

LEADERSHIP STYLES AND JOB SATISFACTION OF SELECTED STAR-RATED HOTELS IN NAIVASHA SUB- COUNTY, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

Purpose of the Study: The purpose of this study was to assess the effect of leadership styles on job satisfaction of selected star-rated hotels in Naivasha Sub-County, Kenya.

Statement of the Problem: The hospitality industry in Kenya operates in a volatile environment characterised by poor pay, long working hours, and work-related stress leading to cases of absenteeism, substance abuse, and high labour turnover due to low employee job satisfaction. This results in poor employee productivity which in turn affects the hotel's profitability. This calls for the application of appropriate leadership styles in the management of employees to increase job satisfaction.

Methodology: The research study was grounded in Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, Path-Goal Theory, Transformational Leadership Theory, and Transactional Leadership Theory. It employed an explanatory research design and was conducted with a sample size of 49 supervisory-level and 248 junior-level employees, drawn from 3- to 5-star-rated hotels in Naivasha sub-county. Participants were selected using a stratified random sampling technique, and data were collected through a semi-structured questionnaire.

Results of the Study: According to the study findings transformational leadership style, transactional leadership style, and autocratic leadership style were found to have a significant positive effect on job satisfaction in selected star-rated hotels in Naivasha sub-county. Democratic leadership style on the other hand had no significant effect on job satisfaction.

Conclusions: The study concludes that transformational and transactional leadership styles have a significant positive impact on job satisfaction among employees in Naivasha's star-rated hotels. Conversely, democratic leadership had no significant effect, while autocratic leadership showed a weak but positive association with job satisfaction in certain contexts.

Recommendations: It is recommended that hospitality managers in Naivasha prioritize transformational and transactional leadership styles to enhance employee job satisfaction and organizational performance. Additionally, managers should consider the situational use of autocratic leadership, applying it selectively in scenarios where structured guidance is necessary to maintain workplace productivity.

Keywords: *Leadership Styles, Job Satisfaction, Transformational Leadership, Transactional Leadership, Democratic Leadership, Autocratic Leadership*

INTRODUCTION

The tourism sector, in which the hospitality industry plays a central role, has grown into a major economic driver, contributing over 10% to the global Gross Domestic Product (GDP) both directly and indirectly (IMF, 2021). However, this positive trend saw a sudden downturn with the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, as governments enacted measures to contain the virus. These restrictions heavily impacted tourism, leading to a reduction in its global GDP contribution from 10.3% in 2019 to 5.3% in 2020. Although there was a partial recovery to 6.1% in 2021 (WTTC, 2021), the effect was significant. In Africa, tourism's GDP contribution similarly dropped, from 6.8% in 2019 to 3.8% in 2020, and then partially recovered to 4.4% in 2021. Kenya mirrored these trends, with tourism's GDP contribution decreasing from 7.7% in 2019 to 3.9% in 2020 before rebounding to 4.9% in 2021 (WTTC, 2021), highlighting the sector's susceptibility to global crises.

Hotel occupancy rates also reflect the pandemic's impact, with bed occupancy declining from 9,058,226 in 2019 to 3,803,028 in 2020, representing a 58% decrease (TRI, 2022). During the period from January to September 2021, bed occupancy began to recover, reaching 4,138,821 compared to 2,572,812 in the same period in 2020, marking a growth of 60.7% (TRI, 2022). This fluctuation illustrates the volatility of the tourism and hospitality industry, especially under external disruptions like the COVID-19 pandemic. Tran (2017) defines leadership style as the actions and behaviors leaders display to guide employees toward organizational goals. Prabowo et al. (2018) further suggest that adopting effective leadership styles allows managers to direct employees in a way that maximizes job satisfaction. Within the dynamic and highly

competitive hospitality sector, Al-Omari et al. (2015) argue that managers should prioritize developing strong leadership skills to lead their establishments effectively through uncertain times.

In Africa, studies show that employee experience, expertise, and innovative capacity are crucial for the survival of the hospitality industry, although the sector often struggles with retaining staff due to unfavorable conditions. Dlamini et al. (2017) argue that employees in South Africa's hospitality industry frequently seek employment in other sectors due to low pay, limited training, and challenging work environments. The study suggests that adopting supportive leadership styles that foster commitment among employees could counteract these issues. Similarly, Day et al. (2022) observed that in Ghana's hospitality sector, the application of effective leadership styles not only helps increase job satisfaction but also aids in retaining skilled employees and reducing turnover. These studies emphasize that leadership style plays a vital role in sustaining employee engagement, especially in regions facing economic challenges.

In Kenya, Wanjiku and Kungu (2022) conducted research on five-star hotels in Nairobi, finding that effective leadership styles have a positive impact on hotel performance. They recommended that Kenyan hotel managers adopt leadership styles suited to addressing sector-specific challenges, including those posed by terrorism and the COVID-19 pandemic. Another study by Nagele and Awuor (2018) identified that a leader's competence, communication skills, and ability to motivate staff significantly influence the operational performance of hotels. This evidence from Kenyan studies highlights the importance of leadership competence and adaptability in achieving a competitive edge, especially in an environment as challenging as the hospitality industry. Adopting the appropriate leadership style is crucial to improving employee commitment and ensuring sustainable performance, especially amid external pressures.

Job satisfaction is closely linked to employees' positive feelings toward their work, defined by Gani et al. (2019) as a psychological state associated with positive emotions toward one's job (Surusu and Sagbas, 2020). Positive emotions foster both physical and mental well-being, which translates to better service quality—a key factor in maintaining a competitive edge in hospitality (Surusu and Sagbas, 2020). However, globally, hotel work remains demanding, with employees facing long hours, burnout, and, at times, physical injuries. Compounded by low pay and limited benefits, these conditions lead to high turnover and serious psychological issues, including stress, burnout, and even substance abuse (Vargas-Sevalle et al., 2020; Cheng

and Yi, 2018; Ashton, 2018; Heurtas et al., 2019). Such workplace challenges underscore the need for supportive management and leadership styles that can mitigate stress and boost employee satisfaction, which ultimately contributes to organizational success.

In Africa, Amissah et al. (2016) found that hospitality industry employees in Ghana face low pay, limited work-life balance, long working hours, and communication gaps, all of which contribute to low job satisfaction. The study identified four primary facets of job satisfaction: remuneration, promotion opportunities, training opportunities, and job advancement. Amissah et al. recommended that hotel managers could improve employee satisfaction by offering competitive pay, enhancing training opportunities, and equipping managers with strong communication skills. By addressing these factors, managers can foster a work environment that encourages employee commitment and reduces turnover.

Within the Kenyan context, Mokaya et al. (2013) highlighted the significance of employee job satisfaction in achieving customer satisfaction and enhancing organizational productivity. The study recommended that hotel managers prioritize training and career development for employees and conduct regular reviews of working conditions and promotion opportunities to positively influence job satisfaction. Such practices are crucial in the competitive Kenyan hospitality industry, as they ensure employees feel valued and motivated. Hence, the study examined the impact of transformational, transactional, democratic, and autocratic leadership styles on job satisfaction among employees in star-rated hotels in Naivasha sub-county, Kenya.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The hospitality industry in Kenya exists in a highly competitive environment. This means hotels have to continuously evolve their services and be customer focused if they are to create a competitive edge over their competition. However, hotel employees in Kenya's hospitality industry are negatively affected by low pay, long working hours, lack of promotion opportunities, work-related stress, terrorism, and the effect of pandemics (Wanjiku and Kungu, 2022; Mokaya, 2013). This has resulted in increased absenteeism, low motivation, and a high labour-turnover rate, all due to low employee job satisfaction levels. This has been shown to negatively impact on employee productivity, customer satisfaction, and organizational profitability (Wanjiku and Kungu, 2022; Book et al, 2019).

This situation calls for effective management of human resources with an appropriate leadership style, if the hotel establishment is to sustain a competitive advantage in an evolving and highly competitive environment (Surucu & Sesen, 2019). Studies carried out by Huang et

al (2016) and Munir and Iqbal (2018) centred on the hospitality industry revealed a notable relationship between the leadership style applied by hospitality managers and job satisfaction of hotel employees. However, these studies focused on the Asian hospitality industry.

A study by Wanjiku and Kungu (2022) on leadership styles and organizational performance in Kenya's hospitality industry found that the use of appropriate leadership styles positively influences organizational performance. However, this study specifically examined the link between leadership styles and organizational performance, focusing exclusively on five-star hotels within Nairobi County. Similarly, a study by Nagele and Awuor (2016) investigated the relationship between transformational leadership and operational performance in Kenya's hospitality industry, though it was limited to a single leadership style and conducted as a case study in one hotel in Nairobi. This review of literature indicates a gap in understanding the broader impact of various leadership styles on job satisfaction. Consequently, this research aims to fill that gap by examining the effects of transformational, transactional, democratic, and autocratic leadership styles on job satisfaction within star-rated hotels in Naivasha sub-county, Kenya.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this research study were:

- i. To investigate the effect of transformational leadership style on job satisfaction in selected star-rated hotels in Naivasha sub-county, Kenya
- ii. To establish the effect of transactional leadership style on job satisfaction in selected star-rated hotels in Naivasha sub-county, Kenya.
- iii. To evaluate the effect of democratic leadership style on job satisfaction in selected star-rated hotels in Naivasha sub-county, Kenya.
- iv. To determine the effect of autocratic leadership style on job satisfaction in selected star-rated hotels in Naivasha sub-county, Kenya.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The study tested the following hypotheses:

- H₀₁** Transformational leadership style has no significant effect on job satisfaction in selected star-rated hotels in Naivasha sub-county, Kenya?

H02 Transactional leadership style has no significant effect on job satisfaction in selected star-rated hotels in Naivasha sub-county, Kenya?

H03 Democratic leadership style has no significant effect on job satisfaction in selected star-rated hotels in Naivasha sub-county, Kenya?

H04 Autocratic leadership style has no significant effect on job satisfaction in selected star-rated hotels in Naivasha sub-county, Kenya?

THEORETICAL REVIEW

This study utilized four theories to discuss the effect of leadership style on employee job satisfaction: the Path-Goal Theory, Herzberg's Motivation Theory, Transformation Leadership Theory, and Transactional Leadership Theory.

Path-Goal Theory

The Path-Goal Theory was conceptualized by Robert House in 1971 and is modelled on identifying a leadership style that best suits employees in a particular work environment to help them achieve their goals (House & Mitchell, 1974). The theory was conceptualized as enhancing subordinate's performance and job satisfaction by putting focus on their motivation. With this theory, leaders alter their leadership behaviour to suit the requirements of their employees and work environment, and consequently, leaders are better able to direct employees through their journey in achieving their objectives (Hoidn, 2023).

The fundamental application of the theory is based on the leader assisting followers in determining their goals, and defining the path they want to follow to attain the goals by helping them confront obstacles, find a way around obstacles, or removes obstacles that may prevail along the path to attaining their goals. The leader alters his/her leadership behaviour, depending on subordinate and task attributes, to motivate followers towards goal attainment (Olowoselu, 2019). Different leadership behaviours can be adapted to the Path-Goal Theory and this research has focused on transformational, transactional, autocratic and democratic leadership behaviour. Based on the theory this study sought to establish how both democratic and autocratic leadership styles affect job satisfaction in the hotels under study.

Herzberg's Motivation Theory

Herzberg's Motivation Theory (also referred to as the Two Factor Theory) was postulated by Frederick Herzberg, a behavioural scientist based in the USA, in his 1959 seminal work on

motivation. Herzberg's Theory postulates that motivation is a function of two independent factors – hygiene factors and motivational factors. Hygiene factors comprise the quality of supervision, job security, benefits given, the organization's policies, working conditions, interpersonal relations, and salary scale. In a situation where the scale of these factors became disagreeable to employees, it led to job dissatisfaction (Gitman et al, 2018). However acceptable level of these factors did not predicate job satisfaction, but however, averted dissatisfaction and consequently poor job performance. Motivating factors, which comprise work autonomy, recognition, advancement at work, level of achievement, work itself and the scale of responsibility influenced job satisfaction. This theory posits that both satisfaction factors and dissatisfaction factors are definite and unrelated, and for this reason, doing away with dissatisfaction elements did not necessarily predicate job satisfaction (Hiriyapa, 2018). Herzberg's Motivation Theory found relevance in this research study as hygiene and motivation factors were critical in explaining job satisfaction and understanding how the different leadership styles affected job satisfaction.

Transformational Leadership Theory

Bernard Bass, a leading scholar in the field of organizational behaviour, proposed the Transformational Leadership Theory, anchored on earlier research carried out in 1978 attributed to James MacGregor Burns. Burns postulated that transformational and transactional leadership should be viewed as two concepts occupying opposite ends of the same continuum (Arenas, 2019). Bass opined that transformational leaders motivate, develop, inspire, and mentor followers based on trust and support. He further postulated transformational leadership as being founded on four inter-related behavioural dimensions, these being idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Northouse, 2021).

Transactional Leadership Theory

Building on the seminal work by James McGregor Burns, Barnard Bass in 1981 expounded on the transactional leadership model showing the relationship between leader and followers as being based on a cost-benefit exchange, where the leader predetermines what followers need to do to realize their personal and organizational goals. The leader explains what the followers need to do to meet expectations, outlines the evaluation criteria for their performance, provides feedback on whether goals have been met, and allocates rewards that are contingent on the met

goals (Arenas, 2019). Emphasis and focus are put on the attainment of goals coupled with a logical reward exchange for desired outcomes and a punitive system for outcomes that are not desired. Three dimensions of transactional leadership were advanced, these being contingent reward, active management-by-exception, and passive management-by-exception (Aslam, 2018).

EMPIRICAL REVIEW

In a study examining the effect of three leadership styles (transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire) on job satisfaction in the German hospitality industry, Rothfelder et al. (2012) concluded that hotel employees job satisfaction was notably affected by leadership style with the effect of transformational leadership differing with both transactional and non-leadership behaviour. Transformational leadership and contingent rewards were found to have the most positive influence on employee job satisfaction. However, this study was done in the context of the hospitality industry in Germany hence prone to a different working culture to that of the current study.

Govender et al (2013) studied the effect of leadership styles on job satisfaction in South Africa, specifically examining three leadership styles (transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire) while considering job grade, age, and gender as intervening variables. The outcome suggested a notable relationship between transactional, transformational, and laissez-faire leadership styles and job satisfaction. The study also opined that job satisfaction was not notably influenced by the intervening biographical variables under review. This research study will be done in the context of the Kenyan hotel industry and will examine the moderating influence of age, tenure, and education and take into context four independent variables.

Fouad (2019) studied the impact of three forms of leadership (transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire) on job satisfaction in the hospitality industry by surveying a sample of 300 employees in the Food and Beverage department in 5-star hotels in Egypt. The research found that particular attributes of job satisfaction, these being remuneration, promotions, employee development, employee appraisal, employee empowerment and recognition, are influential factors when examining the relationship between the three leadership styles and job satisfaction. However, the study restricted itself to one department in the hotel structure and was done in the context of 5-star hotels in Egypt. This research study will broaden the study by considering all the departments in a hotels structure and taking into consideration select star rated hotels in the Kenyan hotel industry.

In a research to establish the link between leadership styles and job satisfaction conducted amongst library staff in private universities in Nigeria, Jerome (2018) found a positive relationship between democratic leadership style and job satisfaction. He further recommended that library management ought to exercise democratic leadership as it led to better communication with employees, higher participation in decision-making, higher creativity and innovativeness, and a higher sense of responsibility. However, this study was done in the context of libraries in Nigerian private universities whose context may not apply to Kenya's hotel industry.

Ovunda et al (2018) investigated the effect of the democratic leadership style on job satisfaction in the teaching fraternity in public schools in Nigeria. The study posited that democratic leadership style had a weak relationship with job satisfaction and therefore does not significantly predict teachers' job satisfaction. However, this study was done among teaching professionals in Nigeria and hence not applicable to the hospitality industry in Kenya. Rast et al (2012) in a study conducted amongst employees of organizations in the United Kingdom concluded that depending on the level of uncertainty, employees with high self-uncertainty supported autocratic leadership more than non-autocratic leadership styles, while employees with low self-uncertainty supported non-autocratic leadership styles. However, this study considered self-uncertainty as an intervening variable and was conducted in the context of employees drawn from a cross-section of organizations in the United Kingdom, and not specific to the hotel industry.

Research undertaken by Dyczkowska and Dyczkowski (2014) among Polish small and medium enterprises (SME) showed that autocratic leadership had a negative correlation to job satisfaction while democratic leadership style had a positive correlation to job satisfaction. This informed their recommendation that managers consider developing employees by incorporating them in management decision making which would be useful in helping develop a performance-oriented reward system thereby enhancing job satisfaction. However, this study took into context the Polish SME environment which may not have similar characteristics as Kenya's hotel industry.

Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework is a graphical representation of the relationships between independent and dependent variables. Figure 2.1 depicts the presentation of the conceptual framework.

Independent Variables

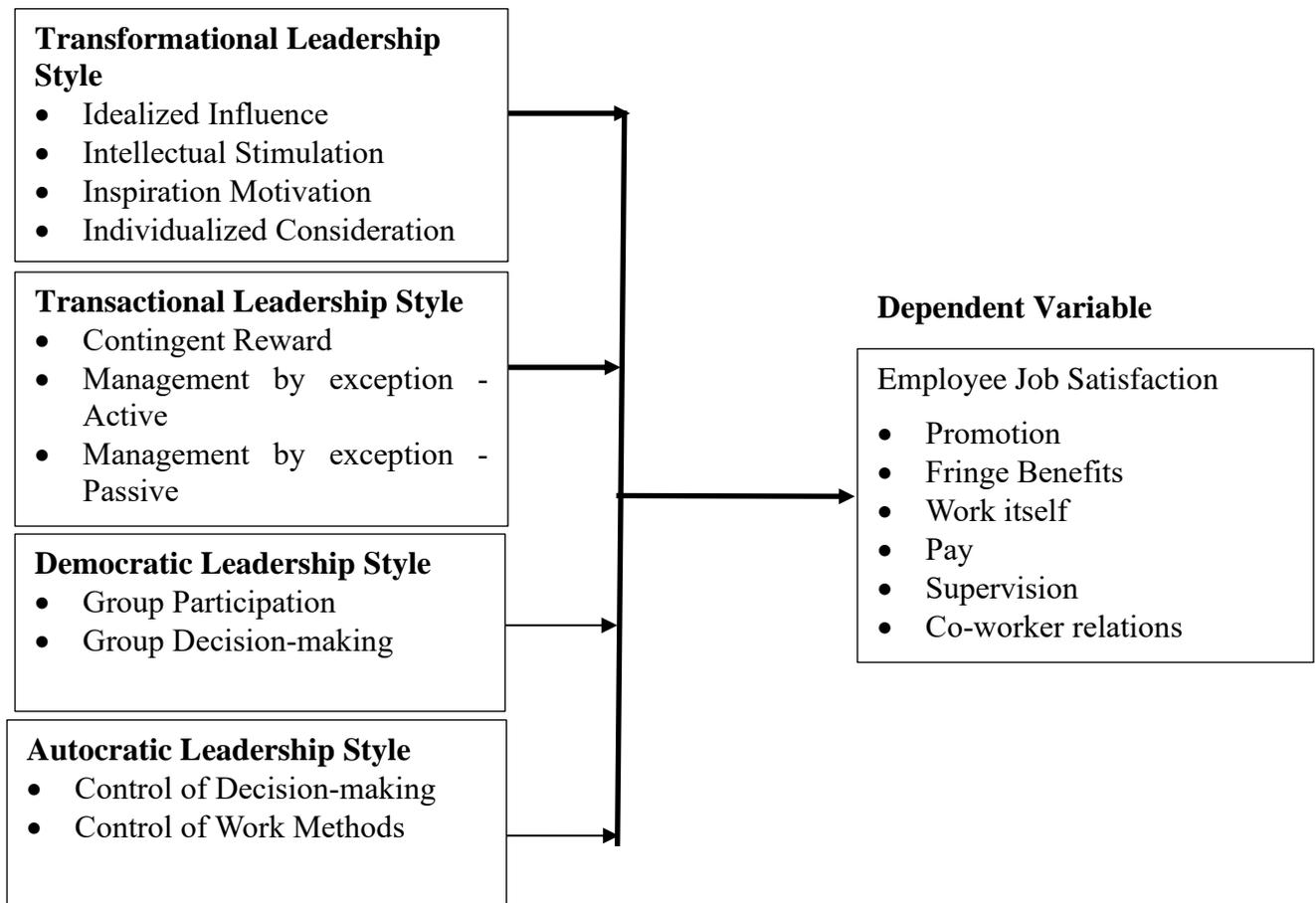


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Source: Author (2024)

Figure 1 illustrates the effect of leadership styles on job satisfaction. The independent variables used in the study were transformational leadership style, transactional leadership style, democratic leadership style, and autocratic leadership style. The dependent variable of the study was job satisfaction. This was proxied by promotion opportunities, fringe benefits, work itself, pay, quality of supervision, and co-worker relationships.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research employed an explanatory research design that applied a survey research approach to allow for descriptive and inferential analysis. The target population was all five 3-star to 5-star rated hotels in the Naivasha sub-county, chosen on account of having clear management structures as per the Tourism Regulatory Authority’s star-rating criteria. The research study was conducted on a sample size of 49 supervisory level and 248 junior level employees drawn from 3 to 5-star-rated hotels in the Naivasha sub-county, who were selected using the stratified

random sampling technique. Data were sourced through a semi-structured questionnaire. Cronbach's alpha (α) was applied to measure the reliability coefficient of the research, where a coefficient of 0.7 or more was considered adequate. Frequency percentages were applied and presented in tables. The data was analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics for the research study were analyzed using standard deviation, frequency distribution, and percentages. The qualitative data from the open-ended questions were analyzed by applying conceptual content analysis.

Inferential statistics were arrived at utilizing the Pearson correlation coefficient and multiple linear regression analysis to ascertain the effect of the relationship between dependent and independent variables. The coefficient of determination (R^2) was applied to test the relevance of the model by measuring the extent to which the variation in job satisfaction is affected by the variation in leadership styles. An F-statistic was computed at a 95% confidence level to test the overall importance of the model. A significance level of 0.05 was used, as it is the level recommended for both business and social science research (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2016). The multiple regression equation that was applied for predicting the relationship between leadership style and job satisfaction in select star-rated hotels in Naivasha sub-county is expressed below:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \beta_4X_4 + \varepsilon$$

Where:

Y = the dependent variable i.e., Job Satisfaction

β_0 = a constant representing the coefficient of intercept (the value of Y when all X values are zero)

β_i = The regression coefficients ($i = 1,2,3 \& 4$) which indicates the relative importance of each of the independent variables in prediction of the dependent variable

X_i = The independent variable ($i = 1,2,3 \& 4$) where:

X_1 = Transformational Leadership Style

X_2 = Transactional Leadership Style

X_3 = Democratic Leadership Style

X_4 = Autocratic Leadership Style

ε = the error term (accounting for all other variables not contemplated by the study)

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Descriptive Analysis

The researcher wanted to determine the level of agreement on the effect of transformational, transactional, democratic and autocratic leadership styles on job satisfaction in selected star-rated hotels in the Naivasha sub-county, Kenya. The findings are illustrated in Tables 1, 2, 3, & 4.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for Transformational Leadership Style

Statements	Mean	Std. Deviation
Idealized Influence		
My supervisor makes us feel comfortable dealing with him/her	4.159	1.061
I have a lot of faith and trust in my supervisor	4.059	1.173
I am happy to work under my supervisor	4.083	1.049
Inspirational Motivation		
My supervisor explains clearly what is expected of us	4.235	.817
My supervisor gives a vision of the results we can achieve	4.147	.954
My supervisor helps me see the importance of my work	4.027	.969
Intellectual Stimulation		
My supervisor encourages us to look at old challenges differently	4.075	1.034
My supervisor provides us with new ways of dealing with challenges	4.147	1.007
My supervisor gets us to think innovatively on things we had previously never questioned	4.167	.931
Individualized Consideration		
My supervisor helps individuals to develop in their career	4.119	.960
My supervisor gives us feedback on performance	4.231	1.020
My supervisor gives close and personal attention to individuals	4.107	1.152
Aggregate	4.130	1.010

Source: Research Data (2024)

From the research findings most of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement variables under transformational leadership with an aggregate mean of 4.130 and a standard deviation of 1.010.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for Transactional Leadership Style

Statements	Mean	Std. Deviation
Contingent Reward		
My supervisor informs individuals what is required of them at work for them to be rewarded	4.286	.961
My supervisor recognizes individuals who attain agreed goals	4.266	1.060
My supervisor makes us understand what we can get for our work accomplishment	4.191	1.005
Management-By-Exception		
My supervisor is satisfied when individuals attain standards that have been agreed upon	4.215	1.012
My supervisor does not see the need to change things that are working	4.063	1.104
My supervisor informs us of the standards we have to be aware of to do your job	4.195	.902
Aggregate	4.203	1.007

Source: Research Data (2024)

From the research findings most of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement variables under transactional leadership with an aggregate mean of 4.203 and a standard deviation of 1.007.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics for Democratic Leadership Style

Statements	Mean	Std. Deviation
My supervisor believes employees are capable of doing work on their own	4.259	.848
My supervisor is fair to every employee in my team	4.143	1.122
My supervisor helps employees reach their personal goals	4.159	.950
My supervisor maintains open and frequent communication with employees	3.920	1.153
My supervisor strives to make employees take part in decision-making process	3.920	1.146
My supervisor provides guidance without pressuring employees	3.812	1.255
Aggregate	4.0355	1.079

Source: Research Data (2024)

From the research findings most of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement variables under democratic leadership with an aggregate mean of 4.0355 and a standard deviation of 1.079.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics for Autocratic Leadership Style

Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
My supervisor believes employees need to be closely supervised for them to work	4.156	1.077
My supervisor rewards or punishes employees to motivate them to meet objectives	4.490	.331
My supervisor makes all decisions and does not seek the opinion of other employees on any issue	4.350	.851
My supervisor always wants to demonstrate authority and acts as a leader in every discussion	4.243	1.216
My supervisor issues orders and clarifies procedures	4.314	.872
My supervisor believes the majority of employees are lazy	4.502	.306
Aggregate	4.342	0.777

Source: Research Data (2024)

From the research findings most of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement variables under autocratic leadership with an aggregate mean of 4.342 and a standard deviation of 0.777.

Table 5: Job Satisfaction in Selected Star-Rated Hotels.

Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
I feel I am being paid fairly for the work I do	3.717	1.269
I feel there are promotion opportunities with the job that I do	3.884	1.245
My supervisor understands his/her job well	4.047	1.116
I am unhappy with the benefits I get in my job	4.115	1.065
Salary increments are few and take a long time	4.055	1.086
I like the colleagues I work with	4.099	.993
At times my job feels meaningless	4.266	.944
Salary increments are too few and take long	4.294	.912
There exists promotion opportunities for those who excel in their job	4.310	.819
My supervisor is unfair to me	4.235	.851
Incompetence of the people I work with makes me to work harder	4.370	.904
I like what I do in my job	4.243	1.054
My pay makes me feel unappreciated	4.179	.940
The benefit package we have is fair	4.099	.951
I enjoy my relationship with co-workers	4.099	.943
I am proud of the job that I do	4.055	.953
I feel satisfied with my chances of getting a salary increment	4.139	.955
I feel we should have more benefits than we have currently	4.031	1.141
I like my supervisor	3.812	1.229
I am satisfied with my chances getting promoted	3.820	1.372
My supervisor is not bothered by the feelings of subordinates	4.099	.997
There is too much squabbling at the work place	3.761	1.341
I find the work that I do enjoyable	4.179	1.214
Aggregate	3.905	1.056

Source: Research Data (2024)

From the aggregate result most respondents agreed with the variables with a mean of 3.905 and a standard deviation of 1.056.

Inferential Analysis

The study evaluated how transformational leadership style, transactional leadership style, democratic leadership style, and autocratic leadership style affect job satisfaction in selected star-rated hotels in Naivasha sub-county, Kenya. Using multiple regression analysis and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), the combined effect of transformational leadership style, transactional leadership style, democratic leadership style, and autocratic leadership style affect job satisfaction in selected star-rated hotels in Naivasha sub-county, Kenya.

Table 6: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.756	.572	.527	.453

Source: Research Data (2024)

With an R^2 of 0.572, the model suggests that approximately 57.2% of the variation in job satisfaction is explained by the leadership styles (transformational, transactional, democratic, and autocratic). This indicates that these leadership styles have a significant influence on job satisfaction in selected star-rated hotels in Naivasha sub-county. However, it also implies that about 42.8% of the variation in job satisfaction is influenced by other factors not included in the model, such as work environment, employee benefits, organizational culture, or individual employee characteristics.

Table 7: Analysis of Variance

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	.670	4	.168	1.012	.004
	Residual	40.75	246	.166		
	Total	41.42	250			

Source: Research Data (2024)

The multiple regression analysis applied resulted in a significant model, $F(4,246) = 1.012$, $p < .05$, $R^2 = .57199$. From the findings, with an F-value of 1.012 and a significance level (p-value) of .004, the model was found to be a good fit in predicting how the four independent variables transformational leadership style, transactional leadership style, democratic leadership style, and autocratic leadership style affect job satisfaction in selected star-rated hotels in Naivasha sub-county, Kenya, as it indicates that the independent variables in the model cumulatively have a significant effect on the dependent variable.

Table 8: Regression Coefficients^a

Model		Coefficients ^a			t	Sig.
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		β	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3.595	.425		8.457	.008
	Transformational leadership	.848	.044	.012	.191	.045
	Transactional leadership	.413	.054	.052	.820	.014
	Democratic leadership	.773	.048	.019	.289	.069
	Autocratic leadership	.085	.040	.110	1.727	.008

^a Dependent Variable: job satisfaction

Source: Research Data (2024)

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \epsilon$$

Therefore,

$$\text{Job Satisfaction} = 3.595 + 0.848X_1 + 0.413X_2 + 0.773X_3 + 0.085X_4 + 425$$

Table 8 shows the overall significant test results for the hypothesized research model. The results show that if all factors (i.e. transformational leadership, transactional leadership, democratic leadership, and autocratic leadership) are held constant, employees job satisfaction would be equal to 3.595. The regression analysis reveals varying levels of significance for different leadership styles in their effect on job satisfaction.

Transformational leadership style showed a statistically significant and positive effect on job satisfaction, with a p-value of 0.045. The research study results also revealed that, with all other factors constant, an increase in transformational leadership increases job satisfaction by $\beta = 0.848$ ($p < 0.05$). This would suggest that an increase in transformational leadership will enhance job satisfaction amongst employees. Transactional leadership style showed a statistically significant and positive effect on job satisfaction, with a p-value of 0.014. The

findings reveal that, all other factors constant, an increase in transactional leadership increases job satisfaction by $\beta = 0.413$ ($p < 0.05$). This suggests that structured management and clear reward systems may enhance employee satisfaction.

