Followers' Preferred Leadership Style of their Leader: A Study of Sri Lankan Tourism Industry

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The leader-follower relationship and followers' role are essential elements for successful leadership in any industry; however, there has been limited research regarding followers in comparison to leaders and even those studies have not fully recognized the value of two way influencing relationship between leaders and followers. Keeping this in mind, the study examined the followers' preferred leadership style of their leader using a sample of 87 employees working in different organizations of the Sri Lankan tourism industry. Data collection was done using a structured questionnaire and the descriptive study utilized quantitative methods for data analysis. Findings revealed that in the Sri Lankan tourism industry, management, executive, clerical and supervisory level employees preferred an empowering leadership style while the followers in other employee categories preferred a directive leadership style. The significance of the study for theory and practice as well as the research limitations and direction for future research are discussed.

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