The Impact of a Democratic Leadership Style on Employee Satisfaction, Customer Satisfaction, and Customer Loyalty at a Midsized Nonprofit Sport and Recreation Center

John Vincent, The University of Alabama
Michael Baptiste, The University of Alabama

Abstract

This study examined how leadership styles correlated with employee job satisfaction, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty by surveying managers, employees, and customers at a midsized nonprofit sport and recreation center. Drawing on the extant literature and Heskett et al.'s (1994) service-profit chain model, we developed a conceptual model that hypothesized how the adoption of a democratic leadership style would facilitate employee job satisfaction, and mediate other positive outcomes. Of the three leadership styles examined, autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire, only democratic leadership was found to be positively correlated with employee job satisfaction and customer satisfaction. The results showed that employee job satisfaction was positively correlated with customer satisfaction and employee job satisfaction was positively correlated with customer loyalty. This illustrates the importance of adopting an appropriate leadership style to facilitate employee job satisfaction, which is an antecedent for employee satisfaction and customer loyalty.

Scholars have long recognized the importance of leadership and outlined how the adoption of an appropriate leadership style can positively impact organizational effectiveness in many different sporting contexts (Welty Peachey, Damon, Zhou, & Burton, 2015). However, a plethora of leadership studies in different contexts of sport and coaching revealed how leadership in this context is nuanced and complex (see Burton, Welty Peachey, & Damon, 2019; Crust & Lawrence, 2006; Scott, 2014). When studying the leadership process, one must consider how the antecedents to leadership, such as the leader, employee, and situational characteristics, impact the leader behavior and style, which in turn directly influence multilevel outcomes such as individual employee satisfaction and team performance (Chelladuri, 2007; Yammarino, 2013; Yukl, 2010).

In the 1990s and early 2000s, many of the sport leadership studies examining administrators in sport organizations focused on the influence of transformational leadership on a variety of outcomes (Welty Peachey et al, 2015). However, Yammarino, Dionne, Chun, and Dansereau's (2005) review of the leadership literature in a variety of different contexts identified 17 diverse and evolving leadership approaches. Reflecting this, in the last decade sport leadership studies have examined transformational leadership styles (see Burton et al, 2019; Kim, Magnusen,

Andrew, & Stoll, 2012), leader-member exchange theory (see Bang, 2011), ethical leadership (see Burton & Welty Peachey, 2014), and servant leadership (see Parris & Welty Peachey, 2013; Robinson, Magnusen, & Neubert, 2020; Welty Peachy & Burton, 2017; Welty Peachey, Burton, Wells, & Chung, 2018). Despite this burgeoning growth of research examining different leadership approaches in sport, over the last 3 decades the majority of research has examined leadership in the context of professional sports and intercollegiate athletics (Welty Peachy et al., 2015).

Our review of the literature revealed a dearth of scholarship about leadership styles in the context of midsized nonprofit sport and recreation centers that are common throughout North America. Given that the grassroots, nonprofit level of sport and recreation is a different segment of the sports industry, subject to a number of distinctive characteristics that distinguishes it from other service providers, it is crucial to study leadership in this setting. Robinson (2006) noted how spending discretionary income on sport and recreation can be considered a luxury and how customers participating in sport and recreational activities in their leisure time generally have an emotional connection with the activities the sport and recreation center offers. This makes managing in this context challenging because customers are discerning and demanding with high expectations of the customer service levels they will experience. We could find no contemporary research examining how sport and recreation center managers' leadership styles impact employee job satisfaction as a potential antecedent for customer satisfaction and loyalty within this service chain. Given the gap in the literature, the purpose of this study was to provide insights about the leadership style(s) that are used at a midsized non-profit sport and recreation center to determine if the adopted leadership style(s) are associated with employee job satisfaction, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty.

The limited literature on midsized nonprofit sport and recreation centers consisted of comparisons of the consequences of only two leadership styles—*transformational* and *transactional*—and found that transformational leadership had little influence on employee job satisfaction (Wallace & Weese, 1995; Weese, 1995) and was not congruent with organizational effectiveness (Weese, 1996). Further, although there have been 3 decades of theoretical and empirical research devoted to transformational leadership, it still suffers from conceptual and empirical ambiguities that make it difficult to differentiate it from more recently conceptualized employee-driven leadership styles (see Banks, McCauley, Gardner, & Guler, 2016). Thus, the issue of construct redundancy with many of the more recent leadership approaches is a general concern (see Banks, Gooty, Ross, Williams, & Harrington, 2018) because many measures of empowering leadership styles intersect with aspects of other employee-driven leadership approaches (Cheong, Yammarino, Dionne, Spain, & Chou-Yu, 2019). Given the overlap of many contemporary approaches to leadership and the absence of knowledge about what leadership style(s) managers in this context adopt, for this study, we elected to examine three more traditional and discrete leadership styles: *autocratic*, *democratic*, and *laissez-faire*. Autocratic leadership, a directive, task-driven style, is at the binary opposite end of the leadership style continuum compared with an employee-driven democratic style, and its passive, inactive, nonresponsive extension, laissez-faire. Thus, our study sought to extend the literature in the sport and recreation industry by determining the leadership style adopted, and then by examining its appropriateness by examining if it was associated with employee job satisfaction, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty in the type of midsized nonprofit sport and recreation center that is ubiquitous throughout North America.

Leadership

Although there are many different definitions of leadership, Yammarino's (2013) is widely accepted:

> Leadership is a multi-level (person, dyad, group, collective) leader-follower interaction process that occurs in a particular situation (context) where a leader (e.g., superior, supervisor) and followers (e.g. subordinates, direct reports) share a purpose (vision, mission) and jointly accomplish things (e.g., goals, objectives, tasks) willingly (e.g., without coercion). (p. 150)

An emphasis of much leadership research has focused on what leaders do to facilitate the attainment of individual and group goals. At the individual level, leadership research has examined various aspects of leadership styles and models on areas such as job performance, absenteeism, turnover, physiological stress, and safety, as well as individual job satisfaction, commitment, loyalty, and team building in many different contexts. At the group level, leadership research has focused on leadership effectiveness and its consequences in facilitating team cohesion, morale, and a positive work environment, which are considered antecedents to team performance (Yammarino, 2013). The consequences of the leadership style adopted and how leadership influence is dispersed, how decisions are made, and how individual employee considerations and needs are met in different contexts has also been the focus of much research (Schoel, Bluemke, Mueller, & Stalhlberg, 2011). Particularly pertinent to this study, scholars have also examined how leaders involve their subordinates in the decision-making process in a continuum from directive to participative leadership styles in different contexts (Richter, 2018). At the binary opposite ends of the leadership style spectrum are autocratic and democratic or laissez-faire leadership approaches, which we examined in this study and outline below.

Autocratic Leadership Style

Authoritarian and autocratic leadership styles are often perceived to be largely indistinguishable (Harms, Wood, Landay, Lester, & Lester, 2018), but we will use the term *autocratic* throughout this paper. Although autocratic leadership is often perceived as a less desirable style, its functional utility to achieve organizational tasks or goals makes it ubiquitous across different cultures and organizations (Pellegrini & Scandura; 2008). Given a contemporary resurgence in high profile autocratic leaders, several researchers have suggested there should be a renewed interest in research on autocratic leadership (Harms et al., 2018; Ludeke, 2016). Some leaders may employ what is essentially an autocratic leadership style by making decisions for their employees while tempering some of the destructive elements of this approach through benevolence and care (Chan, Hunag, Snape, & Lam, (2013).

Autocratic leadership is a style where authority, decision-making, and influence reside in the leader. An autocratic leadership style fosters a culture of discipline and obedience. It requires that subordinates adhere to hierarchical organizational structures and follow centralized instructions to achieve organizational goals. Although a consensus in the literature suggested this leadership style has been negatively associated with individual job satisfaction and team motivation, some researchers have suggested that an autocratic leadership style with its emphasis on achieving the task can facilitate positive individual results, group performance, and operational efficiency and, as such, it is worthy of reconsideration (Harms et al., 2018). Bass and Bass (2008) outlined how an autocratic leadership style is appropriate where job tasks have a clear structure and employee commitment is high. Huang, Xu, Chiu, Lam, and Farh (2015)

found that in comparison with transformational leadership, an autocratic leadership style with its emphasis on efficiency and coordination had a positive effect on organizational performance in a challenging economic environment where resources were scarce and where a firm's survival was at stake (p. 189). Illustrating this, Isaacson (2013) described how Steve Jobs' autocratic leadership style saved Apple from the brink of insolvency and transformed it.

