

## **Impact of Leadership Style on Employee Job Satisfaction in the Hospitality Industry**

Maher Fouad

Faculty of Tourism and Hotel Management, Beni-Suef University

### **Abstract**

The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of leadership style on employee job satisfaction in the hospitality industry. The data were collected using a self-administered questionnaire adapted from Gadot (2007), Manning, and Curtis (2009). The questionnaire was distributed to 300 non-managerial employees working in the food and beverage divisions of five-star hotels. The results of this study reveal that self-development and promotion, pay and reward systems, empowerment and recognition, and appraisal systems are important factors for employee job satisfaction. Furthermore, the study finds a significant positive relationship between the transactional, transformational, and laissez-faire leadership styles and employee job satisfaction. However, the autocratic leadership style has a negative effect on job satisfaction.

The current study demonstrates a significant relationship between employee job satisfaction and leadership style; thus, implementing an appropriate leadership strategy can enhance employee job satisfaction and prevent employee turnover in the hospitality industry. The findings can be used as a tool in human resource management to focus on leaders' behaviours with their employees and the level of employees' satisfaction.

**Keywords:** leadership styles, job satisfaction, laissez-faire style, autocratic style, transformational style, transactional style

### **Introduction**

Food and beverage managers who are skilled in leadership are able to motivate, develop, and maintain a good work environment for their employees. In addition, leaders need to monitor employees to encourage positive attitudes and passion regarding the tasks they are assigned and the overall operation, which can elevate the quality of service provided by trusted and satisfied employees (Bartol et al. 2003). Good leaders must maintain a balance between the organization's strategy and vision and end results. Leadership involves leading, developing, conducting, and managing others to achieve the division's goals (Domaine 2004).

The relations between leadership style and the factors underlying employee job satisfaction could influence employee satisfaction positively or negatively and could thus affect the quality of tasks performed and the whole operation (Bartol et al. 2003). In the hospitality industry, a number of factors determine employee job satisfaction, such as empowerment and recognition, self-development and promotion, fairness, pay and reward systems, motivation, and appraisal systems Hanbury et al. 2004. Therefore, it is useful to recognize that there's a gap between leadership style and the factors lead to employee job satisfaction. Thus, this study intends to investigate the relationship between these previous factors and leadership style by investigating how leadership style influences the level of employee job satisfaction.

### **Literature Review**

Leadership style is characterized as the pattern of behaviours that leaders show when working with and leading others (Hersey *et al.*, 2001). . According to Kavanaugh and Ninemeier (2001) leadership is the process of influencing staff to accomplish the long-term objectives of the organization. Miller et al. (2012) explained that leadership style is the main pattern of interactions between leaders and employees. It incorporates controlling and coordinating and all

the systems and strategies utilized by leaders to motivate subordinates to adhere to the directions they are given.

As indicated by Pierce and Newstrom (2003) effective leaders exhibit enthusiasm regarding the long-term development of their employees' abilities. They use inspirational strategies and many competencies and experiences to help their employees accomplish hierarchical objectives (Bartol *et al.*, 2003). Leaders must have subordinates, and leaders should influence their subordinates in the right ways to implement the organization's goals (Daft, 2016).

Middle management in hospitality industry is considered an imperative job in the hotel industry. Many of middle managers have more understanding and aptitudes, and more elevated levels of education than new entry managers; therefore, middle managers are considered the point of convergence for accomplishing the hotels' goals and objectives. It can be argued that good management is preposterous without great initiative. Good management requires setting up clear objectives for the hotel and then leading followers to achieve those goals (Bartol *et al.* 2003).

### **Leadership Styles**

Daniel (2002) distinguished among the different leadership styles and recommended that leadership styles could be clarified on a scale extending from autocratic through democratic to participative to demonstrate the level of power and decision-making authority held by leaders and workers. The autocratic style involves giving orders that employees are expected to implement without discussion; autocratic leaders tell their subordinates what to do. According to (Dubrin *et al.*, 2006) This style offers employees clear direction for their tasks, but it might lead managers to underestimate or overlook contributions from their teams. An autocratic approach is appropriate in a few circumstances; it could be beneficial when a business faces an emergency or when an urgent issue arises that requires quick action. Due to its deep roots in the hospitality industry, autocratic leadership represents the most common leadership style in this industry because of the industry's unpredictable demands.

