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## Betting Against the Glass Ceiling: Supervisor Gender & Employee Job Satisfaction in the Casino-Entertainment Industry

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# Betting Against the Glass Ceiling: Supervisor Gender & Employee Job Satisfaction in the Casino-Entertainment Industry

## **Abstract**

This exploratory study expands on hospitality management literature, specifically on the influence of a supervisor's gender in regards to employee job satisfaction within the casino-entertainment sector. Employee job satisfaction was analyzed using company, department, and supervisor variables based on 961 surveys. The study's results suggest that employees with male supervisors have a higher employee satisfaction level than employees with supervisors that are female. Hospitality organizations are therefore encouraged to create leadership programs to ensure women are a part of corporate leadership's success formula for the future.

## **Keywords**

Human Resources, Job Satisfaction, Gender, Casino

## **INTRODUCTION**

Two U.S. professors ran a study to test students' workplace gender perceptions using a business case study about an actual entrepreneur with an outgoing personality and powerful professional network (Sandberg, 2013). Half of the students were given the case study with a female business leader and the remaining students with a male leader. After polling their students, the male was described as more appealing as a colleague and leader, while the female was determined to be selfish and unappealing as an employee and leader. The case study, which was about an actual female entrepreneur, Heidi Roizen, helped support the notion that success and likeability are positively correlated for men and negatively correlated for women. While most people would not openly admit to gender stereotyping, this study points that both genders like men when they are successful and both genders like women less when they are successful.

This current study was initiated based on a discussion with a casino-entertainment organization about examining their employee satisfaction levels and deciphering how their supervisor gender may influence the ability to improve workplace satisfaction levels of employees. The hospitality industry, of which the casino-entertainment is a segment, faces critical operational challenges due to the industry's labor-intensive structure, a high turnover rate that is intensified due to a multitude of retiring baby boomers, a high female employee percentage, and below-average employee wages (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2013).

The natural starting point for this research was to examine the academic literature to gain a foundation into factors that contribute to employee satisfaction and the relationship a supervisor's gender may have on job satisfaction. Successful hospitality leadership is comprised of knowing the organization's employees, addressing their needs and aspirations, and improving the employee's workplace experience (Barrows, 1990). While several hospitality industry articles were found over the past several decades on either job satisfaction or supervisor gender, there were no published academic empirical studies conducted on the combined topics of employee satisfaction and the relationship it may have to a supervisor's gender. Each topic was researched independently, with the goal of finding consensus and solutions for the industry.

From an academic perspective, this study contributes to hospitality literature by presenting empirical results on the effects of supervisors' gender on job satisfaction. This study's results can be useful for casino-entertainment and hospitality organizations to gain a better understanding of the role of supervisor gender and its relationship to job satisfaction. In particular, findings may assist in human resources decision-making areas, such as employee recruitment, selection, training, leadership development, performance management, and financial compensation.

## **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

The review of literature consists of three topic sections and a conclusion to provide the study's foundation. The first section focuses on the uniqueness of the casino-entertainment industry in comparison to other hospitality industries. The second section examines research on a supervisor's gender, including industry challenges for females and perceptions of both gender's leadership styles. The third section focuses on studies conducted on job satisfaction factors. The conclusion of the review of literature advances the study's three hypotheses.

### **Casino-Entertainment Industry**

Job satisfaction studies within the casino-entertainment segment of the hospitality industry are limited in the academic literature (Bai, Brewer, Sammons, & Swerdlow, 2006; Costen, Hardigree, & Testagrossa, 2003; Gu & Siu, 2009; Wan 2010; Pan 2013). The limited availability of research is based on two factors. First, the casino-entertainment industry is very protective of its employee and customer information due to the competition for profitable customers and qualified employees. Any published results could give rival casinos insight into a casino's unique operational strategies, which could be detrimental to a casino's competitive edge. The second reason lies with the proximity of casino-entertainment properties to academic researchers. In 2012, there were more than 363,000 gaming employees throughout the U.S., with over 170,000 of these employees in Nevada (American Gaming Association, 2014). While the majority of U.S. states (48 of 50) offer some sort of gaming entertainment, such as small casinos, lottery, or pari-mutual facilities, many of these gaming options do not always contain the extensive amenity variety of casino-entertainment resorts, often called mega-resorts. Because most academic institutions are not in close proximity to a mega-resort operation, research is expensive to undertake.