Democratic Leadership

Democratic leadership, sometimes referred to participative leadership, is guided by the awareness that decision-making is shared by both top-level and subordinate organizational members. Democratic leaders generally empower their subordinates by consulting with them to receive their input in an attempt to reach a consensus on the best course of action to take (Cheong et al., 2019). Although soliciting input from subordinates may slow the decision-making process, an advantage is the ownership subordinates may feel in arriving at the decision. Generally, under democratic leadership employees are more likely to communicate regularly and openly because democratic leaders facilitate a sense of job satisfaction by enriching and enlarging people's skill sets and work experiences. Under a democratic leadership style, employees generally feel engaged in their career path and sense they can achieve individual recognition and the advancement they desire, which heightens their sense of ownership and amplifies their commitment. However, since participation takes time, progress normally occurs at a slower rate. This suggests that a democratic leadership style works best in companies where teamwork and quality are more important than speed (Bhatti, Maitlo, Shaikh, Hashmi, & Shaikh, 2012).

Al-Ababneh (2013), Al-Khasawneh and Moh'd Futa (2013), and Belias and Koustelios (2014) found that a democratic leadership style was the most influential leadership style in facilitating job satisfaction in service industries. In the hotel industry, Al-Ababneh found that a democratic leadership style was adopted by most hotel managers and positively related to employee job satisfaction. However, it is worth noting that in this context there were also managers that adopted autocratic and laissez-faire leadership styles that were also able to induce high levels of job satisfaction from their employees. Al-Khasawneh and Moh'd Futa looked at the influence of different leadership styles in an international academic context. They found that a democratic leadership style had a positive impact on student behaviors, knowledge, and commitment, while autocratic and laissez-faire leadership styles were not associated with modifying student behaviors. In their review of leadership and job satisfaction, Belias and Koustelios reported that although workers led by a democratic leader were less productive, they made more high-quality contributions than workers led by authoritarian leaders and also found that organizations that incorporated democratic management styles were more likely to have satisfied workers and achieve organizational success. Mosadeghrad and Ferdosi (2013) looked into how leadership styles interacted with job satisfaction and organizational commitment in the international healthcare industry. They found that healthcare managers mainly adopted a democratic leadership style which was positively associated with employee affective and normative commitment.

One reason that democratic leadership may facilitate job satisfaction is its emphasis on empowering employees. Both realized (Rae, 2013) and perceived autonomy (Rodriguez, Buyens, Landeghem, & Lasio, 2016) appear to be positively linked to job satisfaction. Kanyurhi and Bugandwa (2016) advocated for increased autonomy in service organizations and suggested institutions share information with employees, fairly reward their efforts, and empower them. When employees have more autonomy in the decision-making process, they

are considered to be more important to the organization. Increased autonomy, in turn, can improve their satisfaction level and establish effective organizational behaviors with customers in service interactions (Kanyurhi & Bugandwa, 2016).

Studies that compare autocratic and democratic leadership styles have generally shown that a democratic leadership style is associated with greater job satisfaction and a higher morale, whereas the efficacy of the two leadership styles as measured by productivity has produced mixed results (Schoel et al., 2011). Thus, a democratic leadership style might be most appropriate where the employees need a strong sense of teamwork and cooperation, are intrinsically motivated, and the quality of service provided is generally more important than speed of delivery.

Laissez-Faire Leadership

A laissez-faire leadership style is a passive, inactive, nonresponsive extension of democratic leadership that is defined by a noninvolvement or hands-off approach (Yukl, 2010). Laissez-faire leaders generally delegate decisions and policy making to their subordinates and provide minimal guidance (Wong & Giessner, 2016). This style of leadership is generally considered ineffective in most contexts, with researchers noting its negative association with subordinates' attitude and performance (Judge & Piccolo, 2004). Several studies (see Judge & Piccolo, 2004; Maynard, Mathieu, Marsh, & Ruddy, 2007; Piccolo et al., 2012) found negative correlations between laissez-faire leadership and employee job satisfaction. Skogstad et al. (2014) noted that laissez-faire leadership was destructive and undermined job satisfaction over the long run for offshore workers in Norway. Kelloway, Sivanathan, Francis, and Barling (2005) concluded that laissez-faire leadership was associated with poor communication, role conflict and ambiguity, and a perception of poor interpersonal relationships, all of which contributed to a stressful and ineffective work environment.

Several researchers have posited that the freedom laissez-faire leadership allows might facilitate good performance if a laissez-faire leader's subordinates are intrinsically self-motivated, experienced, and highly competent individuals (Ryan & Tipu, 2013; Yang, 2015). Indeed, when a laissez-faire leader's non-involvement is accompanied by a removal of bureaucratic red tape, it could provide a psychologically autonomous motivation, freedom, and independence where a subordinate's self-control, self-determination, self-confidence, and self-leadership are empowered to stimulate innovation and creativity (Armundsen & Martinsen, 2014).

Given that the current study examined the association of the adopted leadership style with job satisfaction, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty in a midsized nonprofit sport and recreation center, we discuss each below.

Job Satisfaction

Employee job satisfaction refers to "a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences" (Locke, 1976, p. 1304). Just as job satisfaction has antecedents, it also has implications. Job satisfaction has been associated with increased organizational productivity, enhanced employee loyalty, and decreased employee absenteeism and turnover (Yee, Yeung, & Cheng, 2008). Imran, Arif, Cheema, and Azeem (2014) looked at how employee job satisfaction impacted other organizational features, such as job performance, attitude toward work, and organizational commitment. They found that job satisfaction was

positively related to job performance. Furthermore, Busch, Fallan, and Pettersen (2012) found a positive relationship between job satisfaction, goal commitment, and organizational commitment. Böckerman and Ilmakunnas (2012) also found that job satisfaction was clearly associated with productivity in the manufacturing industry. Moreover, job satisfaction was negatively linked with turnover in both manufacturing and nonmanufacturing industries. Yücel's (2012) study reflected a combination of Imran et al.'s and Böckerman and Ilmakunnas' research as it looked at the relationships between job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intentions. Yücel found that job satisfaction positively impacted affective, continuance, and normative commitment to the organization and was negatively associated with employee turnover.

The two consequences of job satisfaction that this study was most concerned about were customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. We briefly discuss each below.

Customer Satisfaction

According to Kotler and Keller (2012), satisfaction is "a person's feelings of pleasure or disappointment resulting from comparing perceived products' performance (or outcome) in relation to his or her expectations" (p. 36). Customer satisfaction then is the extent to which a company fulfills the needs, desires, and expectations of its stakeholders and customers. Groth and Grandey (2012) found that the interpersonal aspects of frontline employee service quality had a significant impact on customer satisfaction. In short, when employees are caring and responsive, customers are satisfied. Conversely, Groth and Grandey explained that customers often become dissatisfied with service when their expectations are unmet. Once they are dissatisfied, customers have two options: they can either terminate their services with the organization or they can provide feedback to the organization about their dissatisfaction. Acknowledging customer dissatisfaction is important because if a customer is dissatisfied, he/she can often act on that feeling in the form of what Groth and Grandey called antisocial customer behavior. This is when customers behave in a way that harms the service company and/or its members.

Jeon and Choi (2012) found strong support for employee satisfaction positively influencing customer satisfaction. However, unlike Groth and Grandey's (2012) research, this relationship is not mutual as customer satisfaction has no effect on employee satisfaction. They suggested that employee satisfaction may be more affected by other factors, such as pay, co-worker relationships, and supervision. Additionally, the relationship between employee and customer satisfaction was moderated by self-efficacy. While they found personal traits are important factors in the employee satisfaction-customer satisfaction relationship, the same was not found with other organizational variables. They explained that satisfied employees with high self-efficacy or teamwork orientation were more likely to display positive emotions, stemming from job satisfaction, when serving customers.

Customer Loyalty

Customer loyalty is defined as "continued and repeated satisfaction of a customer about a service or product from the behavior, word-of-mouth, shape, and repurchasing of a certain service or product" (Demir, Talaat, & Aydinli, 2015, p. 147). Loyalty results from a customer feeling satisfied with an organization and its goods and/or services. When a customer feels loyal to a company, they are more inclined to pay a premium for the quality good or service (Caruna, 2002). When Gounaris and Boukis (2013) examined the role of employee job satisfaction on

customer repurchase intentions, they found that direct contact employees who were satisfied with their jobs were more likely to establish strong positive relationships with the organization's customers. They explained that the relationship stemmed from the caring attitude that satisfied employees show during service encounters with the customer. This attitude influenced the customer, who then later adjusted his or her own attitude to reflect the employees'. The findings from Gounaris and Boukis's study demonstrated the importance of employees in providing companies with a sustainable competitive advantage and the significant role that employee satisfaction can play.