Woods and King (2002), Tesone (2010) investigated management styles and concluded that autocratic managers tend to hoard power, decision-making activities, and authority. Micromanagers are autocrats with a powerful need to control every activity within their jurisdiction. The direct opposite of the autocrat is the manager who delegates tasks. These managers tend to exhibit a hands-off management style and to assign authority, duty, and responsibility to other people.

Mullins (1998) and Rollinson *et al.* (2005) classified leadership styles as autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire according to the leaders' authority, power and behaviour; these styles recognize the impact of leaders on their employees. Leaders who exhibit an autocratic (authoritarian) leadership style have full hierarchical power and the authority to make decisions without discussing them with their employees, while democratic (participative) leaders share decision making with their employees and delegate authority to the right employees at the right time. However, Kavanaugh, and Ninemeier (2005) added that leaders with a laissez-faire leadership style give their subordinates substantial authority to make decisions directly.

Leaders can adopt a leadership style based on what they perceive to be their employees' style preferences (Woods, and King 2002). Therefore, the impact of leadership style could vary by the type of power that a leader has over subordinates, which makes the leader's authority imperative in accomplishing hierarchical objectives (Nikezie *et al.*, 2012).

Transactional leaders focus on specifying their employees' job and task requirements and providing positive and negative feedback and rewards based on the tasks employees complete

and their work performance. Interestingly, transformational leaders induce trust to try to promote leadership in others, show self-sacrifice and fill in as specialists, thereby focusing themselves and subordinates on organizational objectives and any immediate issues and needs of the work group (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2010). Paracha *et al.* (2012) characterized transformational leadership as a leadership approach through which leaders develop teams or organizations by communicating, creating, and displaying a vision and mission for the organization or department and by motivating teams to strive for that mission and vision.

According to Thompson (2008), transactional leadership occurs when leaders inspire their employees by giving rewards and prizes to people with high performance rather than punishing or reprimanding employees for mistakes and low performance. Empirical research has demonstrated positive relationships between organizational performance and the transformational leadership style (Champoux, 2011).

Covey (1992) added that transformational leaders transform employees and organizations by establishing clear visions, aims, and objectives that are then used to promote needed changes. Although laissez-faire leadership is conceptually related to the latent style of management by exception, it results in an absence of immediate action even when correction is required. In laissez-faire leadership, managers adopt a “hands-off” approach and allow situations to play out in their own particular manner. Supervisors who apply this style more often than not relinquish responsibility and authority, fear taking action, postpone choices, and avoid making a series of decisions individually. This type of leader abstains from taking positions, provides no criticism to followers, and makes very little effort to develop subordinates.

Laissez-faire managers are disconnected and inert, need impact, they are not careful and, above all, they are frequently missing when they are required. It is commonly concurred that laissez-faire leaders don't try to lead. Laissez-faire leadership conduct can be seen as a sink-or-swim procedure in which workers either succeed on their own or fail in every task. Thus, employees working under this type of supervision search for help, direction, advice and support from different sources (Bass, 1990).

According to Bass and Avolio (1989), laissez-faire leadership is rarely considered in industry. Erkutlu (2008) found that a laissez-faire leadership style unfavourably affected subordinates' job satisfaction in the hospitality industry.

### **Influence of Leadership Style on Employee Job Performance**

According to Luthans (2011), leadership style can have a positive or negative influence on employee job performance. Leadership is considered to be a leader's ability to create jobs, grant responsibility, build relationships, engage in communication and develop an environment in which individuals can exceed expectations for work that capitalizes on and expands their abilities and about which they feel enthusiastic. To accomplish this, leaders need to communicate attentively and thoroughly with both senior and junior employees (Williams, 2005).

