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Influence of Servant Leadership on Employee Satisfaction, Quality of Care, and Patient Satisfaction

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Literature indicates that the characteristics of servant leadership have a positive impact on improving employee satisfaction, thereby quality care and patient satisfaction. This project used a quantitative, correlational design to examine the link between servant leadership characteristics and employee perceived job satisfaction, quality of patient care, and patient satisfaction at the community hospital in Texas. Also, this project examined if an educational intervention on the constructs of servant leadership provided to leaders will influence employee perception of job satisfaction, thereby quality care, and patient satisfaction. Thirty-four clinical employees completed two survey instruments. The data that was collected using the Organizational Leadership Assessment (OLA) instrument and the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) short form was analyzed through SPSS software version 20 to determine the link between servant leadership and job satisfaction. Specific domains from the patient satisfaction scores using the Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS) survey were calculated to determine quality of patient care and patient satisfaction. The findings from the analysis of the data revealed a significant positive correlation between the perception of servant leadership in leaders and general job satisfaction \( (r = 0.611, p < 0.0002) \). Patient satisfaction scores also indicated higher scores in several domains that were measured post-educational intervention on servant leadership constructs. The results of the project, however, supported the positive correlation between servant leadership and general job satisfaction, thus quality care, and patient satisfaction in a healthcare setting. Based on the results obtained from the Fishers exact test, patients were more likely to recommend the hospital post-educational intervention on the constructs of servant leadership provided to the leaders. The findings from this project might assist individual leaders of the organizations to gain an appreciation of their leadership characteristics, and might better prepare them to become more successful in the organization. The belief is that a positive work environment will result in increased nurse satisfaction, adding strength to the workforce and thereby quality care of patients. In addition, this project also adds to the existing body of knowledge while providing a more comprehensive understanding of servant leadership. The report published by The Institute of Medicine (IOM), in conjunction with
the National Academy of Sciences and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation on The Future of Nursing articulates the importance of effective leadership to transform healthcare.

**Applicable category:**
Clinical, Academic, Leaders, Researchers

**Keywords:**
Influence of Servant Leadership on Employee Satisfaction, Patient Satisfaction and Quality of Care

**References:**


**Abstract Summary:**

Healthcare executives continue to face the challenge of improving organizational performance and patient satisfaction. Value based care have also prompted a shift from process to outcome measures. Understanding the employees' perception of job satisfaction in relation to leadership behaviors and the influence patient satisfaction provides useful insights for healthcare leaders.

**Content Outline:**

1. Literature indicates that principles of servant leadership have a positive impact on improving employee job satisfaction thereby improving patient experience/patient satisfaction. However, it was not known to what extent servant leadership characteristics influence employee perceived job satisfaction, quality care, and patient satisfaction at a community hospital in Houston, Texas. Today, patient experience ratings and patient outcomes are a critical part of reimbursements and incentives for U.S. hospitals (Richter & Muhlestein (2017). Ultimately the employees are driving the patient experience. Therefore, employee job satisfaction and engagement are key factors in patient-centered care. The link between patient experience and employee job satisfaction is so strong that a leaders' ability to influence employees is crucial.
2. A satisfied employee is more focused on professional tasks that deliver safe, quality patient care
3. Characteristics of servant leadership have a positive impact on improving employee job satisfaction, quality care, and patient satisfaction.
4. There is evidence that the success of an organization depends on its leadership. Leaders today employ various styles and models of leadership to ensure greater organizational effectiveness which in turn impacts patient satisfaction.
5. Servant leadership is defined as a philosophy and set of practices that enrich the lives of individuals which builds better organizations and ultimately creates a more just and caring world.
   a. The characteristics of servant leadership are as follows: listening, empathy, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people, and building community.
   b. A positive link has been established in regards to servant leadership behaviors in leaders and employee job satisfaction which translates to patient safety within organizations that embrace servant leadership.
   c. Servant leaders tend to put the needs of others first before their own needs which is a similar concept within Christianity.
6. Literature indicates that principles of servant leadership have a positive impact on improving employee job satisfaction, organizational outcomes, quality care, and improved patient satisfaction.
   a. Research on employee satisfaction and retention has revealed that leadership style and behavior and the quality of management can have a powerful impact on employee satisfaction, thus impacting quality customer care
   b. A positive correlation was noted between employee turnover and retention of nursing workforce with leaders that exhibit leadership style that value nurses as individuals thus impacting patient satisfaction
   c. A study found that there was a significant increase in motivation and satisfaction with employees who had servant leaders than an employee with non-servant leaders thus implying customer satisfaction
   d. In a research study, the authors concluded that servant leadership style had proven a positive influence on the nursing workforce resulting in safe quality patient care and improved organizational outcome in regards to patient experience.
   e. Previous studies have found that employee attitude and satisfaction does have an impact on patient satisfaction, patient experience and patient outcomes.
   f. In one study, the authors explored the relationship between nurse satisfaction and patient experience. The authors found that a satisfied nursing team was directly proportional to the overall improvement in patient experience

7. An emerging style of leadership theory in the healthcare setting that is gaining much attention among leaders is the servant leadership theory.
   a. The relationship between servant leadership characteristic and employee job satisfaction, quality of care, and patient satisfaction were determined using validated and reliable survey instruments.
   b. Data was collected using two validated reliable survey instruments
      i. The Organizational Leadership Assessment (OLA) survey measured the variable of servant leadership characteristics in a leader.
      ii. The Organizational Leadership Assessment (OLA) survey measured the variable of servant leadership characteristics in a leader.

8. Quality care and patient satisfaction were analyzed using CAHPS hospital survey using Fisher’s Exact test, pre- and post-educational intervention addressing the six constructs of servant leaders.

9. The conclusion made based on the data analysis of this project verifies past research in the area of servant leadership constructs and job satisfaction. The conclusions further verify the relationship between job satisfaction, quality care, and patient satisfaction by means of CAHPS scores pre- and post-educational intervention on the constructs of servant leadership.

10. The Pearson’s correlation was conducted to determine the correlation between the perception of servant leadership and job satisfaction. The data results
revealed a significant positive correlation \( r = 0.611, p < .0002 \) between the two variables of employees' perception of servant leadership characteristics in their leaders and job satisfaction.

11. The Fisher’s exact test results comparing the domains for quality care and patient satisfaction revealed a higher score of post-educational intervention on the constructs of servant leader.

12. The data result for the area of "recommend hospital" revealed that the score prior to the educational intervention on the constructs of servant leader was 80.3% and post-education intervention was 91.4% with a \( p \)-value of 0.007.

13. Based on the data results, the principal investigator concluded that there was a statistically significant correlation between the servant leadership constructs and patient perceived satisfaction.

14. Understanding the employees' perception of job satisfaction in relation to leadership behaviors and the influence on the quality of care and patient satisfaction provides useful insights for healthcare leaders in an effort to enhance safe patient care.

15. The project presented results supporting the premise that a statistically significant relationship existed between servant leadership and job satisfaction hence quality care and patient satisfaction.