

A Work Project, presented as part of the requirements for the Award of a Master's degree in
Management from the Nova School of Business and Economics.

Exploring The Nexus of Leadership Role Characteristics: An Analysis of Autonomy,
Responsibility, and Accountability in a Leadership Context and Their Influence on Job
Satisfaction

Constantin Malte Gehrman (53710)

Work project carried out under the supervision of:

Helena Martins

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Abstract (100 words maximum)

Job satisfaction is a core consideration of organizational studies. This study delves into the intricacies of job satisfaction on the leadership level, which has not been thoroughly examined yet. First, this work identifies three potential leadership role properties (autonomy, responsibility, accountability) and tests whether these are inherent to a leadership position. Next, these variables are tested with regards to their correlation with leader job satisfaction. Findings suggest that all three variables are in fact tied to leadership positions, however only autonomy seems to be correlated with job satisfaction. Thus, this work stresses the need for organizations to promote autonomous leadership.

Keywords

Leadership; Autonomy; Responsibility; Accountability; Job Satisfaction

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1. Introduction

In the context of organizational studies, job satisfaction is one of the most studied concepts and its examination has enjoyed extensive attention in literature (Mishra 2013; Vila and García-Mora 2005; Zhu 2012). Theory shows that job satisfaction is not only an important consideration in theoretical terms, but also has practical implications for organizations - positively affecting job performance (Locke 1970) as well as organizational commitment (Al-Aameri 2000; Ismail and Razak 2016) and lowering turnover intent (Randhawa 2007). While job satisfaction generally has enjoyed thorough examination by scholars, this work adds to existing literature by analyzing determinants of job satisfaction for leaders specifically – a subfield that has not been looked at particularly extensively. So far there has been some exploration of the association between leadership characteristics and satisfaction of employees (Loke 2001; Rad and Yarmohammadian 2006; Sun et al. 2016; Tsai 2011), however not considering satisfaction on the leadership level.

This dissertation aims at testing three possible leadership characteristics and consequently assessing their impact on leader job satisfaction.

The three facets to be examined include autonomy, responsibility, and accountability.

Autonomy refers to the extent to which a leader can take decisions and action without prior consultation with others and is often considered a cornerstone of effective and successful leadership practice (Van Gelderen and Jansen 2006). Responsibility is related to the obligations and duties arising from one's position and accountability in turn denotes the acknowledgement and acceptance of consequences (both positive and negative) related to those duties (McGrath, Keith, and Whitty 2018).

The overarching goal of this paper translates directly into two practical parts:

First, our aim is to assess whether autonomy, responsibility, and accountability are in fact inherent characteristics of leadership roles. Secondly, this paper aims to evaluate whether these characteristics have a significant impact on a leader's job satisfaction level.

Understanding the effect of autonomy, responsibility, and accountability on job satisfaction in the context of leadership is of essential use not only to further develop theoretical knowledge on leadership and job satisfaction, but also to promote organizational learning and development. Given that leaders and their role model functions are pivotal in determining the functioning and success of an organization, knowing what allows leaders to be satisfied with their roles is essential in allowing their performance to excel.

Findings from this research could consequently be used in leadership development initiatives or help in designing the environment and specifications of leadership positions in future.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Leadership

In contrast to management, which involves control mechanisms and taking action when deviation from a planned outcome is detected, leadership is concerned with motivation and inspiration of people, achieved by satisfaction of basic human needs (Kotter 2000).

According to Winston and Patterson (2006, 2) a leader is “one or more people who select, equips, trains, and influences one or more follower(s) who have diverse gifts, abilities, and skills and focuses the follower(s) to the organization’s mission and objectives causing the follower(s) to willingly and enthusiastically expend spiritual, emotional, and physical energy in a concerted coordinated effort to achieve the organizational mission and objectives (...)”.

In short, this definition stresses that a leader can be viewed as a mediator between the overarching company mission/vision/objectives, and those who are under his/her supervision. Leaders inspire their followers and serve as a role model, thus exerting great impact on an organization (Winston and Patterson 2006, 2).

Scholars suggest that effective leadership practice can be related to organizational success in several different ways (Mastrangelo, Eddy, and Lorenzet 2014; Valdisseri, Glenn, and Wilson 2010). Ireland and Hitt (2005) argue that strategic leadership practice can enhance organizational performance, by allowing effective adaptation of behaviors and exploitation of growth opportunities. Bryant (2003) underlines the importance of leadership in enabling knowledge transfer and exploitation, thus allowing the company to be successful in building and maintaining a competitive advantage.