Several studies have discovered that leader behaviour influences employee prosperity. Leadership has two differentiating impacts on employees' prosperity: positive leadership rehearses positively affect prosperity, while negative leadership practices effectsly affect singular prosperity. For instance, Gilbreath and Benson (2004) found that positive leadership rehearses, such as expanding employee control, enhancing communication and organizational commitment, considering workers and their prosperity, and ensuring just employee treatment, predicted employee well-being well beyond the impacts of age, way of life, social support from collaborators and at home, and distressing work and life events. Similarly, Van Dierendonck et

al. (2004) found that the quality of leadership behaviour was associated with enhanced worker prosperity. Surveys by (Kruse, 2013) found that 70% of employee engagement is considered by their relationship with their managers who understand how to lead, direct and motivates them to achieve the organization goals and what are the factors makes them feel committed to their responsibility.

## **Research Methods**

### **Sample and Data Collection**

The target sample for this study consisted of 300 non-managerial employees who were working in the food and beverage divisions of five-star hotels in Egypt. This target sample was were selected as sample using a random sampling technique since we aimed to investigate the leadership styles utilized in five-star hotels and the effects of leadership style on job satisfaction from the perspective of employees. This paper focused on five-star hotels because they have a high standard of service quality and emphasize employee development. To confirm that an adequate number of responses were received, the sample size was determined using Cochran's sample size determination formula for continuous date (Gall et al., 2006). The information used in this formula included a five point Likert-type response scale, a two percent margin of error and an estimate of the population standard deviation of 1.25. A five percent risk that the actual margin of error might exceed the acceptable margin of error was utilized. Utilizing the formula, the minimum required sample size was estimated to be 300. From the population of 300 non-managerial employees, a sample of 228 (76%) was valid to analysis. The questionnaires were delivered personally to human resource managers who volunteered to distribute them to employees. After 2 weeks, the researcher collected all the questionnaires from the human resource managers of the hotels that agreed to participate in this study.

### **Questionnaire Development**

This study was conducted by using a self-administered questionnaire adapted from Gadot (2007) and Manning and Curtis (2009). As these two studies have dominated the literature, the first study has concentrated on the leader's characteristics and behavior, and the second focused on the around the conditions requiring the exhibition of leadership and the conceivable results of different leadership styles.

The questionnaire consisted of 6 dependent variables related to employee job satisfaction and 4 independent variables related to leadership styles; responses were based on a five-point Likert scale (from 1—strongly agree to 5—strongly disagree)

The employee job satisfaction section contained 30 items based on five job facets: empowerment and recognition, self-development and promotion, fairness, pay and reward systems, motivation, and appraisal systems. The leadership style section contained 20 items about five leadership styles, including transactional leadership, transformational leadership, laissez-faire leadership, and autocratic leadership.

### **Statistical Analyses**

Pearson correlations were computed for the measured variables using SPSS version 24. Regression analyses were conducted to examine the extent to which style of leadership positively or negatively influenced employee job satisfaction and *how* leadership style influenced employee job satisfaction.

**Research Question**

Is employee job satisfaction influenced by leadership style?

Which leadership styles have a positive impact on employee job satisfaction?

**Reliability and validity**

a pilot study was conducted with n=30. Moreover, this researcher utilized Cronbach’s Alpha to measure the reliability of the instrument. In addition, this research got 66.6% response rate in which the participants understood all questions and agreed to have face validity. In addition, academics in the field of hospitality management, and five star hotel managers examined the research. They provided comments and some modifications to help this research to be reliable and valid.

The analyses were performed using SPSS Statistics version 24 to test the internal consistency of the data for all the participants. Cronbach’s alpha was used to evaluate the quality of the scale and show the reliability and adequacy of the questionnaires used. The following tables present the obtained results.

Table 1: Cronbach’s alpha values for the job satisfaction and leadership style questionnaire

Variables	Cronbach's alpha	N of items
Leadership style	.776	20
Job satisfaction	.712	30

The results presented in Table 1 indicate that the Cronbach’s alpha coefficient for the variables was  $\alpha = .776$  for leadership style and  $\alpha = .712$  for job satisfaction. These values show the high level of consistency and reliability among the statements for each variable.

**Results**

Table 2 shows the results of the correlation coefficient using Pearson correlations and indicates the presence of a moderately significant correlation between job satisfaction and leadership style (P=.538), as the significance level was less than (0.01). While there was a moderately significant correlation between job satisfaction and the transactional style (P=.485), which had the highest level of satisfaction, followed by the transformational style (P=.444) and the laissez-faire style (P=.391), the significance level for these relationships was less than 0.01. There was a weak correlation between autocratic style and job satisfaction (P=.256).