The casino-entertainment industry term, mega-resort, is commonly used to describe large-scale properties with varied service offerings; including hundreds of casino slot machines, dozens of table games, retail outlets, extensive dining options, headliner entertainment, a large lodging facility, and convention space (for a full discussion and history on casino mega-resort facilities, see Lucas & Kilby 2011; Schwartz, 2003). Many of today's modern casino-entertainment resorts offer luxury at a level not available 20 years ago, and the growth of this industry continues as new states in the U.S. pass legislation that permits casino-entertainment resorts.

To ensure the maximization of revenue and consumer satisfaction, mega-resorts are open 24-hours per day (Lucas & Kilby 2011; Schwartz, 2003; Wan 2013). Staffing levels are based on customer peak service times and property occupancy levels, which are influenced by destination weather and holiday seasonality, citywide convention demand, and property-level marketing promotions. The casino-entertainment business is inherently labor-intensive,

requiring a large number of employees working multiple employee shift schedules, often with more employees in a single property than an average hotel chain's entire system. When the MGM City Center opened in 2009, it hired 12,000 permanent employees, making it the largest single non-construction employee hiring effort in the hospitality industry that year (CityCenter Overview and Facts, 2013).

The volume of workers needed to run casino-entertainment resorts can also be seen in organized labor totals. The Las Vegas Culinary Union 226, the largest union in the state of Nevada, has seen a 300% increase in membership over the last 20 years due to both the number and size of resorts (Las Vegas Culinary Union, 2013). The large employee volume creates a significant financial expenditure related to the management of employees. For example, the Mirage Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas spent \$500,000 on training its workforce prior to openings its doors (Eder, 1990).

Casino human resource managers are under significant pressure to ensure employee performance results in customer satisfaction, particularly due to the financial investment made to attract, train, motivate, and retain employees. In the past, human resource managers at casino-entertainment properties served primarily in an administrative capacity that focused on employment bookkeeping, hiring employees, and job training (Hashimoto, Kline, & Fenich, 1996). Today, human resource divisions have taken on more strategic responsibilities that demand additional resources for leadership development. The term "employee" is now often interchangeable with the term "human capital" (Walsh, 2000), which indicates the approach companies are taking with value of their workforce. Similar to assets on the balance sheet, such as cash and machinery, employees are now seen as a capital investment. In a study of 170 hospitality managers from over 25 countries, the management of human capital was shown to be a top concern (Enz, 2001).

### **Gender**

While women consist of 60% of the hospitality workforce, only 18% of hospitality managers are female (compared to 25% of the male workforce), and only 6% of senior hospitality board-level executives are women, which is half the U.S. national average (HVS Executive Search, 2011). This trend of few women in leadership positions continues in the casino-entertainment industry. Costen et al. (2003) found women held only 24.8% of casino management positions. Of the thirteen hospitality-related companies on the 2012 Fortune 500 list, no woman holds the CEO title (Boone, Houran, & Veller, 2013). Within the casino-entertainment segment, female employees also outnumber male employees when analyzing the entire workforce, with only one female publically traded casino CEO, the Isle of Capri's CEO and President, Virginia McDowell (American Gaming Association, 2014).

Researchers have identified that the limited female presence in hospitality leadership is due to industry barriers, such as a glass ceiling (Brownell, 2001) or a corporate obstacle course (Boone et al., 2013). One casino manager explained that the gaming industry is a ceiling made of plastic wrap; it stretches when someone pushes through but does not leave a large enough hole, as a shattered glass ceiling does, that others can pass through (Costen et al., 2003). Regardless of metaphors used, the challenges women face in the hospitality workplace include the influence of the good old boys' network, lower wages than their male counterparts, designated female department management positions (such as marketing and human resources), and fewer female mentoring opportunities, all of which limit promotions of women to hospitality organizations' highest levels.