Research also indicates that employee job satisfaction is heavily dependent on leadership styles (Belias, Dimitrios, and Koustelios, 2014) and that there is a significant positive relationship between leadership and job satisfaction (Cakmak, Öztekin, and Karadağ 2015). Given the

impact of leadership on multiple dimensions of organizational performance and functioning, it is critical to study leadership and the determinants of successful leadership practice.

2.2 Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is one of the most intensively studied variables in organizational theory (Lund 2003; Saari, Lise, and Judge 2004). It is assumed to be associated with work-related outcomes and thus also impact organizational productivity in total (Ziegler, Hagen, and Diehl 2012).

The table below summarizes some of the central definitions of job satisfaction that have been deployed by scholars over time.

Figure 1

Job Satisfaction Definitions

Author	Definition
Hoppock (1935)	“Job Satisfaction is any combination of psychological, physiological, and environmental circumstances that causes a person truthfully to say, I am satisfied with my job.”
Rosen and Rosen (1955)	“Job satisfaction tends to result when desires are perceived as being met.”
Locke (1969)	<p>“Job Satisfaction is the pleasurable emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one’s job as achieving or facilitating the achievement of one’s job values.”</p> <p>“Job satisfaction and dissatisfaction are a function of the perceived relationship between what one wants from one’s job and what one perceives it is offering or entailing.”</p>

	<p>Appraisal is based on three elements:</p> <p>(1) The perception of some aspect of the job; (2) An implicit or explicit value standard and (3) A conscious or subconscious judgement of the relationship between one's perceptions and one's values.</p>
<p>Spector (1997)</p>	<p>“Job Satisfaction is the degree to which people like their jobs.”</p> <p>“It is simply how people feel about their jobs and different aspects of their jobs.”</p> <p>“Job satisfaction as a related constellation of attitudes about various aspects or facets of the job.”</p>

This research is based on Spector's (1997) definition referring to job satisfaction as a “related constellation of attitudes about various aspects or facets of the job”. This definition was chosen for sake of simplicity since it does not necessarily imply a mediating role of one's expectations which is not covered in this examination.

As can be observed in Figure 1 above, literature on job satisfaction consistently agrees on the fact that job satisfaction is the result of multiple factors, not one standalone. The definitions presented above, seem to conclude that job satisfaction can be estimated as a function of (1) general attributes of the job and more specifically the job environment, and (2) personal expectations and perceptions relating to these attributes.

Ellickson and Logsdon (2001) provide further support in favor of this breakdown by distinguishing between environmental and personal factors as determinants of job satisfaction.

Data gathered from surveying roughly 1.200 municipal employees suggests that environmental factors such as departmental pride or promotional opportunities represent more significant determinants when compared to personal factors such as age or job level, thus stressing the need for achievement of a solid employee-environment fit. Abdulla, Dejbarni, and Mellahi (2011) confirm the explanatory relevance of environmental factors for job satisfaction levels in a case study of the Dubai Police. Findings seems to confirm that personal/demographic factors are not closely as important in determining job satisfaction levels as environmental factors are, accounting for only one percent of explained variance in the case at hand. Further support in favor of the relevance of determinants related to the job environment stems from Lee and Cummings (2008), who find organizational support to be a vital determinant of front-line managers job satisfaction in the healthcare sector.

Therefore, this work aims at delving deeper into specific factors that can be assigned to the environment and conditions of the job, rather than personal attributes relating to the individual.

Herzberg et al. (1959, 44-49), identifies two categories of factors that may impact satisfaction and dissatisfaction of workers. First, motivators including recognition, achievement, and responsibility. By satisfying an individuals need for self-actualization, if present, motivators have the potential to cause great job satisfaction. At the same time their absence is not considered to result in job dissatisfaction. Hygiene factors on the other hand contain extrinsic entities not pertaining to the workers job itself. If absent, these factors can have a detrimental impact on job satisfaction, while their presence does not necessarily correspond with higher perceived satisfaction with one's job (Tietjen and Myers 1998).

The fact that Herzberg (1959, 44-49) has categorized responsibility as a motivator variable suggests that its fulfillment can in fact contribute to an enhancement of job satisfaction, which

is in accordance with the selection of responsibility as one of the potential predictor variables in determining job satisfaction, performed in this work.