Table 2: Correlations between job satisfaction and leadership styles

		Job satisfaction	Leadership styles	Laissez-faire style	Autocratic style	transactional style	Transformational style
Job satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	1					
	Sig. (2-tailed)						
Leadership styles	Pearson Correlation	.538**	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000					
Laissez-faire style	Pearson Correlation	.391**	.725**	1			

	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000				
Autocratic style	Pearson Correlation	.256**	.814**	.414**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000			
Transactional style	Pearson Correlation	.485**	.578**	.130*	.372**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.049	.000		
Transformational style	Pearson Correlation	.444**	.676**	.312**	.439**	.287**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).							
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).							

Table 3 lists the results of the multiple regression analysis investigating whether empowerment and recognition, self-development and promotion, fairness, pay and reward systems, motivation, and appraisal systems significantly predicted leadership style.

Table 3: Influence of job satisfaction on leadership style

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	Unstandardized B	Std. Error	Standardized Beta	t-value	p-value
Leadership style	(Constant)	27.303	5.313		5.139	.000
	Empowerment and recognition	.402	.130	.169	3.086	.002
	Self-development and promotion	.862	.118	.413	7.333	.000
	Pay and reward systems	.868	.195	.259	4.464	.000
	Motivation	.270	.164	.095	1.653	.100
	Fairness	-.232	.171	-.082	-1.354	.177
	Appraisal systems	.325	.171	.134	1.903	.048
F-value=23.407, P-value=.000, R-square=.389 - Notes. *p< .05, **p< .01, ***p< .001.						

The results in Table 3 reveal that the R-squared value of the model that tested the effect of job satisfaction on leadership style was .389, indicating that the explanatory power of the regression model was 38.9%. This result means that 62.1% of the variation was unexplained; thus, adding other independent variables could improve the fit of the model. The F-statistic value, a measure for testing the statistical significance of a regression equation, was 23.407, showing that the model was significant at the 0.001 level. The regression coefficient of the subordinate factor job satisfaction was .402 (p< 0.02) for empowerment and recognition, .325 (p< 0.05) for appraisal systems, .868 (p< 0.00) for pay and reward systems and .862 (p< 0.01) for self-development and promotion. Four subordinate factors of job satisfaction had a significant effect on leadership style, indicating that empowerment and recognition, self-development and promotion, pay and reward systems, and appraisal systems were definitely critical factors for improving the job satisfaction of hotel employees. The other dimensions did not meet the requirement (p> .05).

Pay and reward systems had the highest beta value (.868), followed by Self-development and promotion (.862), empowerment and recognition (.402), and appraisal systems (.325). This result

indicates that pay and reward systems made the strongest contribution to employee job satisfaction, followed by Self-development and promotion.

These  $\beta$  values provide a sense of the influence that each predictor had on the outcome when the effects of the other variables were held constant. Thus, if Pay and reward systems, Self-development and promotion, empowerment and recognition, and appraisal systems increased by one unit, leadership style will be increased by 0.868 units, 0.862 units, 0.402 units, and 0.325 units, respectively. Based on the previous results, the final predictive model was:

Leadership style = 27.303 + (0.868 \* pay and reward systems) + (0.862 \* Self-development and promotion) + (0.402 \* empowerment and recognitions) + (0.325 \* appraisal systems within the organization).

Table 4 displays the results of the multiple regression analysis of the effect of leadership style on job satisfaction. The R-squared value of the regression model was .415, the explanatory power of the model was 41.5%, and the F-statistic value was 39.555, indicating that the model was significant at the 0.001 level.

The coefficient ( $\beta$ ) for the subordinate factors of leadership style was .419 ( $p < 0.01$ ) for the transactional style, .309 ( $p < 0.01$ ) for the laissez-faire style, .297 ( $p < 0.001$ ) for the transformational style, and (-.158) ( $p < 0.013$ ) for the autocratic style, suggesting that the transactional, transformational and laissez-faire styles had a significant positive effect on job satisfaction. However, the autocratic style had a significant negative effect on job satisfaction.