The leadership style exhibited by each gender impacts the work environment (Boone et al., 2013). On one hand, the Gender-Centered Model (Lewis & Fagenson-Eland, 1998; Loden, 1985; Rosener, 1990) identifies that employees should adopt masculine tendencies in the work environment. In some industries, such as nursing, an industry traditionally dominated by women, it is suggested to adopt female leadership attributes by male and female management in the nursing industry (Rozier, 1996). According to a multiple discipline leadership study of over 7,700 participants, while a supervisor's gender impacted a subordinate's job perception, the differences were in the male or female leadership styles, not the supervisor's actual gender (Valentine & Godkin, 2000).

Different leadership styles of men and women may impact employee job perceptions (Valentine & Godkin, 2000). The Gender-Organization/Gender-Organization-System Model attempts to explain how management-style differences are a reflection of both the supervisor's gender and the supervisor's management position, which results in different management behaviors, thereby creating different management experiences in the same organization (Fagenson, 1990a; Fagenson, 1990b). No matter how minor the differences may be, the gender of an employee's supervisor could present very different job perspectives in an identical organizational situation (Jeanquart-Barone & Sekaran, 1994).

The Gender Discount Problem has identified that employees and coworkers have different levels of expectations from each gender (Sandburg, 2013). When men help workplace colleagues, those who benefit feel indebted because the favor is viewed as an inconvenience to the man. A responsibility is felt to return the favor in the form of a more favorable job performance evaluation or financial increases; yet when men choose not to help, there is no penalty for not providing the favor. In contrast, when women help work colleagues, the perception is that women want to help because of their desire to get along with others and there is no perceived need for rewarding the colleague. If the woman chooses not to assist, however, the penalties include less favorable job reviews and decreased financial rewards. Employees perceive feminine leadership as less competent or less successful than masculine leadership (Gardiner & Tiggemann, 1999). Negative preconceptions about women in the workplace have been shown

to impact women's appraisals (Deaux, 1984; Taynor & Deaux, 1973; Taynor & Deaux, 1975). The Heidi Roizen case study, discussed earlier, supports the notion that success and likeability are positively correlated for men and negatively correlated for women, with both genders liking men when they are successful and both genders disliking women when they are successful (Sandberg, 2013).

All of these different gender interactions have the potential to create workplace challenges, thus impacting job satisfaction (Morgan, 1997). Therefore, taking a deeper look at the multiple empirical studies that have analyzed gender leadership styles could be helpful to pinpoint potential differences between the two gender management styles.

#### ***Female management styles***

Important job success factors for female hotel managers include enthusiasm, determination, interpersonal skills, and sense of humor (Brownell, 1994). Female leadership characteristics focus on problem solving, analytical thinking, effective communication, and creating professional relationships (Andorka, 1998; Moskal, 1997). Female supervisors are more likely to develop close connections with their subordinates in comparison to their male counterparts (Anderson & Martin, 1995; Klenke, 2002; Valentine & Godkin, 2000). Top ranking hospitality industry female executives have been classified as being personable, politically savvy, intellectually capable, and having street smarts (Knutson & Schmidgall, 1999). Other important female hospitality executive attributes include communication, inner values, perseverance, responsibility, stewardship, trust, and vision (Knutson, Schmidgall, & Cichy, 2002). A study of restaurant managers identified that "women should definitely be the preferred gender to hire" (Yamaguchi & Garey, 1993, p. 392).

#### ***Male management styles***

Male hotel managers reported loyalty and integrity as integral to their success (Brownell, 1994). Males communicate with coworkers for needs related to control (Anderson & Martin, 1995). Subordinates tend to prefer male leadership (Cann & Siegfried, 1987), with male supervisors receiving more favorable evaluations within the workplace (McGlashan, Wright, & McCormick, 1995). Employees with male supervisors were identified as having greater job structure, giving feelings to greater career success (Valentine & Godkin, 2000). From these findings, it could be hypothesized that subordinates of male supervisors may have higher employee satisfaction rates than those of a female supervisor.