Identifying possible determinants of job satisfaction is critical to organizations for several reasons. Baloch (2009) finds that satisfied employees tend to be more productive, creative, and committed to their organization. Siengthai and Pila-Ngarm (2016) provide evidence for a significantly positive relationship between job satisfaction and job performance. This is in line with findings from Nimalathan and Brabete (2010) and Platis, Reklitis, and Zimeras (2015). Moreover, job satisfaction may have a negative impact on turnover intention (Al-Ali et al. 2019; Tian-Foreman 2009). Unfortunately, there is little empirical research performed to assess job satisfaction as well as its precedents and effects on the leadership level specifically. Literature is often centered around the question in how far leadership styles or characteristics may influence satisfaction levels of employees and not leaders themselves (Belias and Koustelios 2014; Cakmak, Öztekin, and Karadağ 2015).

2.3 Autonomy

The word autonomy originates from the Greek words “autos” (self)- and “nomos” (law) (Swaine 2016). The concept of self-governance, or *autonomy* can be applied to numerous fields and is extensively discussed in the philosophical sphere, where it is closely linked to the idea of liberty and equality (Dworkin 2015).

In a business context, feelings of autonomy can for instance be caused by a greater ability of an individual to take decisions without prior consultation with peers or his/her supervisor (Van Gelderen and Jansen 2006). This is also often referred to as “task autonomy” (DeCarlo and Agarwal 1999). Hackman and Oldham (1975, 162) define autonomy as the “degree to which

the job provides substantial freedom, independence, and discretion to the employee in scheduling the work and in determining the procedures to be used in carrying it out”.

Roczniewska (2017) finds a positive correlation between hierarchy level and level of autonomy. Englund and Solbrekke (2011, 20) describes that professional leadership entails some degree of autonomy to allow professional judgement to be made.

Generally, this work assumes that individuals in leadership positions enjoy higher levels of autonomy compared to non-leaders given the nature and requirements of their jobs. This leads us to formulation of the following Hypothesis:

H1.1: Individuals assuming a leadership role will show higher levels of autonomy on the job than those who are not assuming a leadership role.

In their prominent study of work design, Hackman and Oldham (1976) state that autonomy can lead to increased experienced responsibility for outcome of one’s work, which in turn has a positive impact on satisfaction levels.

Iliopoulou and While (2010) suggest that autonomy influences job satisfaction, concluding their study performed in the Greek healthcare sector. This is in accordance with DeCarlo and Agarwal (1999), stating that autonomy positively impacts job satisfaction, specifically observing salespeople in the U.S. and Australia. Thompson and Prottas (2006) also highlight the importance of job autonomy, leading to higher job satisfaction and higher satisfaction with one’s life. While there have been several studies trying to research the relationship between autonomy and job satisfaction, there is a literature gap concerning this mediating effect for leaders specifically, which this study is trying to close.

Accordingly, I predict that as a leader's autonomy level on the job increases, so will his/her job satisfaction:

H_{1.2}: For individuals assuming a leadership role, there is a positive correlation between perceived level of autonomy on the job and job satisfaction.

2.4 Responsibility

Historically there has been much confusion around the terms responsibility and accountability – specifically the precise distinction of the two. McGrath, Keith, and Whitty (2018) describe the confusion as the “failure to separate the obligation to satisfactorily perform a task (responsibility) from the liability to ensure that it is satisfactorily done (accountability)”.

Bivins (2006) describes a responsible actor in terms of “one whose job involves a predetermined set of obligations that must be met in order for the job to be accomplished”.

In context of leadership, Siegel's (2014) offers an alternative definition of responsibility, that is rather centered around a leader's fiduciary responsibility to maximize profit and shareholder wealth.

Romme and Georges (2021) discuss that hierarchy can be viewed as a “ladder of responsibility”, which is formed in a self-organized manner. Given that this statement is true, individuals in leadership roles (generally higher up the hierarchy) should assume greater levels of responsibility than those who are not currently in a leadership position.

Hence, the following hypothesis is derived:

H_{2.1}: Individuals assuming a leadership role will show higher levels of responsibility on the job than those who are not assuming a leadership role.

