

“Influence of Thought Leadership in the Hospitality Industry”

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Abstract

Innovation and performance in combination with efficient leadership are quintessential requirements to achieve the desired sustainable profitability of companies. The relationship shared by these variables is the key to the organizational success, although there exists a complex relationship between them as per the study. The purpose of this article is to analyze the impact of leadership on the relationship between innovation and performance in the hotel sector. Leadership is the indispensable management function that assists to channelize the available resources of the organization for improved efficiency and on-time achievement of goals. Effective leaders extend support in understanding the purpose and then motivating and guiding the organization to realize its mission, vision and objectives. The hard-core search to find out the best leadership style in hospitality industry results in suggestions to practice open communication and people-centered leadership style. Practicing this type of leadership style proved to be most effective for the hospitality leaders, who inherently respect their employees as crucial individuals and see them as part and parcel of the team, find it much easier to command respect in return, that leading in hospitality sector needs to reflect what may be called hospitable leadership: successful leaders in hospitality demonstrate a leadership style that not only enables and inspires and sets strategic direction, truly welcoming input and viewpoints from operational staff and leadership levels

Keywords: Leadership, thought leadership, employee job performance, Hospitality services, data analysis, methodology etc.

1.Introduction

Tourism companies operate in a dynamic competitive world, where innovation is an essential condition for the survival of companies (Sundbo et al., 2007). A more dynamic and rapidly changing business environment has forced the hospitality industry to resort to effective leadership processes as a way of motivating employees to obtain the desired results (Humphreys, J.H., 2005). Leadership plays a key role in promoting firm innovativeness (Khan et al., 2020). The definition of leadership has changed considerably in the last decades, the initially concept linked to the figure of “great man” fell out of use, the most recent approaches focus on the transformational dimension of the leader (Brownell, 2010). This dimension is reflected in a collaborative and relationship attitude, establishing open communication, forming and supporting the team effort and providing the necessary resources to fulfil a shared vision (Brownell, 2010; Humphreys 2005). Leadership is a critical factor in organizations, as it can affect goals, visions, strategy, social environment and employee motivation (Yukl, 2013). Leadership is the ability to influence others to voluntarily make decisions that promote the short and long-term growth of companies (Nejad & Rowe, 2009). Pioneering leadership studies originate from Ohio and Michigan Universities identified two main types of behavior among the surveyed leaders. Leadership oriented to people, as the leader is attentive to subordinates, respects their ideas and feelings and establishes mutual trust. On the other hand, task-oriented leadership, the degree to which the leader is task-oriented and directs subordinate work activities to achieve the goal. To make the right decisions, managers need to know how to balance their technical and social skills in the right combination, promoting relationships and interactions that lead to communication processes that have to be effective in order to motivate and lead others (Page & Connell, 2009). To survive in the present business changing environment, companies realized that the ability to change and adapt was inevitable. Leading change management has become the main concern of all executives. In this context, transformational and charismatic leadership theories arise.

II.STYLES OF FIGUREHEAD – A LEADER:

Servant leadership may be a way in which leaders can increase the chances of bringing out the best in their followers. Servant leaders tend to communicate directly with their staff – their manner is perceived to be duly “direct”, transparent, and authentically personal. They communicate with the intention to understand their needs and concerns, and their aspirations – and these servant leaders end up understanding “how their staff tick”. Servant leaders lead, as such, but they do that with a view to being of service to their members of staff – all for the ultimate benefit of the business.

We would argue that leading in hospitality sector needs to reflect what may be called hospitable leadership: successful leaders in hospitality demonstrate a leadership style that not only enables and inspires and sets strategic direction, truly welcoming input and viewpoints from operational staff and leadership levels that report to them, but also empowers those echelons and gives them due care and compassion, combined with a level of increasing self-direction and

autonomy. This requires not only able leadership, but also calls for a suitable set of values and characteristics to be possessed and upheld by leaders.