When looking at 40 competencies required for hospitality managers, the top ranking factors included leading teams, listening, communicating, hard work, trustworthiness, positive attitude, and flexibility (Brownell, 2008). Gender and technology-use were the two lowest ranked competency items. While not directly comparable due to culture and location, researchers conducted a study of over 200 Turkish hotel managers and determined there were no differences between their

work experiences, satisfaction, and psychological well-being regarding management gender styles, which according to the researchers contradicted previous findings (Burke, Koyuncu & Fiksenbaum, 2008). Therefore, to gain more insight into employee job satisfaction, the final section of this study's literature review is focused on employee satisfaction factors.

### **Job Satisfaction**

Job satisfaction has been defined as pleasurable feelings arising from an employee's workplace (Locke, 1969). More recently, the Society of Human Resource Management (SHRM) defined job satisfaction as how employees feel about various aspects of their job. This includes attributes such as work environment, pay, and benefits (SHRM, 2014). While job satisfaction continues to be a complex research topic that has been researched across a variety of industries, hospitality researchers have a great interest in understanding job satisfaction factors due to the industry's high turnover rate of employees and its impact on organizational profitability (Arnett, Lavrierie, & McLane, 2002; Barrows, 1990; Chi & Gursoy, 2008; Ghiselli, La Lopa, & Bai, 2001).

#### ***Historic job satisfaction studies***

In a 50-year old study of 350 New England electrical and manufacturing plant workers, researchers identified compensation and promotional opportunities as two top factors that increased job satisfaction for both genders (Hulin & Smith, 1964). Observations showed that women were receiving less pay and were working at lower level jobs than their male counterparts. The study's findings indicated that the female employees studied were less satisfied in their jobs than the male employees. The researchers concluded that a "large (and increasing) percentage of our work force is working under the handicap of relative dissatisfaction" (p. 4, Hulin & Smith).

A U.S. Department of Labor study of over 1500 workers analyzed job characteristics between men and women (Voydanoff, 1980). This study had numerous survey questions referring to eight core job aspects: financial reward, hard work, physical contact, role strain (job scope clarity), supervisor, working conditions, enriching job demands, and self expression. Both genders were satisfied by the same top job characteristic, *self-expression*, which was considered an important finding at that time as women were entering the labor force at an increasing rate by accepting job positions traditionally held by men and that were positions "considered unsuitable for women on the basis of assumed sex differences in job capabilities and interests" (Voydanoff, 1980, p. 185). The major difference found between men and women was the greater importance of *role strain* among women, and of *financial rewards and promotions* among men. "The difference is interesting because women are concentrated in subordinate positions in the role structure in the organization, while men are in positions for which earning a good income and having opportunities for promotion are especially salient (Voydanoff, 1980, p. 185)."



### ***Empirical hospitality job-satisfaction studies***

To find industry solutions, researchers have attempted to identify job satisfaction factors for the hospitality industry. Yet, there is not a consensus among research studies as to which job factors ensure hospitality employee satisfaction, nor a consistency of job satisfaction surveys or scales used to assess satisfaction levels (Burke et al., 2008; Chiang, Jang, Canter, & Prince, 2008; Curtis, Upchurch, Severt, 2009; Erdem & Cho, 2006; Erkutlu & Chafra, 2006; Ghiselli et al., 2001; Madanoglu, Moreo, & Leong, 2004; Karetepe, Avci, Karetepe, & Canozar, 2003; Rhodes & Doering, 1983; Silva, 2006; Smith, Gregory, & Cannon, 1996; Tutuncu & Kozak, 2007; Wildes & Parks, 2005; Yamaguchi & Garey, 1993). In the casino-entertainment industry only four studies (Bai et al., 2006; Gu & Siu, 2009; Wan, 2010; Wan 2013) have attempted to identify factors specific to employee job satisfaction.