Literature on the relationship between responsibility and job satisfaction for leaders is very vague and often centered around corporate social responsibility rather than the level of responsibility assumed in one's position (Khan, Sarwar, and Khan 2018; Tziner et al. 2011). Nevertheless, the assumption here is that higher levels of responsibility will positively impact job satisfaction. The reason for this is very simple; a leader who is responsible for a multitude of different tasks (or even people), will feel like the organization and subordinates lay some trust in his/her capabilities. This trust, then translates to confirmation which translates into satisfactory feelings about one's job. In line with the previous research, Tietjen and Myers (1998) state that responsibility is in fact a motivator of job satisfaction according to Herzberg et al. (1959, 44-49) and thus should show a significantly positive correlation with leader job satisfaction.

Accordingly, the following hypothesis is derived:

H_{2.2}: For individuals assuming a leadership role, there is a positive correlation between perceived level of responsibility on the job and job satisfaction.

2.5 Accountability

As previously defined, accountability can be seen as the liability to ensure that tasks are satisfactory done (McGrath, Keith, and Whitty 2018).

Scholars find accountability to be linked to organizational outcomes such as performance, precision, and focus (Thoms, Dose, and Scott 2002).

Bivins (2006) makes an interesting distinction between a responsible and an accountable actor by stating that the responsible actors, due to their moral maturity, are capable of "self-motivation in their responsive adjustments for actions they have performed, while accountable

actors must rely on external pressure for this adjustment”. On the one hand, an accountable leader is controlled and motivated by external forces such as rewards, punishments, and corrective actions. On the other hand, responsible leaders enjoy a status of “moral autonomy”, that allows them to be free in their professional reasoning and decision-making.

Similar to responsibility, the following hypotheses are based on the assumption that (1) due to his/her position within the organization, a leader will generally be held accountable to a greater extent than a non-leader and (2) that this level of accountability is a sign of trust that will lead to higher job satisfaction levels. Below are the consequent hypotheses derived:

H_{3.1}: Individuals assuming a leadership role will show higher levels of accountability on the job than those who are not assuming a leadership role.

H_{3.2}: For individuals assuming a leadership role, there is a positive correlation between perceived level of accountability on the job and job satisfaction.

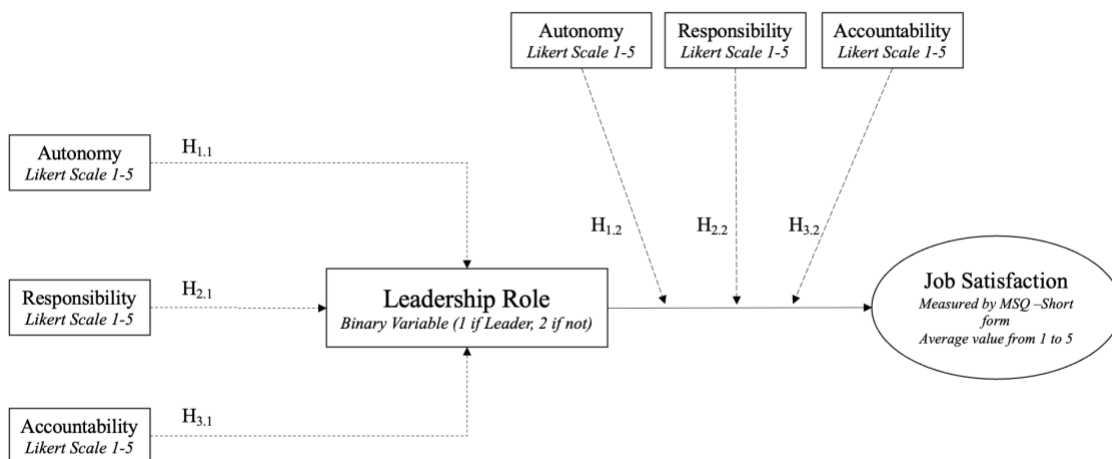
3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The underlying goal of this research was to investigate the relationship between potential leadership characteristics (specifically autonomy, responsibility, and accountability) and leader’s job satisfaction. The following model gives an overview of the interplay of factors introduced, along with the formulated hypotheses:

Figure 2

Research Model



To meet the research objectives, a quantitative deductive research approach was followed, entailing that data collection followed the formulation of our overarching research goals – to test whether the stated hypotheses can be confirmed with the sample at hand.

3.2 Data Collection and Analysis

Data was gathered along with five other students from the umbrella field lab also studying job satisfaction, using a survey created in Google Forms.

