

# LINKING TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP BEHAVIORS TO SERVICE QUALITY IN NCAA DIVISION I-A

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## INTRODUCTION

From this organizational point of view, the quality of service has received considerable attention as one of the critical and influential determinants on the organizational performance. It has been Yukl (1989) defined transformational leadership as “the process of influencing major changes in attitudes and assumptions of organizational members and building commitment for the organizations’ mission and noted that high perception of employees’ service quality tends to significantly enhance the performance of employees as well as employees’ job satisfaction. Jabnoun and Rasasi (2005) specified that transformational leadership is particularly significant within the organizations in which high service quality is needed. objectives” (p. 204). Service quality has been linked to several important behavioral intentions such as customer satisfaction, repurchase, and employee performance. Together with the relationship between leadership behavior and organizational effectiveness, research studies have revealed that the leadership behavior of a leader is the first phase that should be considered for the successful service quality. The purpose of this study was to extend the existing literature by investigating how the head coaches in college athletics perceive transformational leadership of their athletic directors and by testing the relationship between transformational leadership and service quality.

## SAMPLE AND DATA COLLECTION

The population for this study was head coaches and student athletes at 53 schools affiliated with the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I-A. A total of 175 responses were received from head coaches after two rounds of data collection, and 271 responses were received from student athletes after three rounds of data collection.

## MEASURES AND DATA ANALYSIS

A three-component 9-item adapted from Bass (1985) was used to measure athletic directors’ transformational leadership (i.e., charismatic leadership, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration). Items were measured on a 7-point Likert-type scale. The internal consistency estimates (Cronbach’s alpha) for the three subscales were .93, .85, and .88, respectively. We used a modified SERVQUAL, which was revised by Harris (2002). Service quality was measured with four subscales (i.e., reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy) (14 items). The internal consistency estimates (Cronbach’s alpha) for these four subscales were .89, .90, .90 and .87, respectively. The data were recorded and analyzed using the SPSS statistical computer package. All tests of significance were set at an alpha level of .05.

## RESULTS

Table 1 indicates that the mean of charisma ( $M = 5.82$ ,  $SD = 1.25$ ) was significantly greater than the mean of individualized consideration ( $M = 5.40$ ,  $SD = 1.31$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and intellectual stimulation ( $M = 4.72$ ,  $SD = 1.15$ ,  $p < .001$ ). In order to evaluate service quality provided to the student athletes, the

results of another paired-samples t-test are presented in Table 2. Responsiveness ( $M = 5.54$ ,  $SD = 1.04$ ) of service quality as perceived by the student athletes had a higher mean than reliability ( $M = 5.42$ ,  $SD = 1.02$ ,  $p < .05$ ) and assurance ( $M = 5.20$ ,  $SD = 1.32$ ,  $p < .001$ ). However, responsiveness was not significantly different with empathy ( $M = 5.43$ ,  $SD = 1.19$ ). Further, empathy was not significantly different with reliability.

*Table 1. Results of Paired Samples t-test for Transformational Leadership Dimensions.*

	Mean	SD	t	df	p
Pair 1 Charisma - Individualized consideration	.420	.770	6.771	153	.000
Pair 2 Charisma - Intellectual stimulation	1.092	.950	14.213	152	.000
Pair 3 Individualized consideration - Intellectual stimulation	.669	.994	8.325	152	.000

Note.  $p = .05$ .

*Table 2. Results of Paired Samples t-test for Service Quality Dimensions.*

	Mean	SD	t	DF	p
Pair 1 Reliability - Responsiveness	-.125	.603	-2.027	95	.045
Pair 2 Reliability - Assurance	.220	.664	3.257	95	.002
Pair 3 Reliability - Empathy	-.014	.661	-.206	95	.837
Pair 4 Responsiveness - Assurance	.346	.808	4.193	95	.000
Pair 5 Responsiveness - Empathy	.111	.676	1.607	95	.111
Pair 6 Assurance - Empathy	-.235	.665	-3.457	95	.001

Note.  $p = .05$ .

## DISCUSSION

Results from the paired-samples t-tests demonstrate that the head coaches perceived their athletic directors as the leader who primarily tends to have charismatic characteristics. Findings indicated that the head coaches perceived charismatic leadership of the athletic directors' transformational leadership as the prominent dimension. However, the current study could not find any significant correlation between the two concepts. One possible explanation of the result in the present survey may be that previous research related to service quality has been studied in the business marketing context. Also, different results would be generated if the head coaches completed the transformational leadership questionnaires for themselves and if general students rated service quality instead of athletic directors and student athletes, respectively.

## REFERENCES

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