A review of empirical hospitality employee job satisfaction studies conducted over the past three decades identify four consistent factors that are identified in some aspect in each employee satisfaction study: supervisor traits, financial rewards, job training, and work conditions. Two gaming, two restaurant, and two lodging studies determined that job satisfaction is due to a combination of financial rewards (pay, benefits, and promotion advancement), work life (stress, amount of time at work, and job conditions), and supervisor traits (communication, conflict resolution, and leadership) (Curtis et al., 2009; Erkutlu & Chafra, 2006; Madanoglu et al. 2004; Wan, 2010; Wan 2013; Yamaguchi & Garey, 1993). Two studies, a Macau gaming study (Gu & Siu, 2009) and a San Diego hotel study (Chow, Haddad, & Singh, 2007), connected employee satisfaction to financial rewards, training including career development, and supervisor decision-making support. A study of over 90 U.S. lodging properties pinpointed organizational support (teamwork, conflict resolution, and training) as the largest factor for predicting overall job satisfaction (Smith, Gregory, & Cannon, 1996).

Of these four employee-satisfaction factors (supervisor traits, financial rewards, job training, and work conditions) only two factors—financial rewards and supervisor communication—were found to be significant in four studies (Chiang et al., 2008; Erdem & Cho, 2006; Iverson & Deery, 1997; Karatepe et al., 2003). Supervisor and coworker factors (tactful, caring, and hardworking) were identified as items affecting job satisfaction (Tutuncu & Kozak, 2007; Wildes & Parks, 2005). Similar supervisor and coworker factors along with the top factor, *locus of control*, were determined as significant job satisfaction factors for two U.S. lodging chains (Silva, 2006).

### **Research Questions**

While numerous studies on the topic of job satisfaction and gender leadership styles have been conducted, the conclusions have produced

inconsistent results. Yet throughout these studies, supervisor, department and company level satisfaction seem to be divisions where satisfaction levels can be identified for each unique study. Because the casino-entertainment industry has only a handful of conducted studies, attempting to create basic job satisfaction traits would be a starting point for understanding the topic. Therefore, based on the literature review, three specific null hypotheses were selected for testing:

*Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference between the perceived organization satisfaction mean for employees with a male supervisor versus those with a female supervisor.*

*Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference between the perceived department satisfaction mean for employees with a male supervisor versus those with a female supervisor.*

*Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference between the perceived supervisor satisfaction mean for employees with a male supervisor versus a female supervisor.*

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Data Collection**

A U.S.-based casino-entertainment company surveyed front-line employees from three of their casino-entertainment resorts. Each property contained full gaming options (slots, keno, bingo, table games, and sports book), dining facilities, multiple entertainment options (lounges, shows, athletic center, and full-service spa), and lodging facilities. The study took place in 2009, with the company asking for 5 years before the results were released publically. Further information about the U.S. organization is not given in order to ensure its anonymity.

This secondary data set was used for several reasons. First, casino-entertainment data is difficult to obtain due to the industry's competitive nature. Second, the sample size is large, with 961 employee surveys and a response rate of over 96%, making this the largest academic study on job satisfaction in the casino-entertainment industry. Finally, this research is the only study to analyze casino employee satisfaction in relation to supervisor gender.

### **Measurement Instrument**

Based on discussions with the casino-entertainment organization that conducted the study, the survey was conducted with the purpose of identifying employee job satisfaction levels across the company and within departments. The survey included nearly 40 quantitative and qualitative questions related to satisfaction with the company, the employee's department, and the employee's supervisor. The survey utilized a 5-point Likert-type scale for respondents' answers, with "1" representing *strongly disagree* to "5" representing *strongly agree*. The company, department, and supervisor sections of the survey results

each contained an overall satisfaction variable. This variable was used as the independent variables in each of the hypotheses.

### **Statistical Procedures**

The three hypotheses were proposed to identify if there is a significant difference in the employee satisfaction means between male and female supervisors for: 1) organizational satisfaction, 2) department satisfaction, and 3) supervisor satisfaction. The researchers used t-tests as the method of analysis because the independent variable (supervisor gender) was categorical in nature and the respective dependent variables (company satisfaction, department satisfaction, and supervisor satisfaction) were continuous in nature.

### **RESULTS**

In an attempt to assess internal consistency of the survey instrument, the reliability coefficient was calculated using Cronbach's alpha, as it is the most widely used measure. The alpha coefficient for the 961 survey responses was .833, exceeding the common threshold of .70, suggesting that the items have relatively high internal consistency.

Next, the breakdown of supervisor gender was calculated, with 572 employees (59.5%) having male supervisors and 389 (40.5%) having female supervisors. These findings are similar to the supervisor breakdown reported in other segments of the hospitality industry (Woods & Viehland, 2000). Prior to running the t-tests, the primary assumptions were tested. The data used in the test was found to be normally distributed and the equality of variance assumption was acceptable for both the company and department satisfaction variables ( $F = 0.421$ ,  $p = .517$ ;  $F = 2.02$ ,  $p = .156$ , respectively).

The assumption of equality of variance for supervisor satisfaction was violated ( $F = 5.156$ ,  $p = .023$ ). The researchers ran t-tests because the two populations (male supervisors and female supervisors) had different group sizes; 60% male and 40% female. The statistical software used, SPSS 17.0, accounted for this non-equality of variance in the t-test results to correct for the violated assumption. Variable normality histograms were conducted on the dependent variables (company, department, and supervisor satisfaction results), with each variable normally distributed. Although the supervisor satisfaction variable was slightly skewed to the right, it still indicated a normal distribution.

Department satisfaction had a value of 3.72 ( $SD = 0.80$ ), and company satisfaction yielded a mean of 3.26 ( $SD = 0.82$ ). Both company satisfaction and department satisfaction were not found to be statistically significant ( $t = .464$ ,  $p = .643$ ;  $t = .015$ ,  $p = .988$ , respectively) based on supervisor gender, see Table 1. Therefore, both null hypotheses 1 and 2 were supported, as the results indicated that neither the employees' level of company satisfaction nor the department satisfaction were different between respondents who had a male supervisor and those with a female supervisor.

Supervisor satisfaction had the highest mean score (on a Likert-type scale of 1 through 5) with a value of 3.83 ( $SD = 1.05$ ). Because a significant difference in supervisor satisfaction levels between employees with male vs. female supervisors, null hypotheses 3 was rejected ( $t = -1.975$ ,  $p = .049$ ). In this case, employees indicated a higher supervisor satisfaction score when their supervisor's gender was male. For a summary of the values obtained during testing, refer to Table 1 below.

Table 1  
*Casino-Entertainment Company Survey Satisfaction Means and Standard Deviations (N = 961).*

	Mean (Male)	Mean (Female)	Mean (Survey)	Standard Deviation	t-value	p-value
Company Satisfaction	3.25	3.28	3.26	.820	.464	.643
Department Satisfaction	3.72	3.72	3.72	.800	.015	.988
Supervisor Satisfaction	3.88	3.74	3.83	1.054	-1.975	.049*

\* $p < .05$

*Note.* Likert-style scale with “1” representing *strongly disagree* to “5” representing *strongly agree*.

Of the three statistical analyses that were run, the only result found to be statistically significant was the male supervisor satisfaction score was found to be .14 points higher, a 3% difference, than female supervisor scores. The results of this study do not imply that females should not be given the opportunity for leadership roles within the gaming or hospitality industry. Without digging down to a more granular level with qualitative data included in this research data, the researchers are unsure what specific leadership characteristics may be distinguishing factors. The literature confirms the presence of differences in masculine and feminine leadership styles (Moskal, 1997; Valentine & Godkin, 2000).

## DISCUSSION

### Hypotheses Results

The purpose of this study was to expand the current hospitality literature by examining the impact of gender supervision on employee satisfaction at the (a) supervisor, (b) department, and (c) company level. Studies on genders impact on overall company satisfaction or department satisfaction had not been identified in the literature review, so these questions were exploratory in nature.

The researchers began this study based on a discussion with a casino-entertainment organization about examining their employee satisfaction levels and

how their supervisor's gender may influence the ability to improve workplace satisfaction levels of their employees. The hospitality industry faces critical operational challenges due to the industry's labor-intensive structure, a high turnover rate, a multitude of retiring baby boomers, a high female employee percentage, and below-average employee wages (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2013).