Table 4: Influence of leadership style on job satisfaction

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	Unstandardized B	Std. Error	Standardized Beta	t-value	p-value
Job satisfaction	(Constant)	49.429	5.374		9.199	.000
	Laissez-faire	.883	.163	.309	5.405	.000
	Autocratic	-.483	.193	-.158	-2.508	.013
	Transactional	1.779	.238	.419	7.492	.000
	Transformational	1.311	.258	.297	5.077	.000
F-Value=39.555, P-Value=.000, R-Square=.415, Notes. * $p < .05$ , ** $p < .01$ , *** $p < .001$ .						

These results revealed that transactional leadership style increased job satisfaction by 1.779 for each additional one-unit increase in transactional leadership. For each one-unit increase in the transformational style, job satisfaction increased by 1.311, while each one-unit increase in the laissez-faire style increased job satisfaction by .883. Each one-unit increase in the autocratic style decreased job satisfaction by -.483. Thus, the final predictive model was:

Job satisfaction = 49.429 + (1.779 \* transactional) + (1.311 \* transformational) + (.883 \* laissez-faire) + (-.483 \* autocratic).

## Discussion

This paper investigated the effect of leadership style on employees' work satisfaction. A moderate positive relationship was found between job satisfaction and leadership style. However, the autocratic leadership style was found to have a weak relationship with employee job satisfaction. The present study shows that pay and reward systems, self-development and promotion, empowerment and recognition, and appraisal systems are the most important factors for employee job satisfaction in relation to leadership style. This result is consistent with Andreassi *et al.* (2012), who found a relationship between job satisfaction and leadership style.

These authors indicated that variables related to satisfaction, such as salary, work conditions, supervision, teamwork, training and development, recognition and policies, are predictors that could lead to job satisfaction.

The results reveal that the behaviour of a leader towards his/her employee determines whether the employee is satisfied or dissatisfied. The study found a positive direct effect of the transactional, transformational, and laissez-faire styles and a negative effect of the autocratic leadership style on job satisfaction. Nevertheless, among the leadership styles, the transactional style was the most likely to lead to employee development and promotions, to consideration of pay and rewards, and to positive environmental conditions. In a similar vein, Bass (2003) concluded that there is a need to study the influence of the transformational and transactional leadership styles on employee job satisfaction, as employee job satisfaction is reflected in the quality employees provide to customers. He divided leadership styles into transactional leadership and transformational leadership based on their importance for employee job satisfaction. Transactional leadership is concerned with external demands and considers employees to be essential, and the relationship between managers and subordinates depends on this perspective. Transactional leaders have a tendency to accomplish hierarchical objectives through a positive approach to the organization's mission and plans, and their essential reason for existing is to maintain a stable organization.

The results indicate that the transactional leadership style is the most popular style among employees, in accordance with Muenjohn (2007), who stated that "The Full Range of Leadership Development Model" demonstrates that leaders who display the transactional leadership style are more compelling leaders than transformational and laissez-faire leaders. Sribenjachot and Chan (2007) added that the transformational and transactional leadership styles have a positive influence on employee satisfaction, as employees make extra efforts and maintain a high level of quality under these styles of leadership.

Furthermore, the study reveals that leaders who want to obtain high performance from their employees need to generate high morale and satisfaction, and this can be accomplished by creating a good work environment. Leaders can create this type of work environment by using solicitous leadership. The results indicate that the autocratic leadership style has a negative relationship with employee job satisfaction, which could be considered a factor for job dissatisfaction. Macneil (2003), who explained that autocratic leadership is considered an imperfect leadership style and is not supported by employees, as employees do not want to be subjected to autocratic leadership because it can lead to leadership challenges, supports this result. The author added employees do not accept autocratic leadership because while globalization and economic knowledge enable employees to increase their competencies, knowledge and ability to make decisions, these characteristics are not supported under autocratic leadership.

