

# Leadership Style of Managers in Five-Star Hotels and its Relationship with Employee's Job Satisfaction

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## Abstract

The purpose of the study is to investigate the impact of leadership style on employee job satisfaction in five-star hotels. A questionnaire consisted of 57 items based on five-point likert scale (from strongly disagree to strongly agree) was used to measure both leadership style and job satisfaction from employees' perspectives. Using random sampling, the researcher distributed 350 questionnaires, 220 of which were completed. The obtained data from the questionnaires are investigated through the SPSS statistical packaged software. The empirical results indicated that two types of leadership styles, namely, democratic and laissez-faire were found to have direct positive significant relationships with employees' job satisfaction. The findings showed that the dominant leadership style was democratic and employees were moderately satisfied with their job. This implies that democratic leadership is deemed suitable for managing hotels. The study's results show that different leadership style will have different impacts on employee job satisfaction. An interesting finding is that democratic leadership has a stronger influence on job satisfaction than laissez-faire leadership does. As a result, by adopting the appropriate leadership styles, leaders can affect employee job satisfaction.

## Keywords

Leadership Styles, Job Satisfaction, Hotels

## I. Introduction

Leadership style is considered as a major subject for researchers because it is still an attractive attribute about leadership among academics and managers [1]. As well, the attention to leadership style has come for subordinates since they like to work more effectively and productively when their managers adopted a specific leadership style [2]. Thus, leadership style is the most important item of leadership process, since managers develop leadership style via their education, training, and experience [3]. That let leadership to be one of the most social phenomena, which have been examined, and it is significant for the effectiveness of functions in both business and society organisations [4].

Job satisfaction is considered as an important goal in organisations for two reasons. First, employees deserve respect and fair treatment. Second, employees' job satisfaction will affect the functions of organisation [5]. Furthermore, Griffin [6] reported that satisfied employees are less absent, stay at work, and they have positive contributions to their organisations, while dissatisfied employees are more absent, show job stress, and look for new jobs.

In the hospitality industry, the most common leadership style is the autocratic style because of unpredictable demands in the hospitality industry. This creates some difficulties to adopt the participative leadership style, since there are deep roots of autocratic leadership style in hospitality industry [1]. However, managers in the hospitality industry can provide different motivators for employees that will improve their job satisfaction [2]. Hence, leadership styles are important tools to create motivated employees which in turn help to achieve organisational goals [7], and therefore hospitality organisations should employ effective

leadership to improve guest services and employee job satisfaction [8]. Organisations will be successful when their employees have high level of job satisfaction [9].

In this study, the researcher investigates the extent to which three leadership styles (namely, democratic, autocratic, and laissez-faire) influence hotel employees' job satisfaction, by examining how leadership style enhances the level of job satisfaction.

## II. Literature Review

### A. Leadership Styles

Since the early 1900s studies on leadership have established a large pool of theoretical materials relating to leadership concepts. Leadership style is defined as an interaction process among individual groups that includes a structured or restructured situation, members' expectations and perceptions [10]. It is also defined as the pattern of behaviour that leaders act during work with and through others, as they perceive it [11]. Furthermore, Miller et al., [12] proclaimed leadership style as the pattern of interaction between leaders and subordinates, which includes controlling, directing, techniques and methods that are used by leaders to motivate subordinates implementing the instructions.

There are three factors that determine the type of leadership style, namely: leaders' characteristics, subordinates' characteristics and organisation environment [7]. Hence, leadership styles can be classified according to the leaders' power and behaviour as autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire, where styles are distinguished by the influence of leaders on subordinates [2] [13]. More specifically, autocratic (dictatorial) leadership style is embedded in leaders having full organisational power and authority of decision making in their hands without sharing it with their subordinates, while democratic (participative) leadership style implies that leaders share their employees' authority of decision making and delegate, and finally Laissez-faire or free-rein leadership style explain that leaders give their employees much authority of decision making [7].