As researchers, the natural starting point was to examine the academic literature to gain a foundation into factors that contribute to employee satisfaction and the relationship a supervisor's gender may have on job satisfaction. Successful hospitality leadership is comprised of knowing the organization's employees, addressing their needs and aspirations, and improving the employee's workplace experience (Barrows, 1990). While the researchers found several hospitality industry articles over the past several decades on either job satisfaction or supervisor gender, there were no published academic empirical studies conducted on the combined topics of supervisor gender and the relationship it may have to employee satisfaction. Each topic was researched independently, with the goal of finding consensus and solutions for the industry.

The first two null hypotheses were confirmed and the third hypothesis was rejected. The supervisor t-test revealed that, for this casino-entertainment organization, employee satisfaction levels for male supervisors were statistically higher (with a score of 3.88 out of 5) than for female supervisors (with a score of 3.74). Similar findings had been identified in the literature with subordinates tending to prefer male leadership (Cann & Siegfried, 1987), with male supervisors receiving more favorable workplace evaluations (McGlashan et al., 1995; Sandberg, 2013) and employees having greater feelings of career success due to male supervisors' increased job structure (Valentine & Godkin, 2000). This casino-entertainment company's results are similar to supervisor likeability results, which indicate men have higher likeability than women (Sandberg, 2013).

The literature review identified the change in perception of women over time in the workplace from less desirable (Hulin & Smith, 1964) to more desirable (Yamaguchi & Garey, 1993), with some women occupying top management positions not finding it necessary to adopt the leadership styles of their male counterparts (Rosener, 1990). Multiple scholars have identified supervisor job success factors, such as communication and valuing personal relationships. These are traits that academic research has identified women leaders in the hospitality-industry possess (Brownell, 1994; Curtis et al., 2009; Erdem & Cho, 2006; Klenke, 2002; Knutson et al., 2002). The satisfaction results are also positioned above the middle of the five-point scale, with company satisfaction ranking the lowest, at 3.26; perhaps there are additional factors that need to be investigated.

## **IMPLICATIONS**

## **Academic**

This study adds a new contribution to the literature. No hospitality industry research has studied supervisor gender in the areas of job satisfaction in the casino-entertainment industry or utilized an actual employee data set of this size. The implications of this study can be seen from a variety of perspectives within the casino-entertainment industry. Because it is evident that women in top roles of hospitality organizations remain a novelty, this study attempted to address the issue of why this is the case, and how perceptions are changing since the work environment has an impact on the leadership style exhibited by a particular gender (Boone et al., 2013).

For collegiate educators, addressing leadership skills in the curriculum is vital, due to the large number of female students enrolled in global hospitality and tourism programs, where the female-male student ratio can be as high as 80-20 (Armstrong, 2006; Hsu, 2009). With a large percentage of females entering the industry, the statistical chances of increased female leadership in future generations are favorable. If women held 50% of all top and middle management positions, it would create a tipping point for employees to have female leaders, creating a societal norm with female leaders that both male and female employees enjoy working for (Sandberg, 2013). As more women enter management positions, an employee no longer sees a man or woman in a position; they now see a leader.

## **Industry Implications**

Because women are being passed up for an executive position in larger corporations, women are leaving to become entrepreneurs or lead smaller hospitality firms (Andorka, 1998; Boone et al., 2013; HVS Executive Search, 2011). Women-owned hospitality businesses were found to comprise one-quarter to one-third of business operations, have strong financial performance, tend to stay in operation longer than hospitality organizations run by men, and women-owned businesses are as likely as men-owned businesses to invest in information technology and volunteer activities.

By addressing the job satisfaction traits through additional research, organizations can take steps through training, development, mentoring and coaching to ensure every supervisor, regardless of gender, of hospitality organizations have the opportunity to attract and retain top talent by creating the best possible work environment for their employees (Northhouse, 2013). The long-term impact of having dissatisfied employees, due to inconsistency in leadership promotions and financial compensation levels, are not desirable for any organization, let alone those in the casino-entertainment segment of the hospitality industry (Wan, 2010).

Warren Buffett is known for saying that one of the reasons for his unprecedented success is that he only had to compete with half the population (Sandberg, 2013). To find ways for corporations to increase their prosperity, Mr.

