



The Influence of Leadership Styles and Organizational Justice on Employee Satisfaction: A Study of the Hotel Industry in Zadar County



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Received: 09-12-2024

Revised: 10-30-2024

Accepted: 11-07-2024

Citation: Čusa, I. V., Bosna, J., & Medić, M. P. (2024). The influence of leadership styles and organizational justice on employee satisfaction: A study of the hotel industry in Zadar County. *J. Organ. Technol. Entrep.*, 2(4), 198-207. <https://doi.org/10.56578/jote020401>.



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Abstract: Human resource management plays a pivotal role in organizational success, with employee satisfaction being a critical factor in maximizing potential and productivity. This study investigates the relationship between leadership styles, organizational justice, and employee satisfaction within the hotel sector in Zadar County. The findings indicate that distributive justice has the most significant positive impact on employee satisfaction, while an autocratic leadership style is found to have a detrimental effect, contributing to lower motivation and higher stress levels among employees. Conversely, transformational leadership positively influences satisfaction by fostering motivation and encouraging employee participation in decision-making processes. The hotels in Zadar County generally report a high level of employee satisfaction, predominantly driven by a transactional leadership style, which emphasizes goal achievement through clearly defined tasks and performance-based rewards. Furthermore, managers exhibit a notable degree of interpersonal justice, treating employees with respect and empathy. These practices are considered to enhance the overall effectiveness of hotel management. In conclusion, the hotel sector in Zadar County benefits from a relatively high level of management effectiveness, characterized by efficiency and respect for employees. However, to further enhance employee satisfaction, it is recommended that management adopt a more democratic leadership style and focus on improving distributive justice, as these factors have the strongest positive influence on satisfaction. The integration of these strategies is expected to foster a more supportive work environment, thereby improving employee morale and retention.

Keywords: Human resource management; Employee satisfaction; Leadership styles; Organizational justice; Hotel industry

1. Introduction

Human resource management plays a key role in the success of any organization. Modern human resource management takes care not only of the needs, interests, and demands of organizations and institutions but also of the needs, interests, and demands of employees themselves (Kuka, 2011). Job satisfaction refers to employees' emotional responses to various aspects of the work environment and is crucial for productivity, motivation, and long-term employee loyalty. Employees' potential is most evident when they are satisfied with their jobs; only under such conditions can employees fully realize their potential by channeling their knowledge, skills, abilities, efforts, and commitment toward achieving better individual performance. Employees are the creators of value and competitive advantage, forming the foundation upon which the success or failure of a company rests (Armstrong & Taylor, 2014). Exceptional individual performance creates a sense of success and achievement, which, in turn, positively affects job satisfaction (Bakotić & Vojković, 2013).

In the hospitality industry, the role of leadership extends beyond traditional management tasks, influencing not only the operational success of the organization but also the morale and satisfaction of employees. Leadership styles shape the daily experiences of employees, from how decisions are made to how they are treated by their supervisors. Similarly, organizational justice - the perceived justice of procedures, interpersonal interactions, and

the distribution of resources - affects how employees evaluate their work environment. When employees feel they are treated fairly and led by competent, supportive leaders, they are more likely to be engaged, motivated, and satisfied with their work. Understanding the complex relationship between leadership, organizational justice, and employee satisfaction is crucial for hotel managers who aim to foster a positive workplace culture that drives performance and enhances the overall success of the business. The aim of this study is to examine the relationship between leadership styles and organizational justice with employee satisfaction in hotel enterprises in Zadar County.

Research Questions:

How do leadership styles and perceptions of organizational justice affect employee satisfaction in hotels in Zadar County?

Which leadership style and dimension of organizational justice predominate in hotels in Zadar County, according to employees' perceptions?

What is the effectiveness of management in hotels in Zadar County concerning the frequency of leadership styles and perceived organizational justice?

Research Hypotheses:

H1: There are differences in the relationship between various leadership styles and job satisfaction.

H2: There is a positive relationship between the dimensions of organizational justice and job satisfaction.

The hotel industry in Zadar County is a key sector of the local economy, with the region being a popular tourist destination known for its rich cultural heritage and beautiful coastline. This industry is characterized by high employee turnover, seasonal fluctuations, and intense competition, making effective human resource management crucial for maintaining high service standards and fostering long-term growth. Hotels in Zadar County, like many in the broader tourism industry, rely heavily on their workforce to provide quality service, and employee satisfaction is closely tied to the success of the organization. In this context, leadership styles and organizational justice take on particular significance.

Hotel managers in Zadar County must navigate a diverse workforce, which includes both local employees and seasonal workers, and address the challenges of managing people with varying backgrounds, expectations, and levels of experience. The leadership style adopted by hotel managers plays a critical role in shaping the work environment and influencing how employees perceive their roles and their relationship with the organization. Leaders who demonstrate fair treatment and involve employees in decision-making processes foster a more positive work culture, which can enhance job satisfaction and reduce turnover, both of which are essential for maintaining high levels of service and customer satisfaction.

Furthermore, organizational justice - how employees perceive the justice of resource distribution, decision-making processes, and interactions within the workplace - has a significant impact on job satisfaction and organizational commitment. In the hotel industry, perceptions of justice can influence employee morale, motivation, and overall performance. Hotels in Zadar County, facing intense competition for a limited pool of skilled labor, must prioritize fair treatment, transparent decision-making, and consistent reward systems to retain talent and create a motivated workforce.

Given the unique dynamics of the hotel industry in Zadar County, where the workforce is often transient, job satisfaction plays a key role in ensuring that employees remain engaged and committed to providing high-quality service. Exploring the relationship between leadership styles, organizational justice, and employee satisfaction will provide valuable insights for hotel managers in the region, helping them to improve their management practices, reduce employee turnover, and enhance the overall guest experience.

This paper consists of several key chapters that thoroughly address the research topic. Following the introductory chapter, in which the main objectives and research questions are presented, Chapter 2: Literature Review analyzes existing research and theories in the areas of leadership styles, organizational justice, and employee satisfaction, providing a foundation for further investigation. Chapter 3: Research Methodology describes the data collection methods, research design, and instruments that will be used for analysis, while Chapter 4: Research Results presents the statistical analyses and findings based on the collected data. Chapter 5: Discussion interprets the results in the context of existing theories and previous research, offering recommendations for improving organizational practices in the hospitality industry. Finally, Chapter 6: Conclusions summarize the main findings of the paper, discusses implications for future research and practical application, and suggests directions for further development of this field.

2. Literature Review

Job satisfaction can be defined as a positive attitude toward work based on evaluating specific job characteristics (Robbins & Judge, 2009). It represents a combination of internal and external factors that lead a person to feel satisfied (Aziri, 2011). Historically, job satisfaction was viewed as a single concept. Today, it is considered a complex cluster of attitudes toward various job aspects shaped by the expectations an individual has about the work they perform and the work environment (Bakotić & Vojković, 2013). In today's business environment,

reforms and transformations have introduced a paradigm shift in human resource management toward prioritizing employees. This paradigm is characterized by new work models, performance metrics, and a renewed understanding of the purpose and meaning of work in an organization, as well as contemporary leadership (Krajnović et al., 2023).

Employee satisfaction positively affects productivity, motivation, loyalty, work quality, and stress reduction while lowering turnover rates. Sageer et al. (2012) summarized previous studies, dividing factors affecting employee satisfaction into:

Personal factors – Employees' personalities significantly determine what they perceive as satisfaction. These factors include personality, expectations, age, education, and gender. Managers must understand individual differences as they influence the feelings, thoughts, and behaviors of each organization member. Effective communication and mutual respect among members contribute to higher satisfaction levels (George & Jones, 2012).

Organizational factors – These include company development, reward system policies, career advancement, job security, work environment, organizational justice, relationships with superiors, teamwork, leadership styles, and more.

This study focuses on the impact of organizational factors, particularly leadership styles and organizational justice dimensions, on employee satisfaction.

In the literature, most authors agree that the definition of leadership refers to the ability to influence others to complete specific tasks. Robbins & Judge (2009) emphasize that leadership is the ability of a manager to use their organizational power to influence the work and organizational behavior of employees by motivating and inspiring them toward business goals while adapting their leadership style to the organizational culture and climate. A successful manager is an individual who strives to be an effective leader, which generally involves possessing natural, inherent traits but also requires enriching them with a broad range of knowledge and skills (Cerović, 2010). Adopting an appropriate leadership style is crucial for effective leadership. By gaining insight into the efficiency and importance of different leadership styles, ambitious leaders can acquire the knowledge and skills needed to adjust their approaches to leadership to meet the growing demands of their organizations and followers (Waheeda & Nishan, 2024). Leadership styles can be defined as specific behaviors of managers within the work process that impact organizational outcomes. Knowledge of leadership styles can assist managers in understanding their subordinates, improving their performance, and aligning individual duties and responsibilities with the appropriate leadership style (Landekić et al., 2016).

Lewin et al. (1939) established that different leadership styles prevail in society. The styles they proposed, now considered fundamental leadership styles, are autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire leadership.

The autocratic leadership style is characterized by the concentration of all authority in the hands of one person, who holds decision-making power. An autocratic leader operates on principles of commands, punishments, and rewards. They do not collaborate with their employees, and when they do, the collaboration is limited to rigid, formal hearings that aim to mask their authoritarian nature. Their leadership resembles military command, involving the issuance of orders without explanations or clear instructions and without justifications for the actions required (Buhač, 2017).

Wang et al. (2022) defined the democratic (participative) leadership style as a type of leadership that involves subordinates in organizational decision-making and management, aiming to effectively enhance employees' sense of inclusion and actively integrate their personal goals with organizational objectives. The democratic style had the highest motivational potential, particularly when managers understand that by empowering their subordinates, they also strengthen themselves. A democratic leader voluntarily relinquishes authority, transferring it to employees while retaining ultimate responsibility. Decisions are made in collaboration with subordinates and with their support, making the decision-making process significantly more complex. However, the leader and the group form a unified social entity, in which members are informed about tasks and motivated to contribute ideas and suggestions (Cerović, 2010; Landekić et al., 2016).

The laissez-faire leadership style is often referred to as a lack of leadership. Such leaders may assign tasks but provide little additional support or management oversight. Decision-making is left to others within the organization, and laissez-faire leaders often quickly lose influence due to their lack of action. A laissez-faire leader seeks to avoid responsibility and power and is highly dependent on the group when setting goals. Group members motivate each other, with the leader playing a secondary role.

Bass (1985) and Schimmoeller (2010) also proposed transactional and transformational leadership styles in addition to laissez-faire leadership.

The transactional leadership style is based on defining expectations, negotiating agreements, clarifying responsibilities, and providing recognition and rewards for achieving set goals and expected performance between the leader and the followers. Transactions occur as managers explain to employees what is expected of them in terms of job performance, and employees receive compensation or rewards for good work or penalties for poor performance (Pomper & Malbašić, 2016). Transactional leaders ensure that expectations are met, thus laying the foundation for motivating employees to exceed expectations (Breevaart et al., 2014).

The transformational leadership style is a process that changes and transforms people. It addresses emotions, values, ethics, standards, and long-term goals and involves identifying the motives of followers, meeting their needs, and treating them as whole individuals. A transformational leader is often charismatic and has a significant influence on those around them, including subordinates. If a leader lacks charisma, they must be exceptionally skilled at recognizing the individual needs of their followers and intellectually stimulating them to achieve extraordinary results and explore their potential, which they may not have previously recognized (Pomper & Malbašić, 2016). Transformational leaders tend to take risks and thrive in uncertain conditions. They also possess the ability to view problems from multiple perspectives to arrive at solutions.

Research conducted by Strukan et al. (2014) found statistically significant correlations between leadership and job satisfaction. They identified a causal relationship between leadership competencies and job satisfaction levels. Additionally, findings from studies by Bello & Bello (2021) and Pomper & Malbašić (2016) indicated that leadership style and behavior toward subordinates and collaborators directly influence job satisfaction and employees' desire to remain in the organization.

Organizational justice, or employees' perception of overall justice within their organizations, was increasingly recognized as a key determinant of motivation, attitudes, and behavior (George & Jones, 2012; Lee & Rhee, 2023). Greenberg (1987) defined organizational justice as employees' perceptions of the justice of resource distribution within an organization. Moorman (1991) stated that organizational justice pertains to employees' judgments about whether they are treated fairly in their workplaces and how these evaluations impact various job-related variables. Issues of organizational justice attract managers' attention, who must consider justice in work policies, advertising campaigns, and corporate contributions. Thus, concerns about justice are pervasive in organizations (Greenberg, 2011).

The theory of organizational justice does not refer to a single theory but describes a group of theories focusing on the nature, determinants, and consequences of organizational justice (George & Jones, 2012). Based on this framework, Greenberg (1993) identified four dimensions of organizational justice: distributive justice, procedural justice, interpersonal justice, and informational justice.

Research by Afridi & Baloch (2018) showed that organizational justice plays a crucial role in job satisfaction. The study also found that organizational justice is a strong predictor of job satisfaction and that a positive and significant relationship exists between them. Employees seek fair treatment, and it can be assumed that all four dimensions of organizational justice will positively correlate with job satisfaction. Organizational justice significantly impacts and plays a measurable role in shaping attitudes and explaining organizational behavior (Rai, 2013), and it remains a focal point of numerous studies.

Distributive justice is defined as the justice associated with decisions regarding the distribution of resources within an organization. These resources can be tangible (financial, such as salary) or intangible (non-financial, such as praise). Distributive justice is achieved when employees perceive that their efforts and rewards are valued equally (Colquitt, 2001). Individuals assess outcomes (income, bonuses, promotions, social rights) as fair or unfair by comparing what they received to what others received. As a result, they may feel treated fairly or unfairly, which influences their attitudes, and these attitudes can change their behavior (Ehtiyar & Alper, 2006).

Procedural justice relates to the perceived justice of the methods and procedures used in organizational decision-making processes, which should be consistent, unbiased, and morally acceptable (Cropanzano & Greenberg, 1997). Procedural justice focuses on the perceived justice of the means used to determine the distribution of rewards or penalties, suggesting that how outcomes are determined can be more critical than the outcomes themselves. Employees who perceive justice in the reward allocation process tend to report higher satisfaction with their superiors and greater organizational commitment (DeConinck & Stilwell, 2004).

Interpersonal justice reflects the degree to which individuals involved in executing procedures treat one another with politeness, dignity, and respect (Colquitt, 2001). Interpersonal justice pertains to justice in interpersonal interactions rather than in the distribution of benefits (Ehtiyar & Alper, 2006) and is based on respect and propriety norms (Adamovic, 2023).

Informational justice refers to employees' perceptions of the extent to which managers explain their decisions and the procedures used, emphasizing communication. When managers describe the procedures for distributing outcomes in a truthful, direct, and timely manner - providing thorough explanations - subordinates are more likely to perceive informational justice as high (George & Jones, 2012). Informational justice is grounded in the principles of truthfulness and justification (Adamovic, 2023).

Research shows that organizational justice is positively associated with job satisfaction, organizational commitment, work performance, and organizational citizenship behavior, while negatively associated with absenteeism and employee turnover (Afridi & Baloch, 2018; Choudhary et al., 2013; Kalay, 2016; Lotfi & Pour, 2013; Tvarog Malvić et al., 2014). Studies also suggest that low perceptions of organizational justice increase the potential for counterproductive work behaviors (DeConinck & Stilwell, 2004). Counterproductive work behaviors violate organizational values and norms and can harm individuals and the organization as a whole. These behaviors range from minor infractions, such as wasting time and resources, to more severe violations, such as theft, sabotage, and verbal or physical abuse (Adamovic, 2023; George & Jones, 2012). None of the dimensions of organizational

justice should be overlooked (Lee & Rhee, 2023), even though some studies reveal stronger relationships between specific dimensions and job satisfaction (Lotfi & Pour, 2013). Bosna (2022) emphasizes the importance of actively aligning labor supply and demand to effectively address labor market needs. The shortage of labor, particularly acute in sectors like hospitality, underscores the importance of adopting strategies aimed at attracting, retaining, and motivating employees. In this context, leadership and organizational justice play a crucial role in creating a work environment that enables employees to achieve high job satisfaction, which is vital for maintaining service quality and competitive advantage in the hospitality industry.

3. Research Methodology

The research was conducted through a survey questionnaire among employees of seven selected hotels in Zadar County. A total of 47 employees participated in the survey. The selection of seven hotels in Zadar County was based on several key criteria that ensure the sample is relevant and provides valuable insights into the hotel industry in the region. The hotels were selected to represent a variety of establishments, including hotels of different sizes, types (luxury vs. budget), and service levels. This diversity allows for a comprehensive understanding of different management practices and employee experience across the sector. The chosen hotels include both large, internationally recognized hotels and smaller, locally owned establishments, ensuring a broader perspective on employee satisfaction and leadership styles in the area.

The sampling method used was purposive sampling, which is commonly employed in research where the goal is to gather specific information from a targeted group that meets predefined criteria. In this case, the hotels were selected based on their relevance to the research objectives, specifically regarding their employee composition and the leadership practices observed within the organization. This approach allowed for a focused examination of hotels that are representative of the overall hotel sector in the region.

Although the sample size of 47 employees across seven hotels is relatively small, it provides an initial snapshot of employee satisfaction and leadership styles in the area. The sample includes employees with varying levels of experience, roles, and demographics, allowing insights into how different factors may influence employee satisfaction across diverse hotel settings. However, it is important to note that due to the purposive nature of the sampling, the findings may not be fully generalizable to all hotels in Zadar County. The sample is intended to offer a preliminary understanding of the dynamics at play and will be useful in identifying trends that can inform further research with a larger, more representative sample.

The questionnaire used in this study is based on existing, standard measurement instruments commonly used in research on job satisfaction, leadership styles and organizational justice. It was not developed from scratch but adapted to the specifics of our research. The validity of the instrument was ensured based on previous studies that confirmed its suitability for measuring the relevant constructs, while reliability was confirmed through the use of Cronbach's alpha for internal consistency of the scales.

Before completing the questionnaire, participants were informed about the purpose of the study and assured of anonymity. They were encouraged to respond honestly using a Likert scale from 1 to 5, where 1 indicated "strongly disagree" and 5 indicated "strongly agree." The initial part of the questionnaire collected demographic data such as gender, age, education level, marital status, and length of employment in the current organization. Participants were then asked to focus on statements regarding the behavior and characteristics of their immediate superiors and statements related to organizational justice. The final section of the questionnaire included a question about overall job satisfaction. Descriptive analysis was used to describe facts, processes, and relationships between selected organizational variables and job satisfaction. Spearman's correlation coefficient was applied to analyze the relationship between leadership styles and organizational justice with job satisfaction in hotels in Zadar County.

4. Research Results and Hypotheses Testing

The demographic structure of respondents is shown in Table 1.

Nearly two-thirds of the respondents are women. The majority belong to the age group of 18 to 27 years, with a significant number also in the 28 to 37 age group. More than half of the respondents have secondary education, while 38.3% have higher education qualifications. The number of unmarried respondents slightly exceeds those who are married. Most respondents have work experience in their current company ranging between one and five years. An equal number of respondents have been employed for less than one year and between six to ten years. Only 2.1% of respondents have worked in their company for 11 to 15 years, and 8.5% have been employed for more than 15 years.

According to the descriptive data from Table 2, the transactional leadership style is somewhat more prevalent in the hotels of Zadar County. On average, respondents generally agree with statements describing a transactional leader, particularly with the assertion that their supervisors clearly set standards that employees must adhere to in order to perform their work adequately. The transactional leadership style is based on defining expectations, clarifying responsibilities, and providing recognition and rewards for achieving established goals. This leadership

style emphasizes stability, efficiency, and goal achievement through clear agreements and conditions. Respondents agree that their immediate supervisors do not use an autocratic leadership style. Specifically, they concur with statements indicating that supervisors do not scold employees in front of others, do not undermine their contributions to the organization, do not prioritize company interests over employee interests, and share information with their staff.

Table 1. Overview of demographic variables by categories

Variable	Category	N	Percentage
Gender	Male	17	36.2%
	Female	30	63.8%
Age	18-27 years	19	40.4%
	28-37 years	13	27.7%
	38-47 years	9	19.1%
	48-57 years	4	8.5%
	58-67 years	2	4.3%
Education	Secondary education	25	53.2%
	Higher education	18	38.3%
	University degree	4	8.5%
Marital status	Single	25	53.2%
	Married	20	42.6%
	Divorced	2	4.2%
Employment duration	<1 year	11	23.4%
	1-5 years	20	42.6%
	6-10 years	11	23.4%
	11-15 years	1	2.1%
	>15 years	4	8.5%

Source: Author's analysis (2024)

Table 2. Descriptive statistics for leadership styles

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Median	Mode	Range
Democratic style	47	3.4	1.22	2.00	4.00	1-5
Autocratic style	47	2.29	1.26	3.00	1.00	1-5
Transformational	47	3.32	1.18	3.00	4.00	1-5
Transactional	47	3.46	1.17	4.00	4.00	1-5
Laissez-faire style	47	3.36	1.22	3.00	3.00	1-5

Source: Author's analysis (2024)

According to Table 3, it is evident that interpersonal justice is the most pronounced dimension. Interpersonal justice reflects the perception of justice in interpersonal interactions. This includes respect, dignity, and consideration shown by supervisors toward employees. Considering the range of results, it is clear that some respondents rate organizational justice very highly, while others assess it very poorly. On average, respondents perceive organizational justice as moderate.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics for dimensions of organizational justice

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Median	Mode	Range
Distributive justice	47	3.08	1.19	3.00	2.00	1-5
Procedural justice	47	3.55	1.22	4.00	4.00	1-5
Interpersonal justice	47	4.01	1.17	4.00	5.00	1-5
Informational justice	47	3.58	1.20	4.00	5.00	1-5

Source: Author's analysis (2024)

According to Table 4, it can be concluded that the average respondent is generally satisfied with their job. The range of results indicates that some respondents are very dissatisfied with their jobs, while others are highly satisfied.

Hypothesis 1, which assumes differences in the correlation between leadership styles and job satisfaction, is fully confirmed. The data from Table 5 identify a significant negative correlation between the autocratic leadership style and job satisfaction, as well as a positive correlation for the other leadership styles. The negative correlation of the autocratic style with job satisfaction suggests that strictly controlling employees and making decisions without their involvement reduces their job satisfaction. On the other hand, democratic and transformational leadership styles, which involve employees in decision-making and foster their development, have a positive impact on job satisfaction. Transactional and laissez-faire leadership styles also show a positive correlation,

indicating that clearly defined expectations and freedom in work contribute to higher job satisfaction.

