job outcomes (job satisfaction and job performance) among teleworkers of insurance companies in Pakistan.
5. To examine the moderating effect of self-efficacy on the relationship of servant leadership and workplace isolation among teleworkers of insurance companies in Pakistan.

### **1.6 Significance of the Study**

The current study contributes to body of knowledge in several ways. The current study explores the impact of servant leadership on workplace isolation and job outcomes among teleworkers of insurance companies in Pakistan. The changing work environment also has an impact on the insurance industry. The life insurance industry expanded considerably in last decade, due to law and order situation in Pakistan. Inducing severe rivalry and competitiveness between companies and employees, these changes along with the increased pressure to perform well may result in feelings of distrust, tension and feeling of isolation (Linda *et al.*, 2012). This study has relates perception of workplace isolation to servant leadership, to

empirically examine whether servant leadership considerably affect workplace isolation perception and its consequences. The current study analyzes the interlinking factors of workplace isolation between servant leadership and job outcomes (job performance and job satisfaction). According to Marshall *et al.* (2007), the perception of teleworkers that they belong to an organization is significantly affected by the leadership styles of the supervisor. Furthermore, it is argued that feelings of isolation in teleworkers can be mitigated by servant leadership style (Marshall *et al.* 2007).

The present research also uses a broader idea of job performance as suggested by Parker *et al.* (2001) in two dimensions (i.e. task performance and contextual performance). Past studies have mainly focused on issues relating to task performance, while neglecting contextual performance (Parker *et al.*, 2001). Two types of performance are measured by the present study i.e. task performance and contextual performance. The task performance focuses on job requirements and descriptions while contextual performance behaviors are optional and are not acknowledged by the organizational formal system (Ackfelt and Coote, 2005). This study contributes to body of knowledge on the effects of workplace isolation on a wider perspective of task performance and contextual performance.

This research also includes self-efficacy which is a dispositional variable representing the views of an individual regarding the possibility of a certain behavior taking place (Bandura, 2012). The person's degree of self-efficacy affects the inclination towards a given job or work environment and therefore self-efficacy is generally an essential element of the functioning of a group or an individual (Bandura, 1997). It is essential to assess the moderating effects of self-efficacy in a collectivist culture such as the Pakistani society. This research therefore adds to the existing body of knowledge by regarding self-efficacy as a moderator on the relationship of servant leadership and workplace isolation among teleworkers of insurance companies in Pakistan.

Furthermore, the objectives and research questions are especially developed to make this study valuable for the insurance companies in Pakistan. The present

study is beneficial for the insurance companies in different ways. It provides an index of the solution to managers and human resource directors. It contributes to make policies to minimize the extent of workplace isolation among teleworkers of insurance companies in Pakistan. It is favorable to create job satisfaction and job performance among teleworkers to mitigate the feeling of isolation among teleworkers. The current study provides an insight to the directors to upgrade the role of leadership to make it servant based leadership. The current study is useful for the policy makers to understand the critical factors which directly or indirectly affect the job satisfaction and job performance among teleworkers.

### **1.7 Scope of the Study**

In this study, the relationship between servant leadership, workplace isolation, job satisfaction and job performance was measured by utilizing validated questionnaires adapted from previous studies. Workplace isolation is a psychological construct that describes employee perceptions of detachment or remoteness from their organization and colleagues. Employees' feel isolated when they perceive their supervisor and colleagues are not supportive. The present study is an attempt to cover a wide range of issues related to workplace isolation of insurance companies in Pakistan. Thus, scope of the study comprise of teleworkers of insurance companies in Pakistan.

There are fifty four companies that are operational in insurance sector of Pakistan. Moreover, operations of these companies are divided into four regions headed by regional heads, responsible for looking after all the zones under their administration. Then there are zonal offices of insurance companies which are headed by the zonal heads, who are responsible for procurement of business to achieve the set business target of the organization. The approximate population of the study comprises of more than 132 thousand teleworkers. However, scope of the study comprises of top five insurance companies with respect to number of workforce. Details of insurance companies and their number of teleworkers are given in Table 1.1.



**Table 1.1:** Population of the Study

<b>Sr. No.</b>	<b>Name of Company</b>	<b>Teleworkers</b>
1.	State Life Insurance Corporation	90000
2.	Postal Life Insurance	38000
3.	EFU General Insurance Company Limited.	3500
4.	Askri General Insurance Company	392
5	Habib Insurance Company	192
	<b>Total</b>	<b>132084</b>

Source: Annual reports of respective companies, 2014

## **1.8 Definitions of the Constructs**

The current study has used five main constructs that are servant leadership, self-efficacy, workplace isolation, job satisfaction and job performance, so the conceptual and operational definitions of the constructs are elaborated below.