Buffet insists that we find ways to ensure women are part of a corporate leadership success formula; with organizations running at 100% capacity, a new level of unbridled optimism can be reached in the future (Buffett, 2013).

With more females in the workplace, there is more of an opportunity to move both horizontally and vertically through an organization with fewer obstacles (Costen et al. 2003). Alternatively, instead of a career ladder, organizations can change the career path to a jungle gym, where careers are focused on creative exploration for corporations, with more ways to reach long-term career goals (Sandberg, 2013).

### **LIMITATIONS & FUTURE RESEARCH**

No study is without its limitations, and this study is no exception. The data used in this research was secondary with the survey questions based on important topics to the company's executives and human resource department related to employee job satisfaction. While the survey was not based on a previous job satisfaction survey scale, hospitality research has not determined a consistent scale for identifying job satisfaction. The data is valuable because it was collected in an actual work environment from employed casino-entertainment employees.

Although the survey was confidential, it was not an anonymous data collection. A unique employment number was given to each employee and associated with each respondent's survey to track and ensure a high employee response rate. Although there is no evidence to suggest the employee responses were influenced based on this lack of anonymity, there is the chance that biases may have existed, such as social desirability bias, where an employee would attempt to make themselves appear better than they were.

There were certain variables not present in this research that would have been helpful. Having the respondent's gender would have enabled further analysis of the topic of the supervisor's gender and supervisor satisfaction. Because this study was conducted from one casino-entertainment company, the results of this study are not generalizable to the entire global casino-entertainment industry. Future research should be conducted in other gaming municipalities around the U.S. and world, which may identify cultural or generational differences, as those identified by Wan in 2010 and 2013. Replicating the study in other segments of the hospitality industry could build on the findings. A longitudinal study would be interesting to track the changes of this topic over time. Future research may reverse the findings of Hulin and Smith, 1964, and Voydanoff, 1980; identifying women as having similar levels of job satisfaction as their male counterparts due to equal financial rewards and promotional opportunities. Finally, additional analysis of the qualitative data may provide further insight into the topics of gender and job satisfaction.

This study was a unique opportunity to analyze actual employee satisfaction data, and therefore the numerous benefits outweigh the limitations

with the results of this research adding to the limited literature available on the topic of supervisor gender and job satisfaction in the casino-entertainment industry.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

This was an exploratory study, due to the unprecedented large casino-entertainment employee data set and the limited research on the casino-entertainment industry. In summary, the results of this study imply that management should be concerned with several items. First, the study revealed that male supervisors receive slightly higher subordinate satisfaction levels over female supervisors. Neither company nor department satisfaction was impacted due to leadership gender; therefore, casino-entertainment management should pay close attention to their organization's unique job satisfaction traits, which can be gathered from their organization's employee satisfaction surveys. This research identified that even with the numerous studies done on each hospitality segment, there seems to be little consensus of a global standard for hospitality job satisfaction traits; therefore it would be important for hospitality organizations to pinpoint the traits unique to their success.

Secondly, for global academic hospitality and tourism programs, a suggestion to include leadership as part of the required curriculum to prepare the next generation of leaders, as the majority of collegiate hospitality and tourism students are primarily female. As the percentage of female employees increases in the hospitality industry, the academic preparation could ensure that both male and female hospitality and tourism graduates are prepared for leadership positions.

Finally, the recommendation for hospitality human resource practitioners to create leadership development programs for their female and male employees (Northhouse, 2013). These programs could improve organization leadership through programs on the topics of long-term goal setting, strengthening management traits, and working with mentors (Boone et al., 2013, Northhouse, 2013; Sandburg, 2013; Wan 2013). These programs can assist with building a jungle-gym approach (instead of a ladder approach with a glass ceiling) for top employee talent to reach an organization's multiple leadership positions. The importance of leadership, which is comprised of knowing employees, addressing employee needs and aspirations, and improving employee experience, is vital to hospitality's success (Barrows, 1990), and it is important that we have 100% inclusion of both genders going forward to remain competitive (Buffett, 2013).

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