Table 4. Descriptive statistics for job satisfaction

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Median	Mode	Range
Job satisfaction	47	3.59	1.13	4.00	3.00	1-5

Source: Author's analysis (2024)

Table 5. Correlation between leadership styles and job satisfaction

	Autocratic Style	Democratic Style	Transformational Style	Transactional Style	Laissez-faire Style
r	-0.61*	0.55*	0.51*	0.45*	0.44*

Note: * Statistically significant at the 5% level

Source: Author's analysis (2024)

Table 6. Correlation between forms of organizational justice and job satisfaction

	Distributive Justice	Procedural Justice	Interpersonal Justice	Informational Justice
r	0.58*	0.55*	0.47*	0.49*

Note: * Statistically significant at the 5% level

Source: Author's analysis (2024)

Hypothesis 2, which assumes a positive correlation between the forms of organizational justice and job satisfaction, is fully confirmed. All dimensions of organizational justice in Table 6 exhibit a significant and positive correlation with job satisfaction, with distributive justice leading the way. This indicates that employees who perceive the distribution of resources as fair demonstrate a higher level of job satisfaction. These findings align with the study by Colquitt (2001), which showed that equitable resource distribution enhances employee satisfaction and motivation. Additionally, fair organizational procedures, adequate employee communication, and respectful treatment by supervisors are critical for job satisfaction. The results confirm that the perception of workplace justice plays an essential role in employee satisfaction.

5. Discussion

The research has shown that the autocratic leadership style negatively impacts job satisfaction, consistent with the findings of Fouad (2019). This leadership style increases perceptions of unfair treatment and a lack of psychological safety, reducing engagement and job satisfaction. Therefore, it is positive that this leadership style is not dominant in the hotel enterprises of Zadar County.

The democratic leadership style has a significant positive correlation with job satisfaction by motivating employees to share their ideas and suggestions and involving them in decision-making. This ultimately ensures employee commitment and reduces turnover. According to Hernaus et al. (2024), leader support is essential for fostering employees' innovative behavior; without high levels of supervisor support, there will be little creativity and innovation among employees. The democratic leadership style is relatively more prevalent in the hotels studied, and given its particularly positive effect on job satisfaction, more frequent application of this style would be desirable. Bilginoğlu & Yozgat (2018) emphasized the importance of encouraging employees to express their opinions and participate in decision-making, as these practices improve job satisfaction and organizational commitment. This is especially important in the hospitality sector, where employee engagement is critical.

The research identified distributive justice as having the most significant positive impact on employee job satisfaction. Rivai et al. (2019) also found a significant positive effect of distributive justice on job satisfaction, although they did not find a significant link between distributive justice and organizational performance. Meanwhile, Astuti & Ingsih (2019) concluded that distributive justice affects job satisfaction by improving employee performance. Employees place high importance on having their efforts equally valued and fairly rewarded, as well as on fair resource allocation within the organization. In the hotel enterprises of Zadar County, distributive justice is perceived by employees as the least expressed dimension of organizational justice, indicating a need to improve resource distribution justice to enhance job satisfaction.

These insights can serve as guidelines for hotel managers to develop more effective human resource management strategies that promote satisfaction, thereby increasing productivity and reducing employee turnover. The results of this research have practical implications for hotel enterprises, offering concrete recommendations for improving the work environment and optimizing employee management. This can lead to increased employee satisfaction, which is essential for maintaining high service levels in the hotel industry.

Based on these findings, it can be concluded that organizations should focus their efforts on ensuring fair resource distribution and implementing participative leadership styles to enhance employee satisfaction and engagement.

6. Conclusions

The research has shown that employees in the hotel enterprises of Zadar County are generally satisfied with their jobs. The transactional leadership style is predominant, with managers in the hospitality industry emphasizing goal achievement through clear tasks, rewarding employee successes, and correcting deviations. Interpersonal justice is the highest-ranking dimension, as managers treat their employees with respect, dignity, and empathy. The management in Zadar County's hotel enterprises demonstrates a high level of social and emotional intelligence and is attuned to the needs and emotions of their employees.

Hotel management in Zadar County exhibits a high level of efficiency and respect for employees and can be considered effective. However, to further enhance employee satisfaction in the hotel enterprises of Zadar County, management should more frequently adopt the democratic leadership style and work on improving distributive justice, as these factors have the strongest positive impact on employee satisfaction.

Informed Consent Statement

Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study.

Data Availability

The data used to support the research findings are available from the corresponding author upon request.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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