Effective leaders understand and value the contribution of careful, predictive hiring decisions to the quality of the work being delivered in their organizations. In the hospitality industry, then, this relates to members of staff who possess certain personality characteristics and levels of interpersonal skills, stress resilience and, for instance, empathy – especially guest-facing staff. And that is just about 100% of the workforce in any hotel establishment.

III. PERSONALITY:

The achievement-oriented nature of conscientiousness as a personality domain maps well onto those characteristics of employees who are oriented towards learning. Such employees tend to be motivated to achieve, succeed and persevere when faced with challenges or difficult tasks. Agreeableness is another relevant factor of personality that relates to performance in world of hospitality: for instance, high-performers are likely to display courteousness, a concern for others and generosity. High scorers on the trait of agreeableness (one of the “big five factors” of personality) tend to be good-natured and eager to cooperate and avoid conflict. They are more cooperative and willing to trust those around them (colleagues and others around them). The one area where agreeableness – a key variable of personality – is less straightforward is where effective leaders need to be able to take challenging decisions and hold others to account. This may be more difficult for those who score high on (facets of) this domain. In today’s world, leaders in the hospitality industry (as elsewhere...) need to show the example. The example of shaping an inclusive work environment and showing respect for a wide variety and types of guests who the hotel establishments are welcoming, where diversity is embraced – but, importantly, all this not only applies to its guests, but also its workforce.

IV. LEADERSHIP AVENUE:

Leadership is a complex activity. The Leaders are the people with a huge responsibility. The actions and thoughts of leaders have wide influence on the people and society at large. Often there are longstanding, everlasting implications of the actions of leaders. The last one hundred years of human existence has seen cataclysmic changes. It is not only the changes in technology, demography, climate and the external social and economic changes but also the pace of change which has increased and is increasing exponentially by the day.

The concept of leading or modern leadership is relatively new. Leadership has generally been associated with the individual qualities like charisma and the personal characteristics of leaders. In the opinion of the researcher there have been very significant changes in the past one hundred years in almost all conceivable fields. The pace of change is getting faster in an exponential manner. The world GDP has multiplied by almost sixty times in the past one hundred years. The human population has increased by twenty times in the last two hundred years. There have also been rapid technological changes like the internet and the communication technologies, which have changed the way in which people communicate and access information. The planet has become an increasingly complex place to live in. Leadership needs to be redefined in the context of issues.

V. LITERATURE REVIEW AND PROPOSITION DEVELOPMENT

Zakaria Elkhwesky, (2022) This review has demonstrated that leadership styles research in hospitality has made progress in the past 13 years; however, there are conceptual and empirical overlaps among different leadership styles in hospitality. There is a lack of research on antecedents and integrating theories in studies. This review has revealed that several leadership styles have not been rigorously examined in hospitality research with their outcomes.

Rabiul, Md Karim, Tan Fee Yean, (2021) This study examines the relationship between leadership style (servant and transformational leadership), motivating language and work engagement. A sample of 391 lower and mid-level Bangladeshi hotel employees, selected via simple random sampling, participated in a cross-sectional survey. The mediating effects of motivating language regarding the association between the two leadership styles and work engagement were examined using partial least square-structural equation modelling. Both leadership styles and three types of motivating language have positive relationships with work engagement.

Ypapanti Aivalioti, (2021), Human Resources Management (HRM) plays a catalytic role in the positive performance of a hotel. The Covid-19 pandemic struck the tourism sector to an unprecedented degree at a time when the industry was unprepared for such a severe health crisis. Maintaining the smooth operation of hotels during the crisis presupposes new financial planning, new services according to the health protocols, or modification of those already provided. Under this situation, staff training is necessary. The purpose of the present paper is to examine the impact of leadership on the motivation of hotel employees during the COVID19 pandemic

Candace Blayney, (2020) This research provides a glimpse into the complex and fascinating relationship between leadership and organizational performance. It provides yet more evidence to enhance our understanding of leadership and outcomes. However, more research is necessary. It would be interesting to have a comparative study between

the three leadership competencies addressed in this research and RevPAR in non-Canadian industries. It would also be very useful to approach this topic in a way to further isolate and compare the fundamental differences between the People Leadership variable, and the Visionary and Strategic Leadership variable, and their relative impacts on RevPAR.