### **1.8.1 Servant Leadership**

Jaramillo and Grisaffe (2009) defined the leader as a servant that have a natural feeling to serve others first. The feeling of, to be praised need to put other people at highest priority. In the words of Greenleaf Center for Servant-Leadership (1996), servant leadership emphasizes on serve others first, it is a holistic approach that focuses at encouraging a sense of distribution of power in organizational decision making.

The construct of servant leadership was operationalized as second order reflective construct, measured through 28 items developed by Liden *et al.* (2008), using its seven sub dimensions i.e. emotional healing, creating value for community, conceptual skills, empowering, putting subordinates first, helping subordinates, and behaving ethically. Each sub dimension was tapped using four items.

### **1.8.2 Workplace Isolation**

Workplace isolation describes perceptions of detachment or remoteness of the employees from their colleagues and organization. Employees' feel isolated when they feel that their colleagues and supervisor are not supportive. Employee's perception of separation from the organization and coworkers is termed workplace isolation (Marshall *et al.*, 2007).

In the current study, workplace isolation was operationalized as first order reflective construct; consist of ten items adapted from (Marshall *et al.*, 2007). Isolation from company relate to teleworkers' sense of detachment from their work settings, whereas isolation from colleagues relate to teleworkers' sense of social detachment from coworkers and friends. The measures were utilized to assess the extent to which employees' friendship with coworkers, part of the company network and help in solving work problems.

### **1.8.3 Self-efficacy**

Self-efficacy beliefs encourage teleworkers to perform job duties up to satisfied level (Krishnan *et al.*, 2002). Self-believe persuades people to deal with future circumstances by capitalizing on their cognitive skills, social abilities and behavioral aptitudes (Sitzmann, 2013; Bandura, 1982).

The construct of self-efficacy was operationalized as first order reflective construct tapped through ten items developed by Jerusalem and Schwarzer (1995). The measures were utilized to assess the extent to which employees perceive how to manage the workplace situations like situational problems, unexpected events, to handle unforeseen situations and handle whatever comes in their way.

## **1.9 Job Outcomes**

Job outcomes can be considered as officially required outcomes and behaviors that directly serve the goals of the organization (Bakker *et al.*, 2004). This study is particularly concerned with the relationship between workplace isolation and job outcomes. Job outcomes can be split into employee job satisfaction and employee job performance. Further subsections explained the detailed concept of job satisfaction and job performance.

The current study operationalized the construct of job outcomes on the basis of employees' job satisfaction and job performance. Further these dimensions were operationalized separately.

### **1.9.1 Job Satisfaction**

Job satisfaction is defined in terms of compensation and nature of rewards as a positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experience or how content an employee is with their job experience (Waight and Madera, 2011). Another definition of job satisfaction describes that job satisfaction is the employees' response to the conditions of the workplace (Johnson and Johnson 2000).

The construct of job satisfaction was operationalized as first order reflective construct developed by Agho *et al.* (1992). This version of job satisfaction contains

six items. The measures were utilized to assess the extent to which employees' perceive job satisfaction by using features like enjoyment, enthusiastic and better job.

### **1.9.2 Job Performance**

Job performance is defined as the ability of an individual to behave in such a manner that enables an organization to achieve its objectives (Motowidlo, 2003). In previous literature, job performance is divided into two categories; contextual performance and task performance (Riketta, 2008). Task performance involves fulfillments of duties as established by description of formal jobs. While contextual performance is behavior that goes beyond formal requirements of job but are beneficial to the organizations such as giving suggestions for improvement, working for extra hours and assisting colleague's workers (Borman and Motowidlo, 1997).

The construct of job performance was operationalized as second order reflective construct developed by Williams and Anderson (1991) based on two sub dimensions i.e. task and contextual performance. Task performance was utilized to assess the extent to which employees perceive job performance by using features like attendance at work, advance notice for leave and to fulfill all the responsibilities. Whereas contextual performance refers degree to which employee is helpful for coworkers, sharing information to colleagues and performing extra role duties.

### **1.10 Structure of the Dissertation**

Chapter one of the dissertation explains the background of the study. This provides general discussion on servant leadership, self-efficacy, workplace isolation and job outcomes of teleworkers of the insurance companies in Pakistan. Next section comprises information about the problems associated with teleworkers and how these problems are associated with workplace isolation. Moreover, it provides the research questions which have been generated from the problem statement of the

current study. Further, this chapter discusses the objectives of the study and hypotheses. Additionally, novelty of the current study has been reported under the heading of the significance of the study. The scope of the study and conceptual and operational definitions are also discussed in this chapter.

Chapter two consists of the definition of workplace isolation and thorough discussion about the supported theories and models of workplace isolation. This chapter deliberates on what basis the current study has integrated the impact of servant leadership on job outcomes and how model of workplace isolation has been developed. Moreover, all the constructs of the study has been discussed in detail for supporting the hypotheses.