Distribution of the survey was performed individually by each of the six students mainly to their closer environment (family, friends, colleagues at work) using email, as well as social media including LinkedIn, Facebook, and Instagram.

After finalizing the data collection stage, the data was aggregated in Excel, where it was simplified and used to perform preliminary analysis on the sample at hand (average values, min./max.). Job satisfaction variable was added and calculated as the average value of all twenty responses regarding the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire. After successfully organizing the data in Excel, it was migrated to SPSS software version 29 for further analysis to be performed.

To address the core research question and hypotheses a series of test were run. Analysis was mainly centered around inferential statistics (independent sample t-test, correlation analysis) and fully run on SPSS version 29.

3.3 Instruments

The global survey was composed of 83 questions in total; for this study, 38 items were relevant, namely, sociodemographic characteristics (e.g. gender, age, nationality), job satisfaction levels, leadership role as well as the extent to which the three variables relevant to this work are present in an individual's current job.

Leadership was assessed in two different ways. First, one survey question is of simple binary nature and just questions whether respondents are currently assuming a leadership role or not.

Autonomy, responsibility, and accountability were measured on a 5-point Likert scale.

As for the independent variable, leadership was assessed in a simple binary nature by questioning whether respondents are currently assuming a leadership role or not.

To assess job satisfaction, the short form of the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (hereafter referred to as MSQ) was used (Weiss et al. 1977).

This survey is widely recognized and has been used extensively for academic research purposes for more than 40 years now (Hancer and George 2003; Abugre 2014).

While the long version consists of 100 questions that can be classified into 20 subscales, the short form MSQ utilizes only one question per subscale, namely the item that had the highest correlation with all five questions within one subscale. Five response choices ranging from 1 – Very Dissatisfied to 5 – Very Satisfied are available and thus also represent a 5-point Likert-Type scale. Assessments of respondent's job satisfaction levels are made by averaging one's score across the twenty questions – resulting in a score between 1 and 5. The higher the score, the greater the individuals assumed job satisfaction.

Schriesheim et al. (1993) performed a factor analysis of the MSQ and propose three relevant factors; “intrinsic”, “extrinsic” as well as “general satisfaction”, questioning the validity of the subscales initially underlined by Weiss et al. (1967).

Nonetheless, the validity of the MSQ in assessing job satisfaction is commonly agreed upon in literature (Gillet, Bernard, and Schwab 1975; Martins and Proença 2012). Usage of the MSQ in the context of this study were based on the confirmed validity along with its ease of use and practicality. In the present study, reliability of the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire was validated using Cronbach's Alpha. A value of 0.920 was found confirming the reliability of the scale in measuring actual job satisfaction (*see Table A1, Appendix A*).

3.4 Sample

A total of 268 responses were gathered of which 217 were of German nationality (>80%). There were 150 female, and 114 male respondents in the sample, with five respondents (1,86%) who opted to not disclose their gender or identified as non-binary. Ages varied between 18 and 68, with an average respondent age of 33,53 years (SD=12.12). The sample yielded a median of 28 years old – indicating at age distribution being skewed towards younger ages.

4. Results

Mean scores for job satisfaction were compared between non-leaders and leaders. An independent samples t-test yields a mean job satisfaction level for a leader of 3,8041 with a standard deviation of 0.76082 and 3.692 with 0.54319 standard deviation for non-leaders. A t-value of 1.399 was found with 266 degrees of freedom (*see Tables A.2 and A.3, Appendix A*)

Next, an independent samples t-test was performed to test H_{1.1}, H_{2.1}, and H_{3.1} (*see Table A.5, Appendix A*). Leaders scored higher in autonomy with a mean value of 4.11 and observed standard deviation amounting to 0.865, compared to non-leaders with a mean of 3.55 and SD of 0.921, and this difference is statistically significant, since $p < 0.001$. Similar patterns were observed for responsibility and accountability, where leaders had higher mean scores in terms of responsibility equal to 4.37 with SD of 0.712; and accountability at an observed mean level of 4.21 with a standard deviation of 0.790, compared to non-leaders – where responsibility averaged a score of 3.71 at a standard deviation of 0.93 and likewise accountability with mean of 3.61 and a standard deviation of 1.031, both with $p < 0.001$.