Jones, 1996; Ottenbacher, Gnoth & Jones, 2006; Chang, Gong & Shum, 2011 This study proved that innovations are the basis for the success of organizations in the hospitality industry as they provide organizational efficiency, improvement of product quality, reduction of costs, higher customer satisfaction, increased sales and profits, increased market share and differentiation in relation to the competitors.

Sundbo, Johnston, Mattsson Millett, 2001; Orfila-Sintes, Crespi-Cladera & Martinez-Ros, 2005; Martinez-Ros & Orfila-Sintes, 2009 These researches have shown that leadership is a significant factor in hotel innovativeness.

It has been found that transformational leadership encourages innovations by introducing the system of the employees' personal values (**Bass, 1985; Gardner & Avolio, 1998**) which in turn increases the level of motivation of the employees (**Shamir, House, & Arthur, 1993**) as well as creativity in completing everyday job tasks (**Sosik, Avolio & Kahai, 1997; Jaiswal & Dhar, 2015; Wang, Tsai & Tsai, 2014**). Transformational leadership is oriented towards the future, planning, freedom of thought and energy. The characteristics of transformational leadership that are related to intellectual encouragement as well as supporting the employees in their attempt to be creative and give innovative solutions to the tasks given to them proved to be the factors that are related to organizational innovations the most (**Henry, 2001; Bundy, 2002; Jung, Chow & Wu, 2003**). Numerous studies have shown a positive impact of transformational and transactional leadership styles on innovations. (**Jung et al., 2003; Politis, 2004; Gumusluoglu & Ilsev, 2009a; Gumusluoglu & Ilsev, 2009b; Choi et al., 2016**).

VI. THOUGHT LEADERSHIP:

According to the leadership's researchers, **effective leadership** is a key analyst of organizational success or failure while examining the factors that lead to organizational success. In sum up, **effective leaders** have power over specific traits and show specific behaviors or styles of **leadership**.

Except for conducting a real-time assessment through direct observation, conducting surveys of employees is the best way to **judge leadership effectiveness**. Through surveys, organizations can develop questionnaires that reflect the characteristics of the organization well by means of employees' participation.

- Honesty and integrity.
- Confidence.
- Inspire Others.
- Commitment and Passion.
- Good Communicator.
- Decision Making Capabilities.
- Accountability.
- Delegation and Empowerment.

Assessing the **effectiveness** of a leader is often a **difficult** exercise for many organizations. This is usually because most assessment procedures are influenced by organizational politics, they are not standard based, and the items on which a leader is assessed are undefined or poorly defined.

VII. PROPOSITION DEVELOPMENT;

1. Leadership is a social and group phenomenon; there can be no leaders without followers. Leadership is about others;
2. Leadership involves interpersonal influence or persuasion and leaders move their followers through goals and actions;
3. Leadership is goal-oriented and action-oriented. Leaders take an active role in groups and organizations, which in turn use influence to direct their followers and achieve goals;
4. The presence of leaders in a group assumes a hierarchy. There are cases where this hierarchy is formal and well defined, keeping the leader at the top, in other cases it is informal and flexible.

1. Vision-refers to an idealized image of the future, based on the organization's values;
2. Inspirational communication-refers to positive and courageous messages about the organization, as well as statements that lead to motivation and confidence;
3. Supportive leadership - expresses concern for followers, always taking into account their individual needs;
4. Intellectual stimulation-stimulates the interest and awareness of employees about problems, as well as increasing their ability to see these same problems in a new way;
5. Personal recognition-always rewards for recognition and effort in achieving goals.

6.