The different leadership styles may be adopted by leaders according to their perceptions of their subordinates' style preferences [1], and therefore the influence of leadership style could be differed according to the type of power that used by a leader over subordinates, which make the leader's power important to achieve organisational goals [2].

In the hospitality, the management is characterised as a 'being there' style, which provides stress, intervention, and control of operations and interactions between members at all levels in the organisation [1]. Furthermore, Mullins [2] stated that managerial leadership style 'being there' or 'hands-on' is considered as a prevalent leadership style in the hospitality industry, this style could be more effective than other styles to obtain employees' job satisfaction, since the managers work all the time with their employees and therefore managers give more concern to employees' problems at work. However, there is not a preferred leadership style in the hospitality industry [2]. On the other hand, it seems difficult to adopt participative leadership style. This does not mean that autocratic style is preferable, but it is necessary in

the hospitality industry [1]. While, Okumus and Hemmington [14] indicated that the prevalent leadership style in the hospitality industry was autocratic leadership style. On the contrary, Nour [15] found that the most common leadership style among managers in Jordanian hotels based on power sharing was democratic style.

## B. Job satisfaction

Job satisfaction is defined by Locke [16, p.1300] as “a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from one’s job or job experiences”. Later, Armstrong [17] defined job satisfaction as the feelings and attitudes of people toward their job. He mentioned that if people have favourable and positive attitudes towards their job, this means job satisfaction, but if they have unfavourable and negative attitudes towards their job, this means job dissatisfaction. The above explanations deduce that job satisfaction represents the positive attitudes of people and their feelings about their job, because they like their job.

Spector [5] stated that the antecedents of job satisfaction are categorised into two groups. The first group includes the job environment itself and some factors related to job. The second includes individual factors related to the person, who will bring these factors to the job including previous experiences and personality. Often both groups of antecedents work together to influence on job satisfaction, therefore job satisfaction is determined by a combination of both individual characteristics and job environment characteristics. Moreover, Armstrong [17] suggested several other factors that affect the level of job satisfaction such as extrinsic factors, intrinsic factors, social relationships in work place, individuals’ abilities to do their work, and the supervision’s quality.

The content theories of motivation are related to satisfaction more than motivation. For example, Herzberg’s theory is considered as a theory of job satisfaction related to motivation at work [2]. The content theories based on unsatisfied needs lead to an unstable situation and tensional state. Herzberg’s [18] theory argued that hygiene factors include working conditions, interpersonal relations, supervision, job security, benefits, company policies and management, and salary. When the level of these factors was unacceptable for employees, job dissatisfaction was occurred, but acceptable level did not lead automatically to job satisfaction and prevented dissatisfaction and poor performance of job. Motivating factors that included recognition, advancement, achievement, autonomy, work itself and responsibility led to job satisfaction. Clearly, the theory argued that satisfaction factors and dissatisfaction factors are distinct and separate, so that the opposite of “satisfaction” is not “no satisfaction” and the opposite of “dissatisfaction” is not “no dissatisfaction”, and therefore removing dissatisfaction factors did not lead to job satisfaction. In the hospitality industry, hygiene factors were more common than in other industries because some employees have low expectations to satisfy higher levels of needs and therefore hygiene factors appear as a greater place [2]. Moreover, Chitiris [19] found that employees in Greek hotels were more concerned with hygiene factors than motivating factors. Furthermore, Hancer and George [20] found that the highest level of job satisfaction was achieved by intrinsic factors, while the lowest level was achieved by extrinsic factors.

## C. Leadership Style and Job Satisfaction

Evidently, leadership style and job satisfaction have been extensively researched within the hospitality industry. The importance of leadership was first researched in the 1920s with

studies using surveys about job satisfaction; they reported that employees’ favourable attitudes toward supervision helped to achieve employees’ job satisfaction [10]. Several studies were conducted during the 1950s and 1960s to investigate how managers could use their leadership behaviours to increase employees’ level of job satisfaction [21], these studies confirmed the significance of leadership in making differences in employees’ job satisfaction [10]. Employee job satisfaction is influenced by the internal organisation environment such as leadership styles [22], and therefore employees are more satisfied with leaders who are considerate or supportive than with those who are either indifferent or critical towards subordinates [23]. Consequently, leadership style is an important determinant of employee job satisfaction.

Yousef [24] found that leadership behaviour was positively related to job satisfaction and therefore managers need to adopt appropriate leadership behaviour in order to improve employees’ job satisfaction. Managers and their appropriate leadership styles play an important role in job satisfaction [25, 26]. On the other hand, Yousef [24] argued that theories developed and tested in Western organisations are also valid for non-Western countries. Hence, the impact of leadership style is very significant on job satisfaction, and this relationship does not differ between west and east and therefore leadership is considered an important process for success or failure of any organisation [27].

Leaders can make important differences in employees’ level of job satisfaction through improving employees’ effectiveness and motivation, and by keeping their organisations in a successful situation. Specifically, the autocratic leadership leads to lower level of job satisfaction, while democratic leadership leads to higher level of job satisfaction. Furthermore, the level of job satisfaction under laissez-faire leadership is less than under democratic leadership [10]. Moreover, Savery [28] found that democratic leadership style related positively to employees’ job satisfaction in federal organisations in Western Australian. While, Lok and Crawford [27] found that consideration leadership style was positively related to job satisfaction, but initiating structure leadership style was negatively related to job satisfaction. In contrast, Rad and Yarmohammadian [26] found no relationship between leadership behaviours (task and employee oriented) and employees’ job satisfaction in Isfahan University Hospitals in Iran. They also indicated that a participative leadership style was prevalent among managers and that style influenced employee job satisfaction. Furthermore, Erkutlu and Chafra [29] found that laissez-faire leadership style in a boutique hotel led to negative results in organisational performance such as low satisfaction, high stress, and low commitment by followers.

Tsai and Su [30] confirmed that transactional leadership has a stronger influence on job satisfaction than transformational leadership does in an airline company. Similarly, Shurbagi and Zahari [31] indicated that the relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction is a positive significant relationship in national oil company. While, Voon et al. [32] confirmed that two types of leadership styles, namely, transactional and transformational were found to have direct relationships with employees’ job satisfaction. The results showed that transformational leadership style has a stronger relationship with job satisfaction in public sector organisations. Bhatti et al. [33] found that Leadership style has a positive impact on job satisfaction and public teachers have high level of job satisfaction rather than private teachers. The researcher concludes from the previous researches that leadership style has a relationship with employee’s job satisfaction in different sectors.

### III. Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of study is to explore the impacts of managers' leadership styles on job satisfaction of employees working in five-star hotels. Manager's leadership style is an independent variable and job satisfaction is a dependent variable as shown in fig. 1. Based on the theoretical framework one hypothesis was developed to identify the impacts of leadership style on employee's job satisfaction, as follow:

H1: Is there any relationship between leadership style and employee job satisfaction.

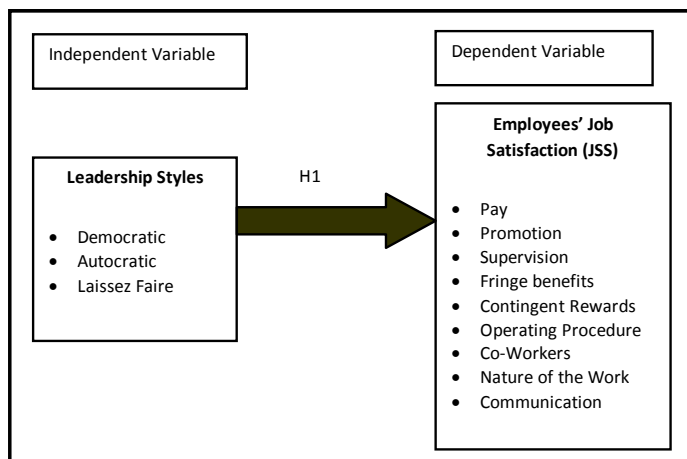


Fig. 1: Theoretical Framework

As fig. 1 shows, it reflects the fact that employee job satisfaction, as measured in terms of pay, promotion, supervision, fringe benefits, contingent rewards, operating procedure, co-workers, nature of the work and communication can be influenced by either one of the three different leadership styles considered in this study: democratic, autocratic, and laissez-faire leadership.

### IV. Methodology

This study was conducted by using questionnaire method. A questionnaire consisted of 57 items based on five-point likert scale (from strongly disagree to strongly agree) was used to measure both leadership style and job satisfaction from employees' perspectives. The job satisfaction section contained 36 statements based on nine job facets were adapted from Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS), developed by Spector [34], to measure job satisfaction throughout nine job facets, namely: pay, promotion, supervision, fringe benefits, contingent rewards, operating conditions, co-workers, nature of work, and communication. The leadership style section contained 21 statements about three leadership styles including autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire style. These statements were adapted from a leadership style survey, developed by Clark [35]. A total of 2400 employees working in six five-star hotels in Jordan were the population of this study, and then 350 employees were selected as sample using a random sampling technique. The researcher distributed 350 questionnaires, 220 of which were completed. SPSS was used to analyse data.

### V. Findings and Data Analysis

An internal consistency test was conducted concerning the whole data of participants. The results indicated that a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was  $\alpha = .86$  for the leadership style, and  $\alpha = .96$  for the job satisfaction, these values represent a high consistency and reliability among statements in each variable.

A total number of employees participated in this study was 220. Most participants (n=194) were males. The majority of participants

(n=170) age 35 years or less. However, most of participants (n=164) were degree holders. The highest number of participants (n=78) was 2-4 years of service. Most participants (n=192) were staff employees as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Participants

Variable	Frequency	Percent (%)
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	194	88.2
Female	26	11.8
<b>Age</b>		
25 years or less	96	43.6
26-35 years	74	33.6
36-45 years	46	20.9
46-55 years	4	1.8
56 years or more	-	-
<b>Education</b>		
Degree holder	164	74.5
Non-degree holder	56	25.5
<b>Length of service</b>		
1 year or less	52	23.6
2-4 years	78	35.5
5-7 years	56	25.5
8 years or more	34	15.5
<b>Job Level</b>		
Staff	192	87.3
Chef leader	28	12.7

The mean scores for all dimensions of job satisfaction ranged from 3.1636 to 3.5364, and therefore all employees were moderately satisfied with their jobs and all dimensions of job satisfaction. It also found that the highest satisfaction among employees was for co-workers, fringe benefits, and operating conditions respectively, but the lowest satisfaction was for communication and nature of work. Furthermore, the results reported that democratic style had the highest mean (3.8247) that reflects the prevalent leadership style among managers, followed by laissez-faire style mean (3.6532), and autocratic style had the lowest mean (3.3753) as shown in Table 2. Since the mean scores for all leadership styles are more than (3) and very close, that means managers have not clear perceptions towards their leadership style, or they are new managers try to find the correct leadership style.

Table 2: Descriptive for the Major Constructs

Dimension	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pay	3.3159	.99637
Promotion	3.2477	.90072
Supervision	3.3795	.93368
Fringe benefits	3.4273	.82419
Contingent rewards	3.3068	.99001
Operating conditions	3.4250	.96436
Co-workers	3.5364	.98837
Nature of work	3.1636	.95110
Communication	3.1636	.92516
Overall Job Satisfaction	3.3495	.87337
Democratic Leadership Style	3.8247	.90236
Autocratic Leadership Style	3.3753	.85281
Laissez-Faire Leadership Style	3.6532	.88452

Note: All items used a 5-point Likert Scale with (1= strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree)

The results of correlation coefficient using Pearson correlation indicated that there was a moderately significant correlation between democratic leadership style and job satisfaction ( $P=.320$ ), since the significant level was less than ( $0.01$ ), while there was a moderately significant correlation between laissez-faire style and job satisfaction ( $P=.206$ ), since the significant level was less than ( $0.05$ ) and more than ( $0.01$ ), while there is no correlation between autocratic style and job satisfaction as shown in Table 3. Generally, the correlations among democratic and laissez-faire leadership styles and job satisfaction have demonstrated moderate levels of correlation.

Table 3: Correlation Between Leadership Style and Job Satisfaction

		Aut. Style	Demo. Style	Lais. Style
Job Satisfaction	Pearson correlation	.101	.320**	.206*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.294	.001	.031
	N	220	220	220

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Furthermore, a linear regression model was conducted in order to indicate the impact of each of democratic style, and laissez-faire style separately as independent variables on job satisfaction as a dependent variable as shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Linear Regression for the Impact of Leadership Style on Job Satisfaction

Variable	R	R <sup>2</sup>	F	B	T	Sig.
Democratic style	.320a	.102	12.278	.466	3.504	.001
Laissez-Faire style	.206b	.042	4.791	.286	2.189	.031

a Predictors: (Constant), democratic style

b Predictors: (Constant), laissez-faire style

Dependent Variable: job satisfaction

The results of regression model as shown in Table 4 indicated that there was a weak positive relationship between democratic style and job satisfaction, since the significant level was less than ( $0.01$ ). The findings indicated that democratic style explains 10.2% of the variance in job satisfaction, since this percentage is low that means democratic style is not good predictor in job satisfaction. Thus, if democratic style increases by one unit, job satisfaction will increase by .466 unit. It is also found that there was a slight positive relationship between laissez-faire style and job satisfaction, since the significant level was less than ( $0.05$ ). The results reported that laissez-faire style explains 4.2% of the variance in job satisfaction, since this percentage is very low that indicates laissez-faire style is not a good predictor in job satisfaction. Therefore, if laissez-faire style increases by one unit, job satisfaction will increase by .286 unit. As a result, the study's hypothesis (H1) is accepted. Additionally, democratic style has more impact on employee job satisfaction than laissez-faire style, since R for democratic style ( $0.320$ ) was more than R for laissez-faire ( $.206$ ). The researcher concluded based on the findings of this study that there is a positive relationship between leadership style and employee job satisfaction.

## VI. Discussion

The results explored that employees showed moderately job satisfaction at their jobs and job facets, moreover they reported job satisfaction with work in Jordanian hotels. The outcomes indicated that employees were more satisfied with co-workers, fringe benefits, operating conditions, supervision, pay, and contingent rewards. However, they were less satisfied with promotion schemes, communication within organisation, and the nature of work. The findings of this study agree with some and disagree with other findings of earlier studies. The current results are consistent with previous findings (e.g. Oshagbemi [36]; Lam et al., [37]; Oshagbemi, [38]; Rad and Yarmohammadin, [26]) which indicated that employees showed more job satisfaction with job itself, nature of work, working conditions, supervision, and co-workers, while the lowest level of job satisfaction was reported for fringe benefits, recognition rewards, communication, pay, and promotion. While, the results of this study disagree with past research (e.g. Oshagbemi, [36]; Oshagbemi, [38]) which found that employees were dissatisfied with pay, promotion, and administration. Furthermore, Rad and Yarmohammadin [26] indicated that the highest job dissatisfaction was related to fringe benefits, working condition, and pay.

This study concluded that all leadership styles are existed in Jordanian hotels at different levels, but democratic style was the prevalent leadership style at Jordanian hotels. These results are consistent with Nour [15] who found that democratic style was predominated among Jordanian hotels' managers. Also past studies (e.g. Yousef, [24]; Rad and Yarmohammadin, [26]) found that participative style was the prevalent style among managers. The present study is inconsistent with previous studies (e.g. Worsfold, [39]; Adeyemi-Bello, [40]) which reported that both leadership behaviours consideration and initiating structure are existed among managers. While other studies (e.g. Nebel and Stearns, [41]; Al-Hajeh, [42]; Okumus and Hemmington, [14]; Jar-Allah, [43]) which indicated that autocratic style was prevailed among managers.

In the current study, it was found that there is a positive relationship between leadership style and job satisfaction. These results are consistent with other studies (e.g. Savery, [28]; Bartolo and Furlonger, [44]; Yousef, [24]; Tsai and Su, [30]; Voon et al., [32]; Shurbagi and Zahari, [31]; Bhatti et al., [33]) which found that leadership styles had a positive relationship with employees' job satisfaction. The study's results are inconsistent with previous studies (e.g. O'Reilly and Reberts, [45]; Hampton et al., [46], Rad and Yarmohammadin, [26]) indicated that leadership style was not related to employee job satisfaction. Erkutlu and Chafra [29] found that laissez-faire style had a negative relationship with job satisfaction.

## VII. Managerial Implications

This study suggested some recommendations, for example, managers should realise the importance of job facets that have been studied in this study, which enhance employees' level of job satisfaction. Thus, managers have to encourage hygiene factors since they were the most important factors to enhance job satisfaction among employees. Since managers in the hospitality industry could improve employees' job satisfaction by providing different motivators for employees at work [2], and therefore managers also have to concerned more with job facets that related to job satisfaction [20]. Hence, managers should enhance job facets that supported the highest level of job satisfaction such as co-workers, fringe benefits, operating conditions, supervision, pay,

and contingent rewards. As well as, they should improve other job facets that lead to the lowest level of job satisfaction such as promotion, communication, and nature of work. Additionally, managers have to obtain some knowledge about leadership styles that would help them to distinguish different leadership styles, and then an appropriate leadership style can be adopted by them.

### VIII. Limitations and Future Research

This study faced several limitations, for example, a shortage of relevant studies in the hospitality industry in general and in Jordanian in particular. The questionnaire of this study was adapted from American researchers, since western culture is different to Arab culture that may be restricted the ability of the questionnaire to conduct at Jordanian hotels. Therefore, this adapted questionnaire still needs more attention when applied at different culture. Furthermore, physical access to Jordanian hotels was a main challenge for the researcher to distribute the questionnaires to participants that decreased the level of the hotels' cooperation with researcher to obtain a representative sample in an unbiased technique in order to get reliable and valid findings. Also, the sample size in this study was small because the researcher was not able to distribute more questionnaires due to the restrictions of hotels. They just allow the researcher to distribute a limited number of questionnaires.

Further research could analyse the impacts of organisational and national culture on employees' job satisfaction and leadership style, and the relationship between leadership behaviour and job satisfaction. Further studies could conduct a longitudinal study to indicate the differences in leadership style over time. In addition, further research could conduct cross-cultural research to explore the impact of national culture on the relationship between employees' job satisfaction and leadership behaviours in order to replicate this study at different cultures and generalise the findings. Further research could use another leadership style questionnaire that would be able to distinguish between different leadership styles among managers. Finally, further research could use a qualitative approach in order to analyse all issues related to both concepts leadership style and job satisfaction rather than to measure each of them.

### IX. Conclusion

This study found a lack of relevant literature in the hospitality industry especially in Jordanian. Almost all relevant studies were taken from Western countries. It was noticed that no studies have looked at the impact of managerial leadership style on employees' job satisfaction in Jordanian hotels. Reviewing the literature indicated that leadership styles are different according to managers' demographic profiles. In addition, job satisfaction among employees was varied based on their demographic profiles, and employees showed different attitudes towards their job satisfaction and job facets. Furthermore, managerial leadership styles had a relationship with employee job satisfaction.

The results of analysed data indicated that employees showed moderately job satisfaction toward their jobs and job facets, since there were agreements among employees on their level of job satisfaction. The study findings found that the prevalent leadership style among managers was democratic style. Moreover, the outcomes reported that there is a positive relationship between leadership (democratic and laissez-faire) and job satisfaction. Managers could enhance the level of employee's job satisfaction by adopting appropriate leadership style.

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