In their overview of previous researchers' findings on the relationships between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty, Kumar, Dalla Pozza, and Ganesh (2013) reported that there was generally a positive relationship between customer satisfaction and loyalty intentions. However, they did note that some studies found a nonlinear or a curvilinear relationship between satisfaction and loyalty. Some reported a steep negative linear relationship when customers were extremely satisfied and a steep positive linear relationship when customer satisfaction was extremely low. In the middle, the relationship was stagnant where changes in customer satisfaction resulted in only small changes in loyalty. Some research has also shown a plateauing relationship indicating when satisfaction increases its impact on loyalty decreases. Their overview also found that the customer satisfaction-customer loyalty relationship was moderated, both positively and negatively, by the marketplace, customer, and relational characteristics.

Chen (2012) looked at the relationship between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty in an e-service setting and found that there was a positive relationship between satisfaction and loyalty. However, like Kumar et al.'s (2013) review, this study also contained evidence of mediators between the two variables. The researcher identified perceived value as a complete mediator of the satisfaction-loyalty relationship, while commitment, trust, and involvement were found to be partial mediators.
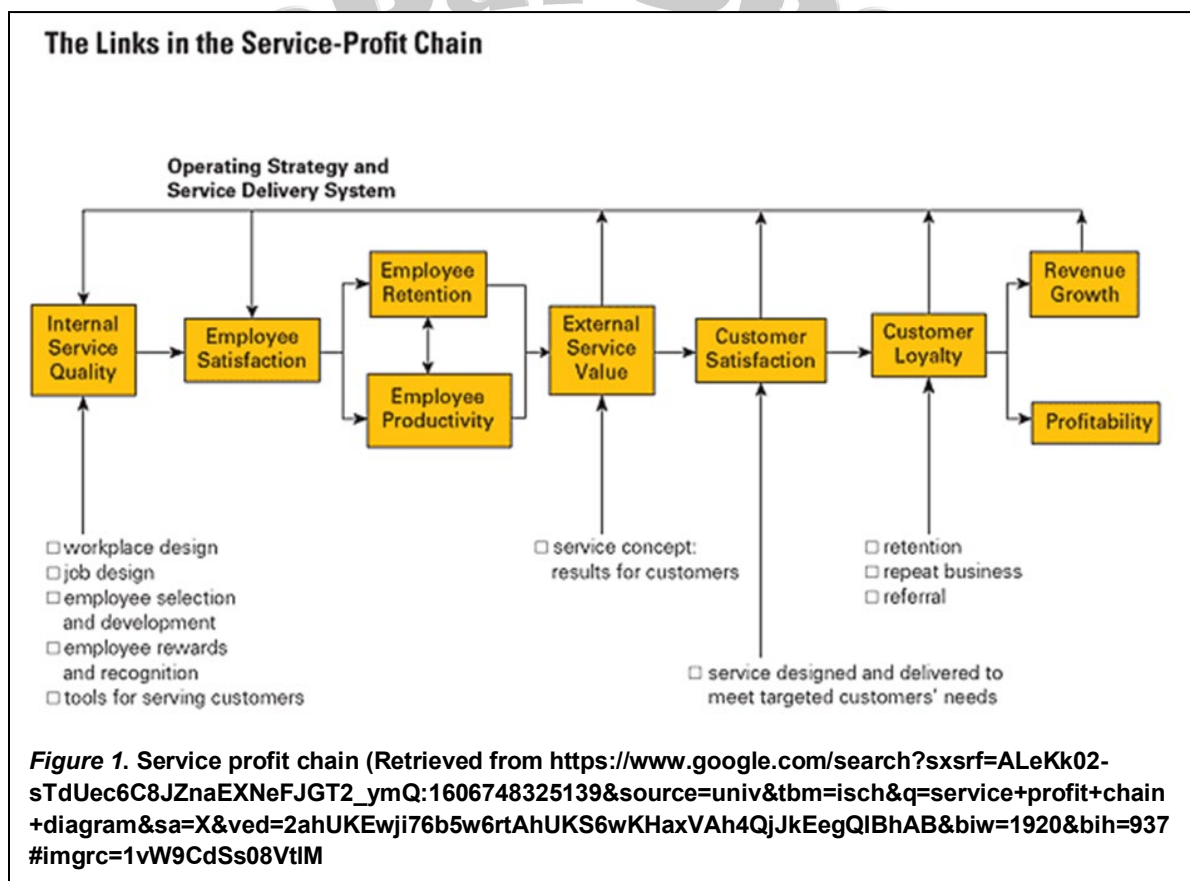
The section below describes how Heskett, Jones, Loveman, Sasser, and Schlesinger's (1994) service-profit chain model is used to provide theoretical insights about the relationship between the adoption of an appropriate leadership style with employee job satisfaction, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty.

Theoretical Framework

This study drew insights from Heskett et al.'s (1994) service-profit chain model to examine how the adoption of a democratic leadership style might be associated with employee job satisfaction, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty at a sport and recreation center. The service-profit chain flowchart (see Figure 1) illustrates the relationship between a service organization's internal service quality, external service value, and profitability. It proposes a synergistic chain that links leadership, employee satisfaction, employee productivity and retention, and customer satisfaction and loyalty with revenue growth and profitability. The core of the service profit chain model is leadership. Leaders of successful service companies seek to create and maintain a company culture that benefits both employees and customers. Recognizing that their customers' primary connection with their service organization is through their frontline employees, they listen to their employees for suggestions on how to improve and make an effort to recognize and care for their employees by creating a culture of internal service quality that prioritizes servicing the needs of their frontline employees. They provide high-quality support services and policies that produce an empowering internal service chain environment
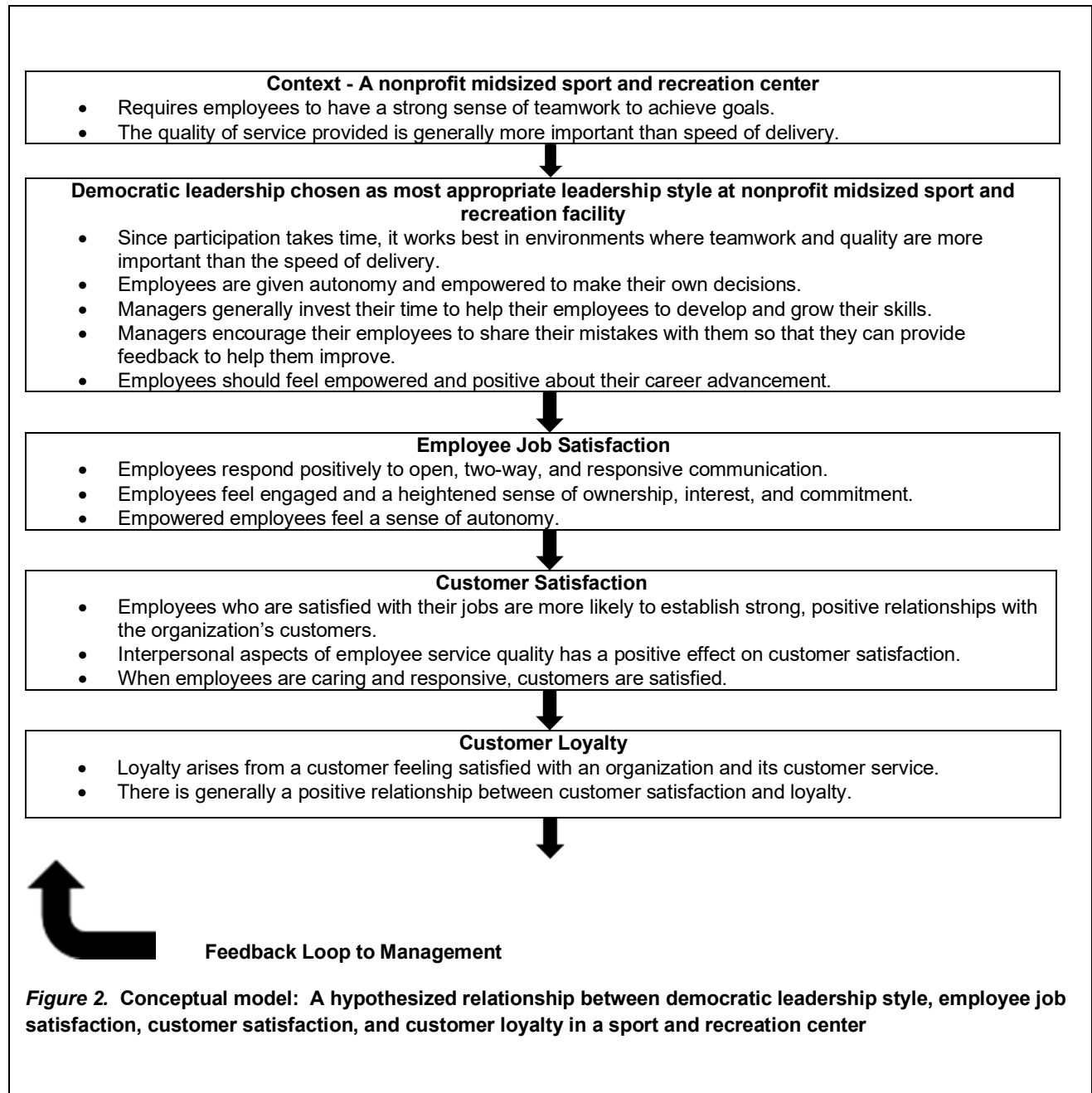
that is rewarded with employee engagement, productivity, satisfaction, loyalty, and retention. Experienced, committed, and satisfied employees then provide value for customers through exemplary customer service, which facilitates customer satisfaction. Satisfied customers become loyal customers in what Heskett, Sasser, and Schlesinger (1997) described as a *satisfaction mirror* and are likely to become company evangelists.

The service-profit chain provides a way for service organizations to quantify their investments in people—employees and customers. Heskett et al. (1997) noted how the cost of acquiring new customers is much higher than the cost of increasing sales to existing satisfied and loyal customers. They reported that customers who were completely satisfied with their experience with an organization showed a repurchase rate that was as much as six times higher than those who were not completely satisfied. This inspires a virtuous cycle of long-term revenue growth and profitability.

Figure 1. Service profit chain (Retrieved from https://www.google.com/search?sxsrf=ALeKk02-sTdUec6C8JZnaEXNeFJGT2_ymQ:1606748325139&source=univ&tbm=isch&q=service+profit+chain+diagram&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwji76b5w6rtAhUKS6wKHaxVAh4QjJkEegQIBhAB&biw=1920&bih=937#imgrc=1vW9CdSs08VtlM

The service-profit chain's application in other leadership contexts (Myrden & Kelloway, 2015), including retail businesses (Bressolles, Durrieu, & Deans, 2015), hospitality (Cain, Tanford, & Shulga, 2018), and organizational performance (Sharma, 2015) provided a precedent for its use in this study, which examined the association of leadership style with job satisfaction, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty in a midsized nonprofit sport and recreation center. Several previous studies have been conducted either linking leadership style to employee job satisfaction or relating employee job satisfaction to customer satisfaction and loyalty in the hotel industry (Al-Ababneh, 2013), in education (Bhatti et al., 2012), and in mental healthcare

(Elshout, Scherp, & van der Feltz-Cornelis, 2013). These studies generally found that democratic leadership had a positive relationship with employees' job satisfaction levels or that employees' job satisfaction had a positive effect on their customer's satisfaction and loyalty. However, we could not find any research that included all three variables in one study.

Context - A nonprofit midsized sport and recreation center
- Requires employees to have a strong sense of teamwork to achieve goals.
- The quality of service provided is generally more important than speed of delivery.

Democratic leadership chosen as most appropriate leadership style at nonprofit midsized sport and recreation facility
- Since participation takes time, it works best in environments where teamwork and quality are more important than the speed of delivery.
- Employees are given autonomy and empowered to make their own decisions.
- Managers generally invest their time to help their employees to develop and grow their skills.
- Managers encourage their employees to share their mistakes with them so that they can provide feedback to help them improve.
- Employees should feel empowered and positive about their career advancement.

Employee Job Satisfaction
- Employees respond positively to open, two-way, and responsive communication.
- Employees feel engaged and a heightened sense of ownership, interest, and commitment.
- Empowered employees feel a sense of autonomy.

Customer Satisfaction
- Employees who are satisfied with their jobs are more likely to establish strong, positive relationships with the organization's customers.
- Interpersonal aspects of employee service quality has a positive effect on customer satisfaction.
- When employees are caring and responsive, customers are satisfied.

Customer Loyalty
- Loyalty arises from a customer feeling satisfied with an organization and its customer service.
- There is generally a positive relationship between customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Feedback Loop to Management

Figure 2. **Conceptual model: A hypothesized relationship between democratic leadership style, employee job satisfaction, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty in a sport and recreation center**

Drawing from Heskett et al.'s (1994) service-profit chain and a review of the extant contemporary literature about leadership styles, job satisfaction, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty in service industries, we developed a conceptual model: A hypothesized

relationship between democratic leadership style, employee job satisfaction, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty in a midsized nonprofit sport and recreation center. Our review of literature suggested that autocratic leadership might be appropriate in a context where emphasis is on speed of delivery and where high productivity is required. In stark contrast, a laissez-faire leadership style might be suitable in an environment that requires autonomous motivation; freedom; and independence, innovation, and creativity. Thus, it would be a suitable style when leading employees who are intrinsically self-motivated, experienced, and highly competent individuals, capable of self-control, self-determination, self-confidence, and self-leadership. A laissez-faire leader could then focus on removing any constraining bureaucratic red tape. However, in a midsized nonprofit sport and recreation center, we hypothesized that we would find that managers drew on a democratic leadership style, which is appropriate because it is an environment where employees need a strong sense of teamwork and cooperation and where the quality of service provided is generally more important than speed of delivery. Our conceptual model suggested that the adoption of a democratic leadership style would facilitate employee satisfaction, and a satisfied employee would be more likely to provide exceptional customer service, which would facilitate customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Research Questions

This study sought to understand if there was a significant relationship among the following pairs of variables: leadership style and employee job satisfaction, leadership style and customer satisfaction, leadership style and customer loyalty, employee job satisfaction and customer satisfaction, and employee job satisfaction and customer loyalty in the context of a midsized nonprofit sport and recreation center. Drawing on Heskett et al.'s (1994) service-profit chain model (see Figure 1), our review of the literature, and our conceptual model (see Figure 2), we developed the following research questions:

>RQ 1: What leadership style (autocratic, democratic, or laissez-faire) do eight managers working in a midsized sport and recreation facility adopt?
>RQ 2: Is there a positive correlation between the leadership style adopted (autocratic, democratic, or laissez-faire) and employee job satisfaction?
>RQ 3: Is there a positive correlation between the leadership style adopted and customer satisfaction?
>RQ 4: Is there a positive correlation between the leadership style adopted and customer loyalty?
>RQ 5: Is there a positive correlation between employee job satisfaction and customer satisfaction?
>RQ 6: Is there a positive correlation between employee job satisfaction and customer loyalty?

Methods

Setting

This study was conducted at a midsized nonprofit sport and recreation center located in western Pennsylvania. The facility was a branch of a leading nonprofit organization that is dedicated to youth development and healthy living. The nonprofit organization, a global brand, has more than 45 million customers in 119 countries. In the United States, it has approximately 2,700 sport and recreation centers, employing about 20,000 full-time employees and serving about 9 million youth and 13 million adult customers. This midsized branch serves 6,700 members and

employs nearly 90 employees. The main facility houses a fitness center, weight room, gym, drop-in childcare, swimming pool, locker rooms, aerobic area, and conference center. It also has a satellite facility located about 10 miles from the main branch. The satellite facility offers indoor soccer, basketball courts, a fitness center, and drop-in child care. The employees participating in the study shifted at either facility depending on staffing needs. Customers utilized both facilities depending upon their requirements. All customers surveyed were members of the facility.

Instrumentation

Leadership styles of the sport and recreation center managers. The leadership styles of the eight sport and recreation center managers were determined using the Leadership Styles Questionnaire (Northouse, 2012). The battery of questions consisted of 18 items measured on a 5-point Likert-type scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The questions specifically measured the level of authoritarian, democratic, and laissez-faire leadership style. By comparing the scores, it was possible to determine which styles were most dominant and least dominant in each manager's leadership style.

Employee job satisfaction. Employee job satisfaction was measured using Loveman's (1998) Employee Satisfaction Survey of Internal Service Quality (ESSISQ). Employee job satisfaction was measured using five dimensions of internal service quality which included work resources (6 items), coworkers (4 items), leadership (13 items), rewards and communication (5 items), and communication (5 items). The items were measured on a 5-point Likert-type scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The participants responded based on their level of agreement about which items enhanced their job satisfaction and produced better service. The mean scores of these different items used to measure each dimension were used to calculate employee job satisfaction. In addition, mean scores of all 33 items were used to measure the overall employee job satisfaction. Greater mean scores indicated greater job satisfaction.

Customer satisfaction. Customer satisfaction was measured using the Customer Satisfaction Survey of Employee Service Quality (CSSEQ). The CSSEQ was used to measure the customer satisfaction in terms of the service of the employee. It included measuring three dimensions of 18 items which included employee attitude (6 items), employee behavior (5 items), and employee professional knowledge and skills (7 items). The items were measured on a 5-point Likert-type scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Mean scores of the different items in the CSSEQ were used to measure customer satisfaction.

Customer loyalty. Customer loyalty was measured using Zeithaml, Berry, and Parasuraman's (1996) behavioral intention battery. The battery consisted of 13 items measured on a 7-point Likert-type scale of 1 (not at all likely) to 7 (extremely likely). The items were also grouped into four a priori categories: word-of-mouth communication (three items: 1-3), purchase intentions (three items: 4-6), price sensitivity (three items: 7-9), and complaining behavior (four items: 10-13). Mean scores of the 13 items in the Zeithaml et al. (1996) behavioral intention battery were used to measure customer loyalty. Items 6 and 8 were reverse coded.

Data Collection

The survey instruments were uploaded into the online survey tool of SurveyMonkey. The link to access the uploaded survey was sent to the participants through e-mail. The lead researcher used a purposive sampling technique to distribute surveys via email to 8 midlevel managers, 21

frontline customer service employees, and 6,800 customers of a midsized nonprofit multi-purpose sport and recreation center. The eight midlevel managers consisted of three males and five females, with an average age of 36. All self-identified as Caucasian. The 21 frontline customer service employees consisted of 8 males and 13 females, with an average age of 24 and all self-identified as Caucasian. The 76 customers that responded consisted of 13 males and 63 females, with an average age of 37, and all self-identified as Caucasian.

The SurveyMonkey website contained the purpose of the study, an informed consent form, instructions, and the survey questionnaire. An online informed consent form was used to ensure that participants agreed to participate in the study. The customers completed the survey at home following their service experience where they were asked a series of questions through which they evaluated the employees that served them and rated their customer satisfaction and likelihood of using the services in the future.

Data Analysis

SPSS statistical software was used to run the data analysis. Prior to the inferential statistical analysis, the data were screened to ensure robustness. Scatter plots were generated on the data of each of the study variables to investigate the presence of outliers, which were removed prior to the statistical analysis. Normality testing was conducted, examining the skewness, kurtosis statistics, and normality plots in the histograms to identify that they followed normal distribution. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the demographic characteristics and the independent and dependent variables. Cronbach's alpha coefficient of reliability was calculated to check the internal consistency of all three survey instruments and was above 0.75, which is generally considered acceptable in social science research. The data gathered from the surveys were analyzed using a Pearson correlation analysis to determine the correlation between variables for each research question. A .05 level of significance was used in the correlation analysis. Five correlation analyses were performed in this study to address research questions 2-6:

1. Between the scores of the three leadership styles of democratic, autocratic, or laissez-faire and employee job satisfaction;
2. Between the scores of the three leadership styles of democratic, autocratic, or laissez-faire and customer satisfaction;
3. Between the scores of the three leadership styles of democratic, autocratic, or laissez-faire and customer loyalty;
4. Between employee job satisfaction and customer satisfaction; and
5. Between employee job satisfaction and customer loyalty.

Results

*Descriptive Statistical Analyses*

Leadership styles. The first research question sought to determine the leadership style (autocratic, democratic, or laissez-faire) of the eight managers working in the midsized nonprofit sport and recreation center. The leadership styles of the managers were determined using the Leadership Style Questionnaire. The surveys were sent to the managers by the executive director. Six of the eight managers identified their most dominant leadership style as democratic. One manager had an equal score in the authoritarian and democratic styles and one manager was predominantly laissez-faire in style (see Table 1).

Table 1: *Leadership Style Score of the Managers at the Sport and Recreation Center*
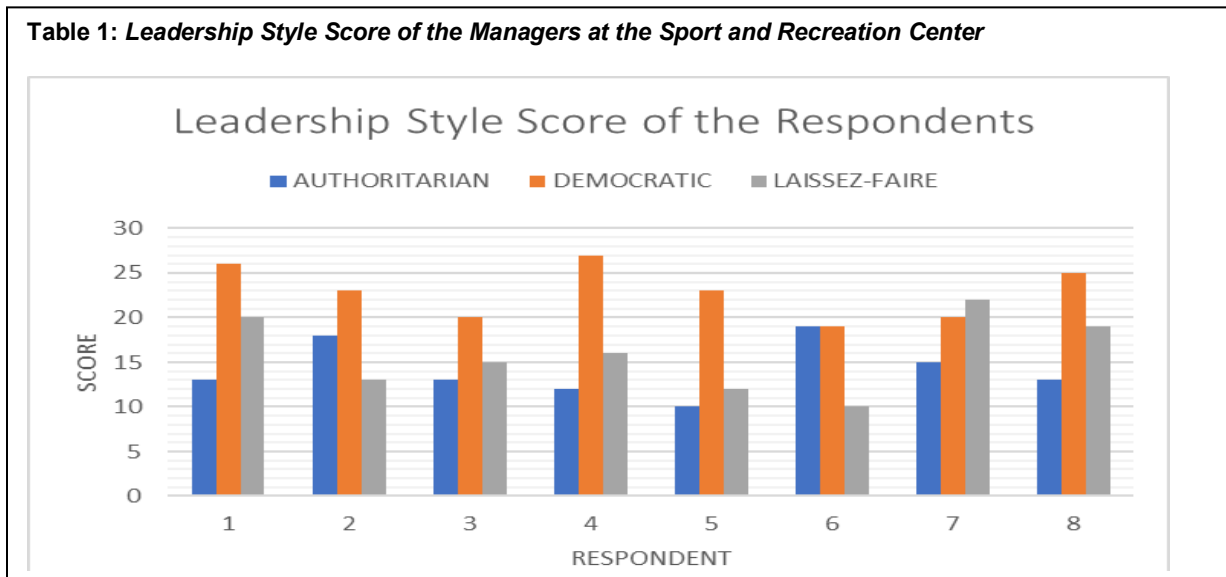
Employee job satisfaction. Employees were also surveyed using the Employee Satisfaction Survey of Internal Service Quality (ESSISQ) to determine their satisfaction levels on various factors relating to their job. Of the 86 employees receiving the survey, 21 completed surveys were returned, a 24% response rate. Among all the factors considered in the survey, results showed that the two greatest factors in overall employee job satisfaction were their relationships with coworkers and their relationship with the leadership, with average scores of 4.0 and 3.8 out of 5.0, respectively.

Table 2: *Average Employee's Job Satisfaction Score at the Sport and Recreation Center*
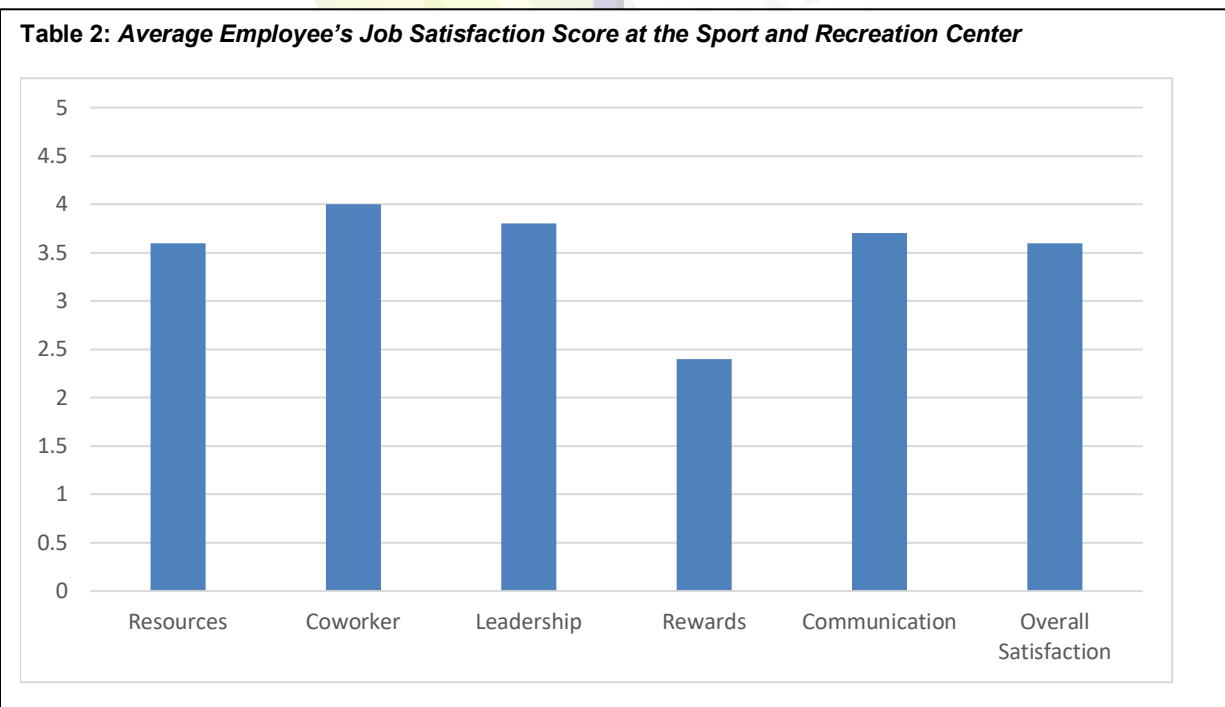
Customer satisfaction. Customers' satisfaction was measured using the Customer Satisfaction Survey of Employee Service Quality (CSSEQ). Based on the results of the survey, the customers' average score on their satisfaction toward employees' attitudes equated to 4.1 out of 5. Customers' satisfaction on employees' professional knowledge and skills as well as employees' behaviors scored an average of 3.7. Overall, the customers' satisfaction toward the service quality of the facility's employees equated to 3.8 out of 5. The researchers concluded that the customers were moderately satisfied with the quality of service at the sport and recreation center (see Table 3).

Table 3: *Average Customer Satisfaction Score on Service Quality of the Sport and Recreation Center Employees*
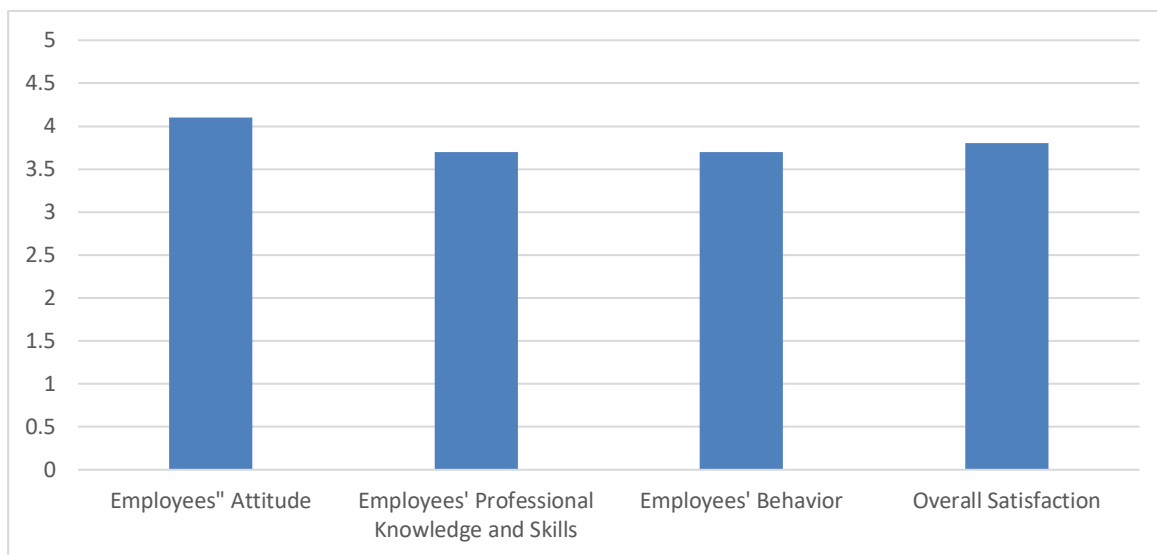
Customer loyalty. Customer loyalty was measured using the Behavioral-Intentions Battery developed by Zeithaml et al. (1996). The survey results showed that the mean from 76 samples, including Questions 6, 7, 10, 11, 12, and 13, equated to 5.2 out of 7. Since the average score was above the median, the researchers concluded that the customers of the sport and recreation center studied were generally loyal. Results of the participants' scores on each of the questions from the Behavioral-Intentions Battery showed that customers were likely to say positive things about the sport and recreation center and were likely to recommend it to others (mean = 5.8). Furthermore, customers' responses indicated that they most likely would not complain to outside agencies, such as the Better Business Bureau, if they experienced a problem with the service at the sport and recreation center studied (mean = 2.7; see Table 4.).

Table 4: *Average Behavioral-Intentions Battery Score of the Members of the Sport and Recreation Center*	
Behavioral-Intentions Battery	Average Score (7)
How likely are you to say positive things about the sports organization studied to other people?	5.8
How likely are you to recommend the sports organization studied to someone who seeks your advice?	5.8
How likely are you to encourage friends and relatives to do business with the sports organization studied?	5.6
How likely are you to consider the sports organization studied your first choice to participate in an exercise class or sports league?	5.6
How likely are you to do more business with the sports organization studied in the next few years?	5.4
How likely are you to do less business with the sports organization studied in the next few years?	2.8
How likely are you to take some of your business to a competitor that offers better prices?	3.1
How likely are you to continue doing business with the sports organization studied if their prices increase somewhat?	4.4
How likely are you to pay a higher price than competitors charge for the benefits you currently receive from the sports organization studied?	3.7
How likely are you to switch to a competitor if you experience a problem with the sports organization studied service?	4.2
How likely are you to complain to other people if you experience a problem with the service at the sports organization studied?	4.2
How likely are you to complain to outside agencies, such as the Better Business Bureau, if you experience a problem with the service at either the sports organizations studied?	2.7
How likely are you to complain to the sports organization studied employees if you experience a problem with services at either the sports organizations studied?	5.0

Inferential Statistical Analyses

The purpose of this study was to examine how different leadership styles (autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire) were correlated with employee job satisfaction and, subsequently, how employee job satisfaction was correlated with customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. Correlation analyses between several pairs of variables (i.e., leadership styles and employee job satisfaction, leadership styles and customer loyalty, leadership styles and customer satisfaction, employee job satisfaction and customer loyalty, and employee job satisfaction and customer satisfaction) were conducted to determine whether each pair had a significant relationship.

 RQ 2: Is there a positive correlation between the leadership style adopted (autocratic, democratic, or laissez-faire) and employee job satisfaction?
 Only democratic leadership style showed a significant correlation with employee job satisfaction ($r = 0.9370$, $p = 0.0000$); hence, as the democratic leadership style score increased, the employee job satisfaction score also increased.

 RQ 3: Is there a positive correlation between the leadership style adopted and customer satisfaction?
 Only democratic leadership style showed a significant correlation with customer satisfaction ($r = 0.6321$, $p = 0.0458$). When the democratic leadership style score increased, the customer satisfaction score also increased.

RQ 4: Is there a positive correlation between the leadership style adopted and customer loyalty?

The Pearson correlation analysis revealed no significant correlation between any of the leadership styles and customer loyalty.

RQ 5: Is there a positive correlation between employee job satisfaction and customer satisfaction?

The Pearson correlation analysis demonstrated there was a significant correlation between employee job satisfaction and customer satisfaction (r = 0.8967, p = 0.0000). When employee job satisfaction increased, customer satisfaction also increased.

RQ 6: Is there a positive correlation between employee job satisfaction and customer loyalty?

The Pearson correlation analysis showed there was a significant positive correlation between employee job satisfaction and customer loyalty (r = 0.5165, p = 0.000). When employee job satisfaction increased, customer loyalty also increased.

The results of the analyses showed that among the leadership styles, only democratic leadership had a significant positive relationship with the employee job satisfaction (r = 0.9370, p = 0.000) and customer satisfaction (r = 0.6321, p = 0.0458). There was no significant relationship found between any of the leadership styles and customer loyalty. Finally, the results showed that there was a significant correlation between employee job satisfaction and customer satisfaction (r = 0.8967, p = 0.0000) and between employee job satisfaction and customer loyalty (r = 0.5165, p = 0.000).

Discussion

Leadership is important in every segment of the sport industry (Burton et al., 2019). Understanding the relationship among managers, employees, and customers is beneficial in developing appropriate leadership, employee, and customer service training programs to enhance the service chain. Leaders must recognize these important relationship dynamics so that synergistic connections can be created. Drawing on Heskett et al.'s (1994) service-profit chain model which conceptualizes the positive association between employee job satisfaction and customer satisfaction, and our review of the extant contemporary literature about leadership in service industries, (see Al-Ababneh, 2012; Al-Khasawneh & Moh'd Futa, 2013; Bhatti et al., 2016; Kanyurhi & Bugandwa, 2016), we developed a conceptual model: A hypothesized relationship between democratic leadership style, employee job satisfaction, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty in a sport and recreation center. Our conceptual model hypothesized how, in the context of a midsized nonprofit sport and recreation center which required employee cooperation, teamwork, and quality customer service, managers should be encouraged to adopt a democratic leadership style to facilitate employee satisfaction, which is an antecedent for customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. While it is acknowledged that employee job satisfaction is mediated by other variables including pay and co-worker relationships (Jeon & Choi, 2012), sport and recreation centers commonly value cooperation and teamwork to provide superior customer service.

We acknowledge how, in different contexts, autocratic or laissez faire leadership styles might be more appropriate. In an environment where emphasis needs to be on the speed of achieving the result, an autocratic leadership style might be the most appropriate. A paternalistic leadership style, an extension of an autocratic leadership style that is tempered by a

benevolence and care of subordinates might also be appropriate (Chan et al., 2013). A laissez-faire leadership style might be most appropriate in an environment where innovation and creativity are at a premium and where a manager is overseeing employees that are intrinsically self-motivated, experienced, and highly educated, competent individuals who have the self-control, self-determination, self-confidence, and self-leadership to be highly effective. However, the results of this study found a democratic leadership style is positively associated with employee job satisfaction at the sort of nonprofit midsized sport and recreation center that is found throughout North America.

This study found a democratic leadership style is also positively associated with customer satisfaction, which suggests that customer satisfaction is mediated by employee job satisfaction. As Jeon and Choi (2012) noted, satisfied employees with high self-efficacy and a teamwork orientation are more likely to display dedication and commitment, stemming from job satisfaction, when serving customers. This demonstrates how important the interpersonal dimension of customer service provided by employees is to customer satisfaction (Groth & Grandey, 2012). In short, when employees are more caring and responsive to their customers, the customers are more satisfied. Such dynamics also involve the setting of expectations on the part of the customers, and when these are met, customer satisfaction is a positive consequence (Groth & Grandey, 2012).

The positive association between employee job satisfaction and customer satisfaction is conceptualized in Heskett et al.'s (1994) service-profit chain model, where investments by the employers reflect positively on the interpersonal connection of employees and customers. Job satisfaction positively impacts affective continuance and normative commitment to the organization (Yücel, 2012). Thus, a satisfied employee is more likely to be more responsive in catering to customer needs. Indeed, it has been found that employee job satisfaction positively impacts job performance, attitude towards work, and organizational commitment (Imran et al., 2014). The positive association between employee job satisfaction and customer satisfaction could also be a consequence of the association between democratic leadership style and employee job satisfaction. The extant literature suggested that a democratic leadership style should facilitate a sense of job satisfaction, particularly if the manager is investing in the employee to facilitate their professional growth and skill development (Bhatti et al., 2012). Thus, under a democratic leadership style, employees should feel empowered and optimistic about their career advancement, which should amplify their sense of ownership in the organization and heighten their interest in their jobs. These constructive influences should also positively impact employees' relationships with their customers.

The results of the correlation analysis showed a positive association between employee job satisfaction and customer loyalty. This result may be mediated by the positive relationship found between job satisfaction and customer satisfaction. Customer satisfaction generally facilitates customer loyalty (Chen, 2012). Our findings support the conclusions of Gounaris and Boukis (2013) that suggested that direct contact employees who were satisfied with their jobs were more likely to establish strong relationships with the organization's customers. This positive relationship stemmed from the caring attitude that satisfied employees displayed during service encounters with the customer. This attitude positively influenced the customer, who then later adjusted his or her own approach to reflect the employee's thoughtful approach (Gounaris & Boukis, 2013). This suggests that investing in people, especially in industries involved in customer service, can provide a sustainable long-term competitive advantage.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

A limitation of this quantitative, correlational study was that it was only able to determine associations between the variables examined. It is also acknowledged that the purposeful sampling technique adopted meant that the results of this study are only generalizable to midsized nonprofit sport and recreation centers with similar demographic characteristics. As such, this study relies on reader analysis and evaluation about its applicability in different contexts.

Future researchers are encouraged to build on the results of this study to strengthen our understanding of leadership styles, employee satisfaction, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty in different situations. We have several suggestions to guide future research efforts.

Our conceptual model could be suitably adapted and used to examine and empirically test the efficacy of democratic or other leadership styles in different environments. Subsequent studies examining leadership styles, employee job satisfaction, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty should adopt a mixed methods approach, incorporating qualitative methodologies such as semistructured interviews and focus groups that would have the potential to provide greater in-depth narrative insights and perspectives from both managers, employees, and customers. This is particularly pertinent given the lack of research about the different ways that leaders and employees reconcile and narrate their experiences when it comes to interacting with customers to facilitate the satisfaction of all parties in a sporting context. Future qualitative research efforts should focus on such leader, employee, and customer interactions. Finally, given the dearth of research examining leadership in the context of sport and recreation centers, future research efforts examining sport and recreation centers should focus on aspects of democratic leadership style that intersect with other employee-driven leadership styles such as servant leadership (see Greenleaf, 1977).

References

Al-Ababneh, M. (2013). Leadership style of managers in five-star hotels and its relationship with employees job satisfaction. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, *3*(2), 94-98.

Al-Khasawneh, A. L., & Moh'd Futa, S. (2013). The impact of leadership styles used by the academic staff in the Jordanian public universities on modifying students' behavior: A field study in the northern region of Jordan. *International Journal of Business and Management*, *8*(1), 1-10.

Armundsen, S., & Martinsen, O.L. (2014). Empowering leadership: Construct clarification, conceptualization, and validation of a new scale. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *25*(3), 487-511.

Bang, H. (2011). Leader-member exchange in nonprofit sport organizations. *Nonprofit Management & Leadership*, *22*, 85-105.

Banks, G. C., Gooty, J., Ross, R. L., Williams, C. E., & Harrington, N. T. (2018). Construct redundancy in leader behaviors: A review and agenda for the future. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *29*(1), 236- 251.

Banks, G. C., McCauley, K. D., Gardner, W. L., & Guler, C. E. (2016). A meta-analytic review of authentic and transformational leadership: A test for redundancy. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *27*(4), 634- 652.

Bass, B., & Bass, R. (2008). *The Bass handbook of leadership: Theory, research and managerial implications*. New York, NY: The Free Press.

Belias, D., & Koustelios, A. (2014). Leadership and job satisfaction--A review. *European Scientific Journal*, *10*(8), 24-46.

Bhatti, N., Maitlo, G. M., Shaikh, N., Hashmi, M. A., & Shaikh, F. M. (2012). The impact of autocratic and democratic leadership style on job satisfaction. *International Business Research*, *5*(2), 192-201.

Böckerman, P., & Ilmakunnas, P. (2012). The job satisfaction-productivity nexus: A study using matched survey and register data. *Industrial & Labor Relations Review*, *65*(2), 244-262.

Bressolles, G., Durrieu, F., & Deans, K. R. (2015). An examination of the online service-profit chain. *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management, 43*(8), 727-751.

Burton, L. J., & Welty Peachey, J. (2014). Ethical leadership in intercollegiate sport: Challenges, opportunities, future directions. *Journal of Intercollegiate Sport*, *7*, 1-10.

Burton, L. J., & Welty Peachey, J., & Damon, Z. (2019). Positive leadership theories: Transformational, transactional, and servant leadership. In J. F. Borland, G. M. Kane, & L. J. Burton (Eds.), *Sport leadership in the 21st century* (2nd ed., pp. 19-40). Burlington, MA: Jones and Bartlett Learning.

Busch, T., Fallan, L., & Pettersen, A. (2012). Disciplinary differences in job satisfaction, self-efficacy, goal commitment and organisational commitment among faculty employees in Norwegian colleges: An empirical assessment of indicators of performance. *Quality in Higher Education, 4*(2), 137-157.

Cain, L., Tanford, S., & Shulga, L. (2018). Customers' perceptions of employee engagement: Fortifying the service-profit chain. *International Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Administration*, *19*(1), 52-77.

Caruna, A. (2002). Service quality: The effects of service quality and the mediating role of customer satisfaction. *European Journal of Marketing*, *36*(7/8), 811-828.

Chan, S., Hunag, X., Snape, E., & Lam, C. (2013). The Janus face of paternalistic leaders: Authoritarianism, benevolence, subordinates' organization based self-esteem, and performance. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *34*, 108-128.

Chelladurai, P. (2007). Leadership in sports. In G. Tenenbaum & R. C. Eklund (Eds)., *Handbook of sport psychology* (3rd ed., pp. 113-135). New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Chen, S. C. (2012). The customer satisfaction-loyalty relation in an interactive e-service setting: The mediators. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, *19*(2), 202-210.

Cheong, M., Yammarino, F. J., Dionne, S. D., Spain, S. M., & Chou-Yu, T. (2019). A review of the effectiveness of empowering leadership. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *30*, 34-58.

Crust, L., & Lawrence, I. (2006). A review of leadership on sport: Implications for football management. *Athletic Insight*, *8*, 28-48.

Demir, A., Talaat, K., & Aydinli, C. (2015). The relations among dimensions of service quality, satisfaction, loyalty, and willingness to pay more: Case of GSM operators service at Northern-Iraq. *International Journal of Academic Research in Accounting, Finance and Management Sciences*, *5*(4), 146-154.

Elshout, R., Scherp, E., & van der Feltz-Cornelis, C. M. (2013). Understanding the link between leadership style, employee satisfaction, and absenteeism: A mixed methods design study in a mental health care institution. *Neuropsychiatric Disease and Treatment*, *9*, 823-837.

Gounaris, S., & Boukis, A. (2013). The role of employee job satisfaction in strengthening customer repurchase intentions. *Journal of Services Marketing, 27*(4), 322-333.

Greenleaf, R. K. (1977). *Servant leadership: A journey into the nature of legitimate power and greatness*. New York: Paulist Press.

Groth, M., & Grandey, A. (2012). From bad to worse: Negative exchange spirals in employee–customer service interactions. *Organizational Psychology Review*, *2*(3), 208-233.

Harms, P. D., Wood, D., Landay, K., Lester, P. B. & Lester, G. V. (2018). Autocratic leaders and authoritarian followers revisited: A review and agenda for the future. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *29*, 105-122.

Heskett, J. L., Jones, T. O., Loveman, G. W., Sasser, W. E. & Schlesinger, L. A. (1994, March-April). Putting the service-profit chain to work. *Harvard Business Review*, 164-174.

Heskett, J. L., Sasser, J. W. E., & Schlesinger, L. A. (1997). *The service profit chain: How leading companies link profit and growth to loyalty, satisfaction, and value*. New York: Free Press.

Huang, X., Xu, E., Chiu, W., Lam, C., & Farh, J-L. (2015). When authoritarian leaders outperform transformational leaders: Firm performance in a harsh economic environment. *Academy of Management Discoveries*, *1*(2), 180-200.

Imran, H., Arif, I., Cheema, S., & Azeem, M. (2014). Relationship between job satisfaction, job performance, attitude towards work, and organizational commitment. *Entrepreneurship and Innovation Management Journal*, *2*(2), 135-144.

Isaacson, W. (2013). *Steve Jobs*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Jeon, H., & Choi, B. (2012). The relationship between employee satisfaction and customer satisfaction. *Journal of Services Marketing*, *26*(5), 332-341.

Judge, T. A., & Piccolo, R. F. (2004). Transformational and transactional leadership: A meta-analytic test of their relative validity. *The Journal of Applied Psychology*, *89*, 36-51.

Kanyurhi, E. B., & Bugandwa, D. (2016). Internal marketing, employee job satisfaction, and perceived organizational performance in microfinance institutions. *International Journal of Bank Marketing*, *34*(5). Retrieved from https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/IJBM-06-2015-0083/full/html

Kelloway, E. K. Sivanathan, N., Francis, L., & Barling, J. (2005). Poor leadership. In J. Barling, E. K. Kelloway, & M. R. Frone (Eds.), *Handbook of work stress* (pp. 89-112). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Kim, K., Magnusen, M., Andrew, D. A., & Stoll, J. (2012). Are transformational leaders a double-edged sword? Impact of transformational leadership on sport employee commitment and job satisfaction. *International Journal of Sports Science & Coaching*, *7*(4), 661-676.

Kotler, P., & Keller, K. L. (2012). *Marketing management*. Boston: Pearson Education.

Kumar, V., Dalla Pozza, I., & Ganesh, J. (2013). Revisiting the satisfaction-loyalty relationship: Empirical generalizations and directions for future research. *Journal of Retailing*, *89*(3), 246-262.

Locke, E. (1976). The nature and causes of job satisfaction. In M. D. Dunnette (Ed.), *Handbook of Industrial and Organizational Psychology* (pp. 1297-1350). Chicago: Rand McNally.

Loveman, G. W. (1998). Employee satisfaction, customer loyalty and financial performance: An empirical examination of the service profit chain in retail banking. *Journal of Service Research, 1*, 18-31.

Ludeke, S. (2016). Authoritarianism: Positives and negatives. In V. Zeiglar-Hill & D. K. Marcus (Eds.). *The dark side of personality: Science and practice in social, personality, and clinical psychology* (pp. 231-250). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Maynard, M. T., Mathieu, J., Marsh, W. M. & Ruddy, T. M. (2007). A multilevel investigation of the influences of employees' resistance to empowerment. *Human Performance*, *20*, 147-171.

Mosadeghrad, A. M., & Ferdosi, M. (2013). Leadership, job satisfaction and organizational commitment in healthcare sector: Proposing and testing a model. *Materia Socio-Medica*, *25*(2), 121-126.

Myrden, S. E., & Kelloway, E. K. (2015). Leading to customer loyalty: A daily test of the service-profit chain. *Journal of Services Marketing*, *29*(7), 585-598.

Northouse, P. G. (2012). *Introduction to leadership: Concepts and practice*. Los Angeles: Sage.

Parris, D. L., & Welty Peachey, J. (2013). Encouraging servant leadership: A qualitative study of how a cause related sporting event inspires participants to serve. *Leadership, 9,* 486-512.

Pellingrini, E. K., & Scandura, T. A. (2008). Paternalistic leadership: A review and agenda for future research. *Journal of Management*, *34*, 566-593.

Piccolo, R. F., Bono, J. E., Heinitz, K., Rowold, J., Duehr, E., & Judge, T. A. (2012). The relative impact of complementary leader behaviors: Which matters most? *The Leadership Quarterly, 23*, 567-581.

Rae, K. (2013). How perceptions of empowerment and commitment affect job satisfaction: A study of managerial-level effects. *Accounting, Accountability & Performance*, *18*(1), 1-35.

Richter, G. (2018). Antecedents and consequences of leadership styles: Findings from empirical research in multinational headquarters. *Armed Forces & Society*, *44*(1), 72-91.

Robinson, L. (2006). Customer expectations of sport organizations. *European Sport Management Quarterly*, *6*(1), 67-84

Robinson, G. M., Magnusen, M. J., & Neubert, M. (2020). Servant leadership, leader effectiveness, and the role of political skill: A study of interscholastic sport administrators and coaches. *International Journal of Sports Science & Coaching*. https://doi.org/10.1177/1747954120971755

Rodríguez, D., Buyens, D., Landeghem, H., & Lasio, V. (2016). Impact of lean production on perceived job autonomy and job satisfaction: An experimental study. *Human Factors and Ergonomics in Manufacturing & Service Industries, 26*(2), 159-176.

Ryan, J., & Tipu, S. (2013). Leadership effects on innovation propensity: A two-factor full range leadership model. Journal of Business Research, *66*(10), 2116-2129.

Schoel, C., Bluemke, M., Mueller, P., & Stahlberg, D. (2011). When autocratic leaders become an option: Uncertainty and self-esteem predict implicit leadership preferences. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *101*, 521-540.

Scott, D. (2014). *Contemporary leadership in sport organizations*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics

Sharma, J. (2015). Impact of TQS on financial performance of the business through service profit chain. *RKG Journal of Management, 7*(1), 56-68.

Skogstad, A., Schanke Aasland, M., Birkeland Nelson, M., Hetalnd, J., Matthiesen, S. B., & Einarsen, S. (2014). The relative effects of constructive, laissez-faire, and tyrannical leadership on subordinate job satisfaction. *Zeitschrift für Psychologie*, *222*(4), 221-232.

Wallace, M., & Weese, W. J. (1995). Leadership, organizational culture, and job satisfaction in Canadian YMCA organizations. *Journal of Sport Management*, *9*, 182-193.

Weese, W. J. (1995). Leadership and organizational culture: An investigation of Big Ten and Mid-American Conference campus recreation administrations. *Journal of Sport Management*, *9*, 119-134.

Weese, W. J. (1996). Do leadership and organizational culture really matter? *Journal of Sport Management*, *10*, 197-206.

Welty Peachey, J., & Burton, L. (2017). Servant leadership in sport-for-development and peace: A way forward. *Quest*, *69*(1), 125-139.

Welty Peachey, J., Burton, L., Wells, J., & Chung, M. (2018). Exploring servant leadership and needs satisfaction in the sport for development and peace context. *Journal of Sport Management*, *32*, 96-108.

Welty Peachey, J., Damon, Z., Zhou, Y., & Burton, L. (2015). Forty years of leadership research in sport management: A review, synthesis, and conceptual framework. *Journal of Sport Management*, *29*, 570-587.

Wong, S. I., & Giessner, S. R. (2016). The thin line between empowering and laissez-faire leadership: An expectancy-match perspective. *Journal of Management*, *44*(2), 757-783.

Yammarino, F. J. (2013). Leadership: Past, present, and the future. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies*, *20*(2), 149-135.

Yammarino, F. J., Dionne, S. D., Chun, J. U., & Dansereau, F. (2005). Leadership and levels of analysis: A state of science review. *Leadership Quarterly*, *16*, 879-919.

Yang, I. (2015). Positive effects of laissez-faire leadership: Conceptual exploration. *Journal of Management Development*, *34*(10), 1246-1261.

Yee, R. W. Y., Yeung, A. C. L., & Cheng, T. C. E., (2008). The impact of employee satisfaction on quality and profitability in high-contact service industries. *Journal of Operations Management, 26*, 651-668.

Yücel, I. (2012). Examining the relationships among job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention: An empirical study. *International Journal of Business and Management*, *7*(20), 44.

Yukl, G. (2010). *Leadership in organizations* (7th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

Zeithaml, V. A., Berry, L. L., & Parasuraman, A. (1996). The behavioral consequences of service quality. *Journal of Marketing, 60*(2), 31-46.