VIII. PROBLEM SPECIFICATION:

Although, leadership is a familiar concept, due to its complexity there are many ongoing discussions about the origin and forms of leadership. This paper focuses on four main problems in regards to leadership. First, "One of the worst business lies is "You can't teach leadership skills because leaders are born and not made."" (Ryan, 2016) This thought reflects on the ongoing debate in research and business world about the origin of the leadership. There are two opposing theories, about predestined and developed leaders.

These two theories are compared in detail in the literature review. Second, many people associate high managerial positions with leadership. Whereas, representing a high position in the hierarchy does not automatically result in being a leader (Arruda, 2016).

A recent business trend is for corporations to offer leadership development programs and encourage emergent not appointed leadership to increase efficiency. The literature review focuses on drawing a clear distinction between the roles of leaders and managers. Third, an emergent topic in recent years is the gender gap in leadership. There are many issues associated with the problem which can be demonstrated by the pay inequality and leadership disproportion. This leads us back to the quote about girls being perfect and boys being brave. The problem is originating from early childhood when we encourage men to negotiate and be driven, but in contrast, we encourage women to be careful and safe (Saujani, 2016). This translates into the work environment where women tend to negotiate about their pay and work condition

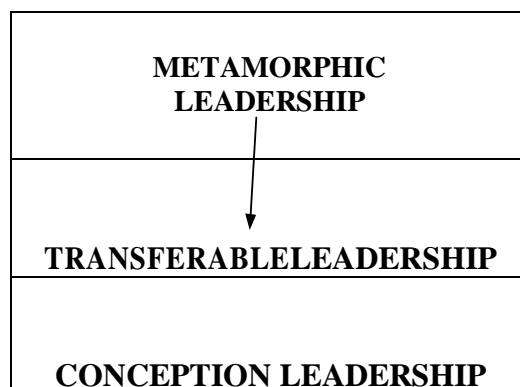
IX. METHODOLOGY:

To test the proposed hypotheses, a quantitative study was carried out and primary data were collected from the answers to a questionnaire. The questionnaire consists of two parts. The first part aims to collect socio-demographic information and the second part consists of 37 questions, divided by the three variables. In order to test the three variables' normality distribution hypothesis, and given that our sample size $N > 30$, we have chosen to perform Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality tests (at 5% significance level), whose results are shown in Table 3. The Sig. values for the variables Innovation and Performance satisfy Sig. $> .05$, therefore we should not reject the null hypothesis: these variables are normally distributed. On the other hand, Leadership has Sig. $= .02 < .05$ which means that we should accept the alternative hypothesis: it is not normally distributed.

X. COMPETENCY MODEL IN THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY:

Effective leaders must distribute the task according to the right skill sets of their team, communicate the tasks clearly and motivate the followers to cope with the pressure from the environment. Researchers Testa and Sipe (2012), analyzed the works mentioning leaders' competencies and conducted in-depth interviews with 110 managers from various fields in the hospitality industry, and based on this research they developed 3 categories of leadership competencies crucial in this sector. The competency model included Business Savvy, People Savvy, and Self Savvy. Firstly, Business Savvy concentrates more in-depth on performance and effectiveness of the establishment. It entails skills focusing on planning, managing team productivity, financial analysis, continuous performance and system improvement and strategic decision making. This category of competencies is goal oriented and uses technical skills. Secondly, People Savvy is an employee-centered dimension concerned with interpersonal leadership and open communication. When applying this dimension to the hospitality industry, it entails both customer and employee satisfaction. Leaders must focus on team development and skills enhancement of the individuals and ensure a pleasant working environment. Lastly, the final set of competencies are Self Savvy which plays the most critical role in the service sector. These skills are crucial for role-modeling and to be an effective role model to the team, the leader must demonstrate accountability, trustworthiness, and commitments to employee and customer satisfaction. An essential element especially related to hospitality is professionalism which covers proper representation of the company towards the customer and followers, confident behavior, and ethical leadership. Self-reflection of a leader incorporates continuous learning and skill enhancement to understand and satisfy the employees and customers better and correct mistakes made in the past.