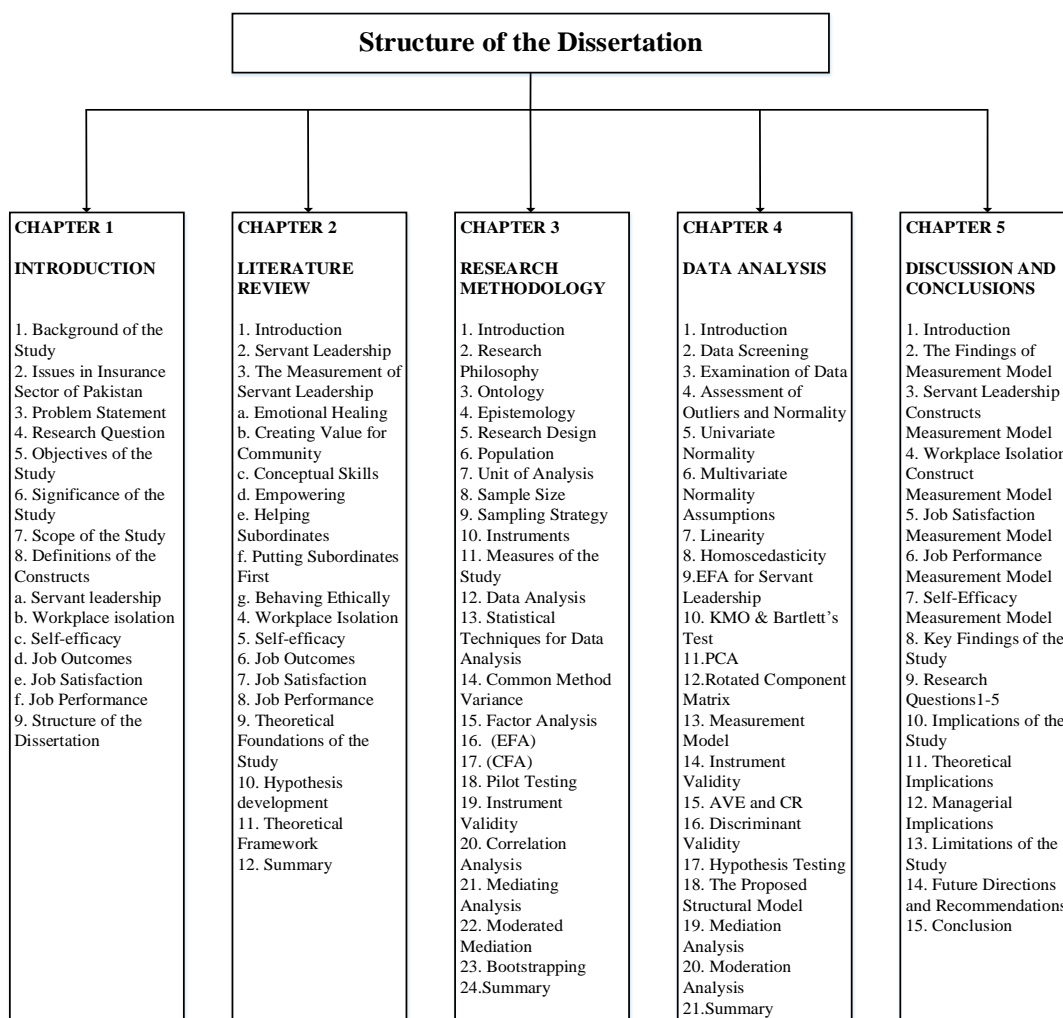
In chapter three details of the research methodology for current study are provided. This chapter explains research design and research paradigm of the study. Further, sampling design is also mentioned in this chapter. This chapter also gives the details of the response rate of the survey questionnaire and explains justification for quantitative data analysis. Moreover, chapter three provides details of measurement scale along with reliability and validity of the scales as reported by the previous researchers. Further, this chapter discusses analytical strategy and statistical techniques which are used to examine the research questions and hypotheses.

Chapter four elaborates detail about data analysis for the current study. In the beginning; study conducted data screening, exploratory factor analysis and confirmatory factor analysis was also done to check the reliability and validity of all the constructs. Later on multivariate normality assumptions are examined and structural equation modeling is applied to analyze the hypotheses of the current study. Further, this chapter provides information about the direct and indirect effects of servant leadership on job outcomes and also analyzes common method variance (CMV).

Chapter five is integral and ultimate portion of this dissertation. This chapter provides an insight to the discussion of findings of the current study and provides justification about the acceptance and rejection of the hypotheses. Moreover, chapter

five provides theoretical and managerial implications of the study. At the final stage this chapter elaborates the limitations of the current study and future directions.

Figure 1.1 shows the structure of the dissertation.



**Figure 1.1** Structure of the Dissertation (Source: Self-developed)

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