The linear regression model shown in Table 1 below explained a modest 19.9% of the variance in job satisfaction. Autonomy coefficient of $\beta = 0.45$ was significantly positively correlated

with job satisfaction with $p < 0.001$, indicating that leaders with greater autonomy tended to be more satisfied. However, responsibility coefficient of - 0.081 and accountability β of 0.004 did not show significant associations with job satisfaction, with p -values of 0.544 and 0.972 respectively.

Table 1

Regression Analysis Summary for Variables Predicting Leader Job Satisfaction

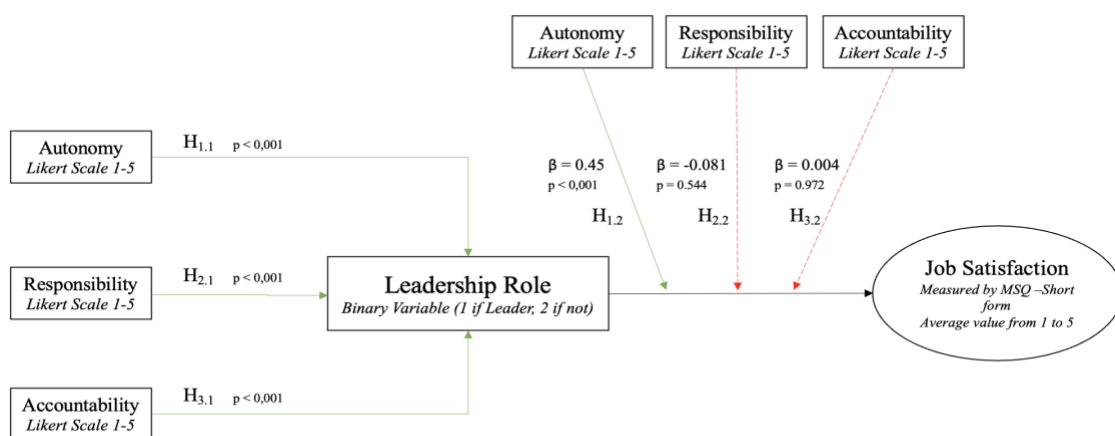
Model		Unstandardized		β	t	Sig.
		B	SEB			
1	(Constant)	2.292	.468		4.902	<.001
	Autonomy	.450	.099	.511	4.547	<.001
	Responsibility	-.081	.133	-.076	-.609	.544
	Accountability	.004	.108	.004	.035	.972

Note. $R^2 = 0.199$

The model below gives an overview of the results found in this study; green arrows indicate that our findings provide statistically significant support in favor of a respective hypothesis/relationship, while the red arrow shows cases in which the sample at hand does not seem to confirm our initial hypotheses.

Figure 3

Research Model Findings



5. Discussion and Implications

Our first set of hypotheses (H_{1,1}; H_{2,1}; H_{3,1}) intend to determine whether autonomy, responsibility, and accountability are inherent characteristics of a leadership role:

H_{1,1}: *Individuals assuming a leadership role will show higher levels of autonomy on the job than those who are not assuming a leadership role.*

H_{2,1}: *Individuals assuming a leadership role will show higher levels of responsibility on the job than those who are not assuming a leadership role.*

H_{3.1}: Individuals assuming a leadership role will show higher levels of accountability on the job than those who are not assuming a leadership role.

The findings of this research in fact confirm all three hypotheses, with significant differences (at all common levels) in mean values for all variables when comparing leaders to non-leaders. Consequently, this paper can confirm that all three properties are significantly higher for an individual if he/she is assuming a leadership role.

Looking at the second set of our hypotheses, analyzed the impact of the three confirmed characteristics of a leadership position on job satisfaction levels:

H_{1.2}: For individuals assuming a leadership role, there is a positive correlation between perceived level of autonomy on the job and job satisfaction.

H_{2.2}: For individuals assuming a leadership role, there is a positive correlation between perceived level of responsibility on the job and job satisfaction.

H_{3.2}: For individuals assuming a leadership role, there is a positive correlation between perceived level of accountability on the job and job satisfaction.

The regression analysis yields results in favor of H_{1.2}, stating that autonomy is significantly positively correlated to job satisfaction levels among leaders. Hence, leaders who describe their jobs as providing greater autonomy tend to be more satisfied with their job than those who enjoy little autonomy.

