## Background and Introduction

Healthcare executives continue to face the challenge of improving organizational performance, quality of care, and patient experience. Faraci, Lock, and Wheeler (2013) postulates that leadership behaviors contribute to patient outcomes. Understanding the employees’ perception of job satisfaction in relation to leadership behaviors and the influence of patient experience provides useful insights for healthcare leaders.

- Literature indicates that the characteristics of servant leadership have a positive impact on improving employee satisfaction, thereby quality of care, and patient experience.
- The link between patient experience and employee job satisfaction is so strong that a leader’s ability to influence employees is crucial.

## Purpose of the Project

Servant leadership is acknowledged as potential contributor to job satisfaction thereby influencing the quality of care, and patient experience. Despite the potential impact, there is limited research on the influence of servant leadership in the healthcare setting. This quantitative correlational study examined the link between servant leadership characteristics to the level of job satisfaction, and the influence on quality of care, and patient experience.

## Clinical Questions

**Q1:** Is there a relationship between servant leadership characteristics in leaders and perceived employee job satisfaction, quality of care, and patient satisfaction?

**Q2:** Will an educational intervention on the constructs of servant leadership provided to leaders increase employee perception of job satisfaction, thereby the quality of care, and patient experience.

## Theoretical Framework

- Servant leadership theory (Greenleaf, 2002) - first coined by Robert K. Greenleaf.
- Social learning theory (Bandura, 1977) is also used as a framework to support the servant leadership philosophy in which followers imitate the leader’s behavior.
- The Organizational Leadership Assessment (OLA) tool (Laub, 1999) is a 66 item survey used to assess the six constructs of servant leadership subcales of values people, develops people, builds community, displays authenticity, provides leadership, and shares leadership.
- The Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) tool (University of Minnesota, 1977) is a 20 item survey used to measure job satisfaction.
- CAHPS hospital survey is the first national, standardized, publicly reported survey of patients’ perspectives of hospital care. The four domains measured within the CAHPS survey includes, recommending the hospital, communication about medication, help feel comfortable, and response to call button. A statistically significant difference (p = 0.007) was noted in the domain of “recommended hospital.”

## Data Analysis

A convenience sample of 34 employees completed 2 survey tools at a community hospital. In addition, four domains within the Consumer Assessments of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS) Hospital survey was analyzed using the Fisher’s exact test to determine the patient’s perception of quality of care and patient experience pre- and post-educational intervention addressing the six constructs of servant leadership.

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## Results

The survey response rate was 28% (n=120). The attributes of the participants consisted of 2.94% top leadership, 17.65% management, and 79.41% workforce. More than half (50%) of participants were workforce.

- The findings revealed a significant positive correlation between the perception of servant leadership in leaders and general job satisfaction (r = 0.061, p < 0.0002).

**Fisher’s Exact Test Results Comparing the Pre- and Post-Education Intervention On the SL Constructs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>Perception of servant leadership</th>
<th>General Job Satisfaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Role</td>
<td>Variable</td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top leadership</td>
<td>Total SL</td>
<td>4.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>Total SL</td>
<td>3.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workforce</td>
<td>Total SL</td>
<td>3.72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Descriptive Data For The Six Constructs of Servant Leadership As Measured By The Organizational Leadership Assessment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Min.</th>
<th>Max.</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valuing People</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>0.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing People</td>
<td>1.56</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>0.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building Community</td>
<td>1.80</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>3.91</td>
<td>0.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Displaying Authenticity</td>
<td>1.92</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>0.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing Leadership</td>
<td>2.89</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>0.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharing Leadership</td>
<td>2.11</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>3.65</td>
<td>0.86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Descriptive Data Among The Participants in Regards To Servant Leadership & Job Satisfaction Variables**

**Descriptive Correlation Coefficients of SL, Job Satisfaction, Education, And Tenure**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spearman’s Correlation Coefficients</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total servant leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSQ General job satisfaction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Strengths, Weaknesses, Limitations**

**Strength**

- The conclusion made based on the data analysis of this project verifies past research in the area of servant leadership constructs and job satisfaction.

**Weakness**

- The practice of servant leadership may or may not generate the same results in other healthcare organizations.

**Limitation**

- Due to the quantitative nature of the study, in-depth description of participant perceptions are left unexplored.

**Survey Instruments used were limited to the perceptions of the participants and thus rely on their honest responses to all the questions.**

## Discussion

Faraci, Lock, and Wheeler (2013) postulates that leadership behaviors contribute to patient outcomes. The results of the project supported the positive correlation between servant leadership and general job satisfaction, thus quality of care, and patient experience in a healthcare setting.

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.

**Future Recommendations**

- Larger sample size
- Using a mixed methodology may help gain a deeper understanding of underlying reasons and motivations from the participants.

## References