LEADERSHIP, WELL-BEING, ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT AND QUALITY OF WORK LIFE AMONG HOTEL EMPLOYEES DURING COVID-19

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Abstract

The coronavirus (COVID-19) epidemic of 2019 forced organizations to make considerable changes to the way they run their operations. In a chosen tourist hotel in Livingstone, the tourist capital of Zambia, this study examined whether a transformational leadership style is superior to a transactional leadership style in fostering employee well-being and organizational commitment. Although understandably that the COVID-19 pandemic's effects on employee well-being, work-life balance, and organizational commitment have not yet been determined, the present paper discusses the potential connections. The study's main objective was to determine how Leadership Style affects Employee Well-Being, and Organizational Commitment and Quality of Work Life of hospitality staff amid COVID-19. Four hypotheses guided the study. The study's population comprised 310 workers from one hotel. The instruments for data collection were Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ), Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ), Quality of work life questionnaire (QWL). Means, median, and mode as well as inferential statistics such as T-tests and partial least squares regression (PLS) were used as statistical tools for the analysis. The findings of the study reveal that, the results were more inclined to support transformational leadership in the hospitality industry, which implied that hospitality managers be equipped to use a transformational leadership style to enhance employee well-being, quality of work-life and organizational commitment. There was a relationship in terms of transactional relationship with organizational commitment though it was insignificant with a path coefficient of 0.013 and T-statistics of 0.056.

Keywords: COVID-19; life satisfaction; organizational commitment; transactional leadership style; transformational leadership style; well-being

Introduction

Workplace globalization brings erratic challenges for each type of organization. Organizations can accept these challenges with a practical, challengeable, and robust leadership style as personnel's attitudes regarding their jobs are affected by organizational leadership. In this contemporary era, leaders' role has changed, and organizational success depends on the leadership style being practiced (Riaz, Arif, Nisar, Ali & Sajjad, 2018). According to Shahid, Nisar, Azeem, Hameed, & Hussain (2018), various leadership styles have been examined through different theoretical approaches, but "transformational leadership, transactional leadership, and laissez-faire leadership" frameworks have been found considerable support within research by recent literature. According to Filimonau, Derqui, and Matute (2020), the COVID-19 pandemic will reduce the attractiveness of hospitality occupations, and authors Jiang and Wen (2020) assert that the COVID-19 pandemic has imposed several significant detrimental, immediate and long(er) term impacts on the international hotel sector. Chen and

Wu (2017) has also found that leadership behaviors, especially transformational leadership styles, influence leader-employee exchange and therefore influence intention to stay in the hotel industry.

COVID-19 in context

According to Sigala (2020), although COVID-19 does not resemble any other past disaster or crisis, it offers little room for hotel managers to predict its impacts and design effective defensive frameworks. Filimonau et al. (2020) highlight that it can be argued that past disasters should have at least taught hotel businesses about the

need to stay alert and allocate resources and plan for dynamic leadership for any future disruptions. Kniffin et al. (2020) assert that, beyond the importance of medicine, epidemiology, and economics, insights from psychology, including leadership, are vital in solving this grave threat. This study explores the transformational leadership style and transactional leadership style in nurturing employee well-being, quality of work-life and organizational commitment in a selected tourist hotel.

Still, authors like Abrams, Lalot, and Hogg (2021) suggest that leaders are a socio-romantic construction and do not matter; psychoanalytical aficionados believe that leaders are merely a projection of infantile "transference." Such positions are not worthy of the commentary. In these times, one conclusion is crystal clear to laypeople and scientists alike: Leaders in charge of resources and powerful policy levers make strategic choices that have real and lasting consequences on social systems' functioning.

The World Tourism Organization (WTO) (2012) reported that the global economic crisis caused an adverse effect from the decrease in tourism demand. Nonetheless, tourism as an industry has to continue. As recent as 2019, the Covid-19 outbreak has, according to Striekowski (2020), affected the tourism and travel sector. Given economic pressures that have hit the world, there comes a need to have committed employees and have hospitality employees' well-being looked after. The kind of leadership style adopted by leaders in an organization has a significant impact on how employees function in an organization.

The concept of Leadership

Numerous investigators have studied leadership styles in different cultures, occupations, organizational settings (Munyeka, 2013). Leadership style is the approach of providing direction, implementing plans, and motivating people (Northouse, 2015). Alkhatani (2016) asserts that leadership is a critical factor in the management and control of employees. The organization can be viewed as a series of attitudes, behaviors, characteristics, and skills based on individual and organizational values, leadership interests, and employees' reliability in different situations.

Leadership can work closely and from afar. Leadership has a large impact whether via social media, which is an important outreach tool in the current milieu (Tur, Harstad and Antonakis, 2020), or directly (Antonakis, d'Adda, Weber & Zehnder, 2021). Alkhatani (2016) additionally states that leadership is executed in different styles depending on its personality and the situation at hand. Irwin (2014) suggests that the style is the leader's outward face because it is the most readily observable way we interact with others. Northouse (2018) points out that effective leadership depends on three basic personal skills: technical, human, and conceptual. Northouse (2018) further elaborated that although all three skills are essential for leaders. The importance of each skill varies between management levels; at lower management levels, technical and human skills are most important for middle managers. The three different skills are equally important, and at upper management levels, conceptual and human skills are most important, and technical skills become less important.

Transformational leadership, Transactional leadership, and organizational commitment

This study's emphasis is to determine which leadership style (Transformational leadership or Transactional leadership) is best suited in fostering employee well-being and organizational commitment in a selected tourist hotel in Livingstone, the Tourist Capital of Zambia. According to Ohunakin et al. (2019), leadership is a key determinant of the hