

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOR AND EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION: A CASE STUDY OF SERBIAN HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

Vesna Malićanin¹, Marko Slavković²

¹Health center "Nikola Džamić", Kraljevačka, 36210 Vrnjačka Banja, Serbia,
yesna.malicanin.vb@gmail.com

²University of Kragujevac, Faculty of Economics, Lyceum of the Principality of Serbia 3, 34000
Kragujevac, Serbia, m Slavkovic@kg.ac.rs

ABSTRACT

Leadership, as a process of engaging and directing employees towards the realization of a certain goal, is a social process that has a significant impact on job satisfaction. In healthcare organizations, job satisfaction is an antecedent of performances, so a leadership style must be created to provide a positive impact on both intrinsic and extrinsic satisfaction. Mostly, such effects are provided by transformational leadership, so the aim of this paper is to examine the impact that leadership behaviour can have on the intrinsic and extrinsic satisfaction of employees in health care organizations in the Republic of Serbia. Over a sample of 362 respondents employed in the health sector of the Republic of Serbia, correlation analysis showed that there is a statistically significant impact of leadership behaviour, ie leadership style, on intrinsic and extrinsic satisfaction of employees.

Keywords: leadership, transformational leadership, job satisfaction, intrinsic satisfaction, extrinsic satisfaction.

INTRODUCTION

The working environment of health organizations is not naturally determined, but is formed by the practice of human resource management, managerial decisions and social interaction of employees. Therefore, the goal is to create such a work environment in which good relations, pleasant working atmosphere and working conditions are represented, given that such factors are a way to ensure employee satisfaction (Upenieks, 2003). One aspect of human resource management relates to leadership, which is becoming increasingly important in healthcare organizations in the new millennium. Leaders not only guide the work of health workers, but also motivate and inspire employees, use their knowledge and ensure development (Dignam et al., 2012). If the leadership style is adapted to the contextual factors of the health organization, it increases the degree of efficiency in work, creates a basis for knowledge exchange and increases the degree of loyalty to the organization (Duffield, Roche, Blay, & Stasa, 2011).

Leadership is a social process in which the leader acts on followers in order to accept certain behaviors and implement certain activities in order to achieve a certain goal (Stojanović Aleksić, & Krstić, 2016). The leader defines the ultimate goal, articulates reality and communicates it to the followers. With his personal qualities or behavior, but also thanks to his interpretive ability, the leader stimulates employees to engage in the process of realizing the vision, ie the desired state to be achieved (Janićijević, 2011). Contextual leadership theory emphasizes that there is no single and best leadership style that can be applied in every situation. However, there are certain leadership styles that can be particularly effective or ineffective in healthcare organizations, certainly when it comes to employee satisfaction. A leader in health organizations must show concern for the needs of employees, define and communicate vision, encourage creativity, use employee knowledge, inspire and stimulate learning (Kumar, & Khiljee, 2015). Leaders in health organizations are expected to define desirable behaviors, delegate responsibility, reward

performance, stimulate teamwork, and manage change (Oliver, 2006). For a leadership style to be effective, the leader of health organizations must have the following characteristics (Alexander, Comfort, Weiner, & Bogue, 2001):

- must be competent and experienced in his field,
- providing equal and quality health care to society is the ultimate goal that a leader strives to achieve with his employees,
- must have the ability to solve different problems in different areas,
- must be systematic in solving problems.

Starting from the position that leadership style depends on the action of numerous contextual factors that may be related to the organizational environment, employees, but also the external environment, different leadership styles can be observed within health organizations. The best effect is achieved when the leader ensures employee participation, grants autonomy, develops and uses their knowledge. However, there are complex situations such as emergencies, when employees have to react quickly, and a sense of urgency can reduce the degree of rational judgment in employees. Leaders are then expected to provide a directive and provide clear guidelines and courses of action (Galea, 2017). Applied directive leadership style should not be seen as a negative phenomenon. In fact, directive leadership is effective in conditions of high interdependence of jobs, stressful circumstances, as well as when the employee needs clear guidelines for action (Stojanović Aleksić, Šapić, & Erić, 2010). Democratic leadership style in healthcare organizations is effective when it comes to an unstructured problem whose solution requires a combination of different skills and abilities, as well as when employees have a high degree of intellectual ability they want to show (Galea, 2017). Thus, it is observed that different forms of leadership behavior may have different significance for employees and their behavior. Accordingly, leadership is a factor that can significantly affect the level of satisfaction of health professionals (Alonderiene, & Majauskaite, 2016).

Job satisfaction is often seen as the most important attitude of employees in organizations. These are cognitive, affective and evaluative reactions of the employee to the job (Janićijević, 2008). At work, job satisfaction is a cumulative of positive and negative events that an employee has experienced during work, which determine his attitudes towards work and thus behavior during work (Joković, Kekuš, Despotović, Pavlović, & Hadživuković, 2018). Hence, job satisfaction can create loyalty to the organization, have a positive impact on productivity and reduce absenteeism, but other circumstances are possible if the level of job satisfaction is low (Inuwa, 2015). As a multidimensional construction, job satisfaction depends on the action of a number of factors. When it comes to personal factors, life satisfaction, personal and demographic characteristics are taken into account (Hayes, Bonner, & Pryor, 2010). On the other hand, there are organizational factors related to the quality of the work environment, interpersonal relationships, available resources, awards and other important factors (Janićijević, 2008). Leadership is also one of the factors that determines the degree of job satisfaction (Yaghoubipoor, Tee, & Ahmed, 2013).

Satisfaction of health workers is a determinant of the efficiency of the achieved results. In order to achieve job satisfaction, leaders of health organizations most often implement transformational leadership style (Samarakoon, 2019). Transformational leadership is of a democratic nature because it implies the care of leaders for the needs of employees, their participation and joint problem solving (Oliver, 2006). The effectiveness of transformational leadership is achieved thanks to the four components of this leadership style. The first component is inspirational motivation, which is especially important in a period of organizational change, because the leader speaks inspiringly and optimistically about the desired state to be achieved. Intellectual stimulation, as a component of transformational leadership, implies that the leader respects and uses the abilities and skills of his employees. The third component is individual consolidation, which actually means that the leader shows individual attention to the problems and needs of each employee. Finally, charisma, ie idealized influence, is a component of transformational leadership according to which the leader defines the desired model of behavior for others by his behavior (Jambawo, 2018). The positive impact of transformational leadership on the

satisfaction of health workers is due to the trust that the leader has in employees, but also due to the ability to express their knowledge, express their views, problems and needs (Yang, 2009; Alonderiene, & Majauskaitė, 2016). By applying a transformational leadership style in healthcare organizations, the leader strives to meet the different expectations of employees, stimulates them to learn and share knowledge and work in a team. Due to empathy and active communication with employees, the leader knows exactly what their needs are and therefore strives to provide those rewards that will have the best impact on motivation (Iqbal, Fatima, & Naveed, 2019). A transformational leader stimulates health professionals to use and develop their intellectual abilities, and to make this process more effective, the leader provides the necessary resources and support (Asif, Jameel, Hussain, Hwang, & Sahito, 2019). Intrinsic satisfaction factors imply that employees are interested in intangible rewards such as recognition, flexible working hours, participation in decision-making, additional education and the like (Berdud, Cabasés, & Nieto, 2016). On the other hand, extrinsic satisfaction factors imply that employees are more interested in earnings, material benefits, working conditions, optimal control, etc. (Cogin, Ng, & Lee, 2016). Transformational leadership emphasizes that it is able to provide intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction. In order to accomplish the task and manage organizational change, the transformation leader provides earnings, autonomy, stimulates the creation and exchange of knowledge, takes care of personal problems, inspires, communicates and represents a model whose behavior should minimize uncertainty in actions taken (Asif et al., 2019).

MATERIAL AND METHODS OF WORK

The subject of the research is the relationship between leadership behavior and satisfaction of employees of health organizations in the Republic of Serbia. The aim of this paper is to examine the impact that leadership behavior can have on the intrinsic and extrinsic satisfaction of employees in healthcare organizations in the Republic of Serbia. In accordance with the subject and goal, the basic assumptions in the research are that there is a statistically significant relationship between leadership behavior and intrinsic and extrinsic satisfaction. Accordingly, an independent variable in the paper is the behavior of leaders, observed through statements to measure leadership style. The findings are taken from and adapted from a study by Arnold et al (Arnold, Arad, Rhoades, & Drasgow, 2000). Leadership style, ie leadership behavior in this model, was analyzed through five dimensions: leading by example, participation in decision-making, training, interaction with team members and providing information. The dependent variable in the work is the satisfaction of employees with work, observed through intrinsic and extrinsic satisfaction. Findings for measuring satisfaction were taken from the authors Schaufeli and Bakker (2004), and certain findings from the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire were used (Weiss, Dawis, England, & Lofquist, 1976).

The first part of the questionnaire was constructed with the aim of identifying and measuring leadership behavior and satisfaction of health workers. In that process, a five-point Likert scale was used, where the respondents expressed their disagreement, ie agreement with the statements. The second part of the questionnaire was of a structural type and was created in order to determine the socio - demographic characteristics of the respondents. The research process was realized in the health sector of the Republic of Serbia and it included relevant health organizations. In the research process, a sample of 362 respondents was formed. The processing of their views was performed through the statistical software SPSS V23. On that occasion, descriptive statistical analysis, Cronbach's alpha test of internal reliability and correlation analysis were applied.

The structural characteristics of the sample show that it is dominated by female respondents (83%). These are mostly respondents who are between 31 and 40 years old (35%), have completed secondary education (71%) and have more than 20 years of service (35%).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

At the very beginning, descriptive statistical analysis was applied, ie the arithmetic mean and standard deviation were determined, the values of which are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Results of descriptive statistical analysis - variable: leadership.

Items	Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation
The leader of the organization works harder than anyone in my group/ team.	3.9972	1.1077
A leader sets a good example by his behavior.	4.1657	1.04743
The leader of the organization respects the suggestions of my working group when deciding on matters that concern us.	4.0470	1.06337
The leader of the organization gives the opportunity to all members of the working group/team to express their opinion.	4.0608	1.02957
The leader of the organization considers the ideas of my working group/ team even when he disagrees with them.	3.8425	1.17219
The leader of the organization helps my working group/ team to identify the domain in which we need more training.	3.8508	1.10895
The leader of the organization points out the ways in which my working group/team can improve the results of its work.	3.9613	1.03600
The leader of the organization encourages the members of my working group/team to solve problems together.	4.0000	0.95899
The leader of the organization helps to develop good relations between the members of the working group/team.	3.9890	1.02862
The leader of the organization explains the goals of our organization.	4.0608	1.00781
The leader of the organization explains the rules and expectations to my working group/team.	4.0829	1.01718
The leader of the organization explains his/her own decisions and activities to my working group/team.	3.9807	1.06683
The leader of the organization shows concern for the well-being of the members of the working group/team.	4.0331	1.06779
The leader of the organization treats all members of the working group/ team equally.	4.0193	1.10509
The leader of the organization cares about the success of the members of the working group/team.	4.0580	1.05497
The leader of the organization finds time to talk to the members of the working group/team.	4.0939	1.01894

The results of descriptive statistics for the variable of leadership show that the highest degree of agreement of the respondents' attitudes occurs when the *A leader sets a good example by his behavior* (arithmetic mean = 4.16). With his model, the leader of health organizations forms a model of behavior for employees, which minimizes any ambiguity about what to do and how to do it. Also, the results of the descriptive analysis showed that the leader respects the suggestions of employees, gives them the opportunity to express their ideas and strives to solve problems together with them. Statements according to which the leader communicates with all employees in order to identify their needs and problems are also significant. High values of the arithmetic mean are also shown by some other statements related to individual consideration, such as those where it is stated that the leader cares about the members of the group and the team, treats all members equally, cares about their success, etc. Given the above, it can be concluded that transformational leadership style is expressed in health organizations.

Table 2. Results of descriptive statistical analysis - variable: job satisfaction.

Items	Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation
Intrinsic satisfaction		
I feel enthusiastic about my job.	3.9280	1.10821
My job inspires me.	4.0221	1,09623
In the morning, when I wake up, I feel ready to go to work.	3.9309	1.15703
I am proud of the work I do.	4.3674	0.90571
I am energetic when I work.	4.0414	0.95375
I have the opportunity to do the job in my own way.	3.5967	1.01118
I have the opportunity to do the work myself.	3.6381	0.96129
I have the opportunity to be "someone" in society.	3.5276	1.02087
Extrinsic satisfaction		
I am satisfied with the amount of salary for the work I do.	3.2624	1.42209
I am satisfied with the collegiality.	3.6630	1.12253
I am pleased with the praise I receive for a job well done.	3.6022	1,09736
My job provides stable employment.	3.8757	1.16196
I am satisfied with how my superior manages people.	4.0608	1.12718
My superior is competent to make decisions.	4.2320	1.00760
Occasionally I have the chance to do some other work as well.	3.3895	1.16038
I am satisfied with the working conditions.	3.8094	1.19770

Descriptive statistical analysis of job satisfaction of health workers shows that the highest degree of agreement occurs with the statement *I am proud of the work I do* (arithmetic mean = 4.36). This attitude of employees is the best indicator of intrinsic satisfaction, because it indicates the inherent, ie internal satisfaction that arises from the very performance of a given job. Also, intrinsic satisfaction shows that work is inspiring for health workers, so as such it stimulates employees to be energetic during work. If extrinsic satisfaction is observed, the greatest degree of agreement of attitudes occurs when the statement *My superior is competent to make decisions* (arithmetic mean = 4.23). This attitude of the employees indicates that they are satisfied with the decisions and behavior of the leader, trust him and wants to follow him. Considering the results obtained in Table 2, the conclusion is that intrinsic job satisfaction is predominant in healthcare organizations.

Table 3. Cronbach's alpha internal reliability test.

Variables	Cronbach's alpha
Leadership style	0.970
Intriguing pleasure	0.877
Extrinsic pleasure	0.878

DeVellis (2016) points out that good internal reliability is achieved if the value of the Cronbach's alpha test is more than 0.7. Since the value of this indicator is significantly above the prescribed value for all variables, it can be said that there is a good internal reliability of the variables in the model. Therefore, it is justified to continue the research and apply correlation analysis, the results of which are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Results of correlation analysis.

Variables	1	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	2	2.1	2.2
1	1,000	0.840 **	0.873 **	0.932 **	0.895 **	0.953 **	0.643 **	0.527 **	0.685 **
1.1	0.840 **	1,000	0.720 **	0.707 **	0.672 **	0.813 **	0.575 **	0.455 **	0.635 **
1.2	0.873 **	0.720 **	1,000	0.773 **	0.698 **	0.777 **	0.597 **	0.477 **	0.632 **
1.3	0.932 **	0.707 **	0.773 **	1,000	0.831 **	0.864 **	0.580 **	0.486 **	0.615 **
1.4	0.895 **	0.672 **	0.698 **	0.831 **	1,000	0.857 **	0.582 **	0.499 **	0.590 **
1.5	0.953 **	0.813 **	0.777 **	0.864 **	0.857 **	1,000	0.627 **	0.511 **	0.670 **
2	0.643 **	0.575 **	0.597 **	0.580 **	0.582 **	0.627 **	1,000	0.910 **	0.919 **
2.1	0.527 **	0.455 **	0.477 **	0.486 **	0.499 **	0.511 **	0.910 **	1,000	0.708 **
2.2	0.685 **	0.635 **	0.632 **	0.615 **	0.590 **	0.670 **	0.919 **	0.708 **	1,000

Note: 1-Leadership style; 1.1-Dimension by leading by example; 1.2-Dimension participation in decision making; 1.3-Dimension-training; 1.4. Dimension-interaction with team members; 1.5-providing information; 2-Total satisfaction; 2.1-Intrinsic satisfaction; 2.2-Extrinsic satisfaction; ** - All correlation coefficients are significant at the level of 0.01 .

When the correlation coefficient is in the interval +/- 0.10-0.29, it is a low correlation. The correlation coefficient in the interval +/- 0.30-0.49 shows a moderately strong correlation, while the correlation coefficient in the interval of +/- 0.50-1 shows a large or strong correlation (Cohen, 1988).

If the general results of correlation analysis are observed first, the highest degree of correlation exists between the leadership style and the information provision dimension (0.953). This actually shows that the leadership style in healthcare organizations is such that it implies regular communication of leaders with employees in terms of goals, plans, vision, work results and other relevant circumstances. But if we look at the impact on satisfaction, we should first note that the leadership style, ie the behavior of leaders, has a high correlation with the overall satisfaction of health workers (0.643). However, it is necessary to consider in particular the impact of leadership behavior on intrinsic and extrinsic employee satisfaction.

The results in Table 4 show that the highest degree of correlation was achieved between leadership style and intrinsic satisfaction (0.527), and if the dimensions of leadership are observed, then the correlation is highest between intrinsic satisfaction and information delivery dimension (0.511). Namely, providing information is one of the ways to ensure intriguing satisfaction of employees of health organizations. If the leader provides clear information about what and how to do, how to behave and what goals should be achieved, there is an increase in satisfaction. In other cases, there is a moderate correlation between leader behavior and intriguing employee satisfaction. Other dimensions of leadership appear to be relevant determinants of intrinsic satisfaction, such as creating behaviors, ensuring participation in decision-making, training, and interacting with team members, but their importance is relatively less than providing information dimension. Healthcare professionals try to be always informed about relevant events and acquainted with the guidelines that need to be taken.

The correlation coefficient of leadership style and overall extrinsic satisfaction is high at 0.685. When analyzing the correlation coefficient between individual dimensions of leadership behavior and extrinsic satisfaction, the highest degree of correlation exists between information provision and extrinsic satisfaction (0.67). Namely, the provision of information can to some extent be an extrinsic factor of satisfaction. When starting work, employees strive to be fully acquainted with work obligations and procedures. Their motive is to avoid any form of unproductive and illicit behavior that may diminish their material and financial rewards. Hence, they expect the leader to show them at the very beginning what should or should not be done, so the minimization of ambiguity in this regard stands out as a determinant of satisfaction. There is a high correlation between all other dimensions and extrinsic satisfaction. Namely, employees in

health organizations want to apply the form of behavior presented by the leader, educate themselves in order to achieve better performance, participate in decision-making and interact with others in order to do better work and thus receive higher rewards. In accordance with all the above views, it can be concluded that there is a statistically significant correlation between the behavior of leaders, ie the leadership style of health organizations and overall (intrinsic and extrinsic) satisfaction.

CONCLUSIONS

A number of factors within healthcare organizations can affect the satisfaction of healthcare professionals. In general, a distinction can be made between intrinsic and extrinsic factors, and thus between intrinsic and extrinsic satisfaction. First of all, job satisfaction represents the positive emotions that an employee has towards the work he or she does. In health organizations, job satisfaction stands out as very important for achieving good performance, including those related to health care. That is why human resource managers strive to form a policy and practice of human resource management that will ensure the growth of satisfaction.

Intrinsic job satisfaction is implied by some intangible rewards such as inspiration, communication, participation in decision-making, additional education, recognition, autonomy in work, etc. On the other hand, extrinsic job satisfaction is associated with material and financial incentives in the workplace. For health organizations, leadership has been shown to be an important determinant of overall job satisfaction. In accordance with the obtained research results, it was determined that transformational leadership is represented in health organizations, where leaders inspire, motivate, use and develop competencies and communicate their vision with optimism. Leadership behavior, which is in line with the leadership style, implies a high correlation with overall satisfaction. The positive impact of leadership on satisfaction is noticeable in all dimensions of leadership style. These include leading by example, sharing information, interacting, empowering employees to participate in decision-making, and training. In intrinsic as well as extrinsic satisfaction, it has been shown that sharing information with employees has the greatest impact on satisfaction. Namely, they want to be regularly informed about all goals and plans, but also about desirable behaviors in order to maximize their performance and get the desired rewards.

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