Democratic leadership style, with a p-value of 0.069, did not show a statistically significant effect on job satisfaction, as the p-value was above the 0.05 threshold. Although democratic leadership is often valued for its participatory approach, it appears not to have a strong impact on employee satisfaction in this context. The non-significant effect of democratic leadership on job satisfaction is somewhat inconsistent with recent literature. The Autocratic leadership style showed a statistically significant and positive effect on job satisfaction, with a p-value of p-value of 0.008. Further, holding all other factors constant, an increase in autocratic leadership increases job satisfaction by $\beta = 0.085$ ($p < 0.05$). Autocratic leadership shows a positive and significant impact on job satisfaction, which diverges from the negative views typically associated with this leadership style.

CONCLUSIONS

The study concludes that transformational, transactional, and democratic leadership styles have a strong and positive impact on job satisfaction within selected star-rated hotels in Naivasha sub-county. Employees responded favorably to leadership approaches that emphasized idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, contingent rewards, and active management by exception. Furthermore, they appreciated democratic leadership practices, such as group participation and collective decision-making, which fostered a supportive work environment. Together, these leadership traits were seen to positively influence job satisfaction across the surveyed hotels, suggesting that employees value inclusive and motivational leadership practices within this setting.

In addition, it is concluded that the transformational leadership style is particularly effective, having the strongest and most positive impact on job satisfaction among the four leadership styles examined. This leadership approach is characterized by inspiring employees, promoting innovation, and providing individualized support, all of which resonate positively within the hotel context. The study highlights that transformational leadership fosters a positive work atmosphere, which in turn enhances employee satisfaction, motivation, and commitment. This emphasis on transformational leadership suggests its significant potential in improving

employee well-being and overall organizational productivity in Naivasha's hospitality industry.

Moreover, the study concludes that while autocratic leadership has a weak yet positive association with job satisfaction, it remains a contentious approach among employees. Respondents expressed concerns regarding supervisors' tendencies to assume that employees are unmotivated or lazy, as well as the prevalent use of a rigid reward-and-punishment system to enforce compliance. Such practices can create a work environment perceived as controlling, which may detract from employee morale and engagement. Addressing these concerns is essential for fostering a more inclusive, motivating, and empowering workplace culture. By doing so, hospitality establishments in Kenya can enhance job satisfaction and improve overall organizational effectiveness, helping them remain competitive in the industry.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommends that managers in the hospitality industry proactively apply transformational leadership in their day-to-day operations, as it has strong potential to enhance job satisfaction, which directly correlates with increased productivity, organizational profitability, and customer satisfaction. Managers can adopt transformational leadership by clearly communicating job expectations, organizational vision, and goals, while regularly engaging employees to foster alignment and a shared sense of purpose. Additionally, hospitality leaders should promote professional development opportunities for supervisors and employees, emphasizing continuous learning and growth through leadership training, skill-building workshops, and mentorship programs. A proactive approach to feedback and personalized attention to employees is also advised, as recognizing individual contributions and offering support can foster an appreciative work culture where employees feel motivated to excel.

In addition, it is recommended that hospitality managers consider the application of transactional leadership practices, as this study identified transactional leadership as another style that positively influences job satisfaction. In implementing this approach, managers should place greater emphasis on recognizing employees who achieve set goals, through programs that celebrate individual achievements, whether via formal awards or informal appreciation gestures, thereby boosting morale and motivation. Managers are also encouraged to embrace flexibility and innovation in the workplace, inspiring supervisors to adopt a more adaptable approach to problem-solving and decision-making. By providing opportunities for

employees to contribute ideas for improving processes, managers can enhance engagement and satisfaction. Furthermore, training programs focused on fostering adaptability and creativity should be offered to equip employees with skills to manage change effectively. Open communication should also be promoted, creating an environment where employees feel comfortable sharing feedback. Regularly reviewing and updating performance standards is essential to ensure relevance, integrating employee feedback and keeping pace with industry trends.

Moreover, the study recommends that, among others, hospitality managers consider the situational application of autocratic leadership, as this style showed a weak but positive impact on job satisfaction in certain contexts. Managers are advised to conduct qualitative research to better understand the specific situations where autocratic leadership might be effective in enhancing satisfaction. They can also provide capacity-building programs that equip supervisors with a range of leadership styles, including both autocratic and participative approaches, enabling them to adjust their leadership based on team needs and situations. Fostering a culture of open communication and collaboration within the organization is essential, irrespective of the leadership style applied. Regular evaluations of leadership practices should be conducted to assess their impact on employee satisfaction, identifying areas for improvement and adjustments. By following these recommendations, hospitality establishments can harness the potential benefits of autocratic leadership while maintaining a positive and supportive work culture that promotes job satisfaction.

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