To conclude, all the three dimensions of leadership competencies are needed to guide the team to good performance, but the last self-savvy is crucial especially in the hospitality industry which is considered to be a people sector



EMPLOYEE JOB PERFORMANCE

Leadership style in the Hospitality Industry influences the performance, employee job satisfaction and relationships within the company. The leadership style and approach depend on multiple factors, namely the characteristics of the leaders, followers and the environment (Al-Ababneh, 2013). According to Boyne (2010), the two central leadership styles in the hospitality context is Transformational leadership and Leader-Member Exchange. To begin, the hospitality sector is very dynamic due to changes in economic conditions, customer expectations, and social norms. Therefore, leaders must act accordingly and motivate their subordinates to achieve excellent performance. To reach the goal, leaders must transform the skills and values of the followers into an advantage and clearly communicate the tasks and responsibilities to assure effectiveness and goal achievement. Northouse P.G. (2016), defined transformational leadership as an interactive process between leader and followers, where leader communicates with the followers, engages, motivates and influence the members of the organization to achieve a goal.

This PAPER is focusing on leadership in the hospitality industry, and therefore the interviews contained some questions related to the uniqueness of leadership styles in this sector and the vision of the future change in leadership for this industry.

Leadership is one of the most discussed topics today, but also one of the most difficult to understand. The literature shows different definitions and views, albeit with elements in common. Transformational leadership is one style that the academy has given greater importance to recently. A good transformational leader is innovative, open to change, explores new approaches, motivates people to learn and to have a strategic and clear thinking, which would lead to good performance of teams and, consequently, to the desired business profit. In this study, it was found that there is a strong relationship between innovation and performance, in line with what is described in the literature. The results also indicate that the improvement of innovation has positive consequences on performance. However, the generalized linear model showed that leadership is not a moderating variable in the relationship between innovation and performance, in the hotel sector

XI. CONCLUSION:

In nutshell, it is concluded that an extensive literature review of existing literature on leadership has been conducted to determine the best type of leadership style that have an impact on Employee Job Performance in Hospitality Sector. This research posits that metamorphic, transferable and conception leadership would pose a positive impact on employees' job performances. Three research propositions have been developed to examine the causal relationship proposed in this research. More importantly, this paper provides an insight for scholarly research in the field of leadership, especially Thought Leadership, which is deficient in theoretical and empirical research.

XII. FUTURES COPE OF HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY;

This section of the finding is focusing on the future of the hospitality industry from the perspective of managers in this sector. The dynamics of the hospitality industry is continuously bringing new challenges for the leaders in this industry. Including changes in customer demand, employee expectations, innovation, and technology. When the respondents were asked how do they see the future of the hospitality industry, they specified three main elements. Firstly, the change in providing the service will change based on the type of the hotel. Business hotels will be focusing on the technology implementation and speed up the process when in contrast the luxury hotels will be aiming to provide personalized and unique services to their clients. Technology improvements will be incorporated in all types of hotel however the managers from business hotels represented a more significant interest. and focused in this direction. The technology improvements should include automated check-in, automated cleaning services, and software facilitating the process and allowing customers to personalize their stay through an app and provide

virtual tours before arriving at the destination. Secondly, the luxury hotels have to distinguish themselves from other hotels not only by price but they need to create customer loyalty via offering unique and personalized experience. Third of all, most of the respondents voiced the concern about the necessary changes in leadership style towards the employees and also necessary changes in the system. As mentioned previously the team in the hospitality industry is creating the experience for the customer and therefore leadership style in the future should incorporate the teams and create the best working conditions and support the followers.

To conclude it is necessary for leaders in the hospitality industry to be flexible and respond to all the dynamic changes that will happen and be open-minded. Because they need to adapt to new innovations, technology improvements, as well as new generations entering the working environment but also changing what is expected from the side of the client.

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