This study not only aligns with but also adds to existing literature (DeCarlo and Agarwal 1999; Deci, Connelli, and Ryan 1989; Hackman and Oldham 1976; Iliopoulou and While 2010; Thompson and Prottas 2006) by affirming the widely acknowledged positive correlation

between autonomy and job satisfaction in the context of leadership positions, as proven by our findings.

Recognizing the importance of autonomy for leaders can yield substantial benefits for organizations from a practical perspective. Creating a work environment that fosters autonomy and empowers leaders to take decisions and shape their own work processes can not only positively impact job satisfaction, but also contribute to organizational performance.

This is also in line with Aziri (2011), who states that the nature of one's work is an essential determinant of job satisfaction. Practically speaking, this translates into a twofold of potential measures that companies should consider.

First, leadership positions should be designed in a way that allow for maximum autonomy. This implies reducing controls and specific requirements and allowing leaders to develop and deploy their own ways of getting the work done.

Second, leaders must be prepared for this case and know how to deal with greater autonomy in a responsible way. Certainly, greater autonomy will also bring higher risk to the organizations due to absence of control mechanisms. Consequently, leaders should constantly be trained and developed to ensure successful functioning in a more autonomous work environment. Additionally, the ability to work autonomously should be a core deliberation when it comes to recruiting.

This research has yielded no significant evidence in support of H_{2.2} and H_{3.2} – indicating that with the sample at hand we cannot validate a positive impact of responsibility and accountability on leader job satisfaction.

A reason behind the results we have found could be the nature of the leadership characteristics we have discussed in this paper. As we have highlighted before, the concept of autonomy incorporates facets of liberty and decision freedom. It is logical in a way that leaders positively assess greater freedom in the way they get their job done – as this also conveys a sense of trust

in the leader ability to handle the situation well. Hence, a leader being more satisfied with his/her job when this level of trust and confidence is given makes total sense.

At the same time, responsibility and accountability could be seen as facets contradicting autonomy, since these properties are rather constraining in nature. Though very small and not statistically significant, responsibility β of -0.081 hints at a potential negative association of leaders between level of responsibility assumed and satisfaction with one's job. A leader who is heavily responsible and accountable might feel greater pressure to perform and thus be more stressed about his/her occupation.

6. Limitations and Future Research

6.1 Sample Bias

The composition of our sample may lead to biased results. Out of 268 respondents, 175 were of German nationality – equating to roughly 65% of the total sample size. The predominance of German individuals in the sample may limit the possibility to generalize findings of this work. Despite the fact that we have no indications of distinct characteristics of German individuals in the context of our research objectives, a more balanced representation of nationalities could provide a more stable picture and increase the external validity of this study.

6.2 Limited Differentiation of Leadership

Another limitation is that this study does not differentiate between various levels of leadership. Simply subdividing the population of working individuals into leaders and non-leaders may not consider important additional factors, such as the seniority level of a leader. A front-line manager, who is technically assuming a leadership role, will have very different priorities,

obligations, and job properties when compared to a C-level manager. Additionally, the level of our three assessed leadership characteristics may vary in the context of this hierarchy level. Hence, this study may have oversimplified the multi-faceted and complex concept of leadership. Future research could take this study a step further by engaging in a more nuanced exploration of leadership in terms of hierarchical level, for instance.

6.3 Oversimplification of Job Satisfaction

The Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire and its inherent complexity hints at the multitude of elements that compose job satisfaction. Assessing leader's satisfaction with their jobs based on three elements alone may omit important variables and thereby not paint the whole picture. Future investigations may contribute by delving deeper into the interplay of additional factors that influence job satisfaction.

7. Conclusion

This study aimed at identifying two central questions: First, whether autonomy, responsibility, and accountability are inherent characteristics of a leadership position and second, whether the prior are positively correlated to leader's job satisfaction. Research objectives were met by following a quantitative research approach and analyzing a sample consisting of 268 respondents, giving us insights about their current job situation. While the predominance of German respondents across our sample may limit the generalizability of our results, this study provides new insights into the domain of leaders' job satisfaction. First, we have proven that all three properties (autonomy, responsibility, and accountability) are in fact significantly higher for individuals assuming a leadership position. While we have proven all three variables to be leadership role characteristics, our findings indicate that only autonomy has a significantly positive impact on a leader's satisfaction with his/her job. We assume that this is due to the inherently positive connotation of concepts related to greater job autonomy, including the freedom of choosing how to get one's job done, or the sense of trust that is conveyed to an individual when providing him with greater job autonomy. At the same time, we cannot confirm our prior beliefs regarding responsibility and accountability – most likely since managers regard these facets as restraining in nature.

The key takeaway in the organizational context resulting from this study is that all practices that evolve around the design and development of leadership roles should consider in how far provision of greater autonomy may be possible and feasible. Surely it is important to consider the context of the leadership position including the hierarchy level, expertise of the individual, and the industry. Assessing the relevance of such possible mediating variables may in fact be an interesting starting point for future scholarly examination.

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9. Appendix

9.1 Appendix A: SPSS Outputs

Table A.1

Reliability testing for the MSQ

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.920	.921	20

Table A.2

Mean Job Satisfaction for Leaders vs. Non-leaders (1/2)

	Leadership Role (1=yes, 2=no)	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
JobSatisfaction	1	97	3.8041	.76082	.07725
	2	171	3.6920	.54319	.04154

Table A.3*Mean Job Satisfaction for Leaders vs. Non-leaders (2/2)*

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Significance One-Sided p
JobSatisfaction	Equal variances assumed	8.619	.004	1.399	266	.081
	Equal variances not assumed			1.278	152.351	.102

Table A.4*Mean Job Satisfaction for leaders vs. non-leaders*

34. Are you currently assuming a leadership role in your job?	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
1	3.8041	97	.76082
2	3.6920	171	.54319
Total	3.7326	268	.63159

Table A.5*Autonomy, Responsibility, and Accountability levels compared across leaders vs non-leaders*

	34. Are you currently assuming a leadership role in your job?	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Autonomy	1	97	4.11	.865	.088
	2	171	3.55	.921	.070
Responsibility	1	97	4.37	.712	.072
	2	171	3.71	.930	.071
Accountability	1	97	4.21	.790	.080
	2	171	3.61	1.031	.079

Table A.6*Linear Regression Model Summary*

Model	R	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.473 ^a	.199	.68099

a. Predictors: (Constant), Accountability, Autonomy, Responsibility

Table A.7*Linear Regression Coefficient Overview*

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.292	.468		4.902	<.001
	Autonomy	.450	.099	.511	4.547	<.001
	Responsibility	-.081	.133	-.076	-.609	.544
	Accountability	.004	.108	.004	.035	.972

a. Dependent Variable: JobSatisfaction

b. Selecting only cases for which 34. Are you currently assuming a leadership role in your job? =

1

Table A.8*Correlation Analysis on Job Satisfaction***Correlations**

		Time sp. w/ Leadership Tasks	Autonomy	Responsibility	Accountability
Time sp. w/ Leadership Tasks	Pearson Correlation	1	.233**	.372**	.288**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<.001	<.001	<.001
	N	264	264	264	264
Autonomy	Pearson Correlation	.233**	1	.549**	.408**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001		<.001	<.001
	N	264	268	268	268
Responsibility	Pearson Correlation	.372**	.549**	1	.628**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001		<.001
	N	264	268	268	268
Accountability	Pearson Correlation	.288**	.408**	.628**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001	<.001	
	N	264	268	268	268

9.2 Appendix B: Questionnaire

Relevant Questionnaire Questions:

- *What is your Age?*
- *What is your Gender?*
- *What is your Nationality?*
- *Are you currently assuming a leadership role in your job?*

- *How would you rate your level of the following characteristics in your job? (1= very low, 5= very high)*
 - *Autonomy*
 - *Responsibility*
 - *Accountability*

- *On my present job, this is how I feel about... (from 1 – Strongly Disagree, to 5 – Strongly Agree)*
 - *Being able to keep busy all the time.*
 - *The chance to work alone on the job.*
 - *The chance to do different things from time to time.*
 - *The chance to be “somebody” in the community.*
 - *The way my boss handles his/her workers.*
 - *The competence of my supervisor in making decisions.*
 - *Being able to do things that don’t go against my conscience.*
 - *The way my job provides for steady employment.*
 - *The chance to tell people what to do.*
 - *The chance to do something that makes use of my abilities.*
 - *The way company policies are put into practice.*
 - *My pay and the amount of work I do.*
 - *The chances for advancement on this job.*
 - *The working conditions.*
 - *The way my co-workers get along with each other.*
 - *The praise I get for doing a good job.*
 - *The feeling of accomplishment I get from the job.*