In addition, Khuong and Khanh (2016) described autocratic leadership as a management style that negatively affects employee job satisfaction. They explained that autocratic leaders are individuals who overuse their authority to push employees to work according to their personal ideals. This type of leader does not allow any negotiation from others, uses his/her power to control everything and exacts retribution from any employee who opposes him/her. This kind of leadership causes employees to feel low confidence in how they are perceived and regarded. According to Bass and Avolio (1994), leaders accomplish their objectives when they utilize the transformational and transactional leadership styles. The best leaders utilize the full scope of



leadership models by incorporating the transformational, transactional and laissez-faire leadership styles.

### **Managerial Implications**

The study findings demonstrate that leadership style plays an important role in explaining employee dissatisfaction, which could lead to employee turnover in the hospitality industry.

These findings can be used as a tool by human resource managers to focus on leaders' behaviours with their employees and the level of employee satisfaction. Furthermore, effective leaders use their personal initiative, talents, and competencies to develop their employees and promote employee satisfaction. They also use motivation tactics, power and many other skills to encourage their employees to achieve management goals. This study offers some recommendations regarding these managerial implications.

First, leaders should lead by example, motivate their employees through their style of leadership and become a role model for employees. Additionally, leaders in the hospitality industry should encourage their employees by providing empowerment and recognition, encouraging self-development and promotion, establishing fairness, creating a clear pay and reward system, motivating employees, and establishing appraisal systems. Leaders should rely on a mix of the transactional and transformational styles and should avoid the autocratic style. They should also consider environmental workplace concerns and manage any situation with the aim of having a positive influence on employee job satisfaction and thereby increasing department revenue. The behaviour of leaders should support the core values of the organization's vision and mission, which will subsequently encourage employees to become interested in the entire hotel organization. Consequently, employees will become more committed to the organizational objectives and be willing to elevate the organization's reputation by providing a high level of service quality.

### **Limitations and Future Research**

This study encountered 2 limitations. The first was the sample size of 300 non-managerial employees working in the food and beverage division of hotels. This sample size does not represent all hospitality employees; therefore, the results of this study cannot reflect all the opinions of employees in different divisions, such as the rooms division or the human resources division. The second limitation is that these four leadership styles do not sufficiently represent all leadership styles that may affect employee job satisfaction. Therefore, research that examines all leadership styles should be considered to generate a more suitable framework.

Furthermore, moderating variables such as education, gender, age, and level of experience should be further analysed to assess their influence on employee job satisfaction.

### **Conclusion**

Effective leaders use personal initiative and their talents and competencies to develop employees and promote employee satisfaction. They also use motivation tactics, power and many skills to support their employees in achieving management goals. The results from the correlation analysis show that leadership style has a moderate positive relationship with employee job satisfaction. The results obtained for each style reveal that the transactional style has the most significant relationship with employee job satisfaction, followed by the transformational and laissez-faire styles. However, the autocratic style has a weak relationship with employee job satisfaction.

These findings suggest that the transactional and transformational leadership styles could be used to create suitable workplace environments, which would in turn lead to high service quality among employees, especially in the food and beverage division.

The transactional, transformational, and laissez-faire styles could be perceived as styles of leadership that support employees in gaining a clear understanding of their given mission and the organization's objectives. In contrast, the autocratic style could destroy the relationship between leaders and employees and therefore lead to employee job dissatisfaction and increases in employee turnover.

The results of the multiple regression analysis indicate that employees consider self-development and promotion, pay and reward systems, empowerment and recognition, and appraisal systems to be the most important factors for their satisfaction. However, pay and reward systems provide the strongest contribution to employee job satisfaction. This result suggests that leaders should attempt to develop their leadership strategies to satisfy these factors of employee satisfaction, as they are the most desirable. Satisfied employees are an important element for determining the level of service quality and hotel success or failure.

Furthermore, an analysis of the results shows that leadership style has either a positive or a negative influence on employee job satisfaction, as the transactional, transformational, and laissez-faire styles increase job satisfaction, while the autocratic style decreases job satisfaction.

This result indicates that leadership style influences a range of outcomes, including employee job satisfaction, performance, and turnover. Specifically, the findings suggest that autocratic leadership leads to lower levels of job satisfaction, while the transactional, transformational, and laissez-faire leadership styles lead to higher levels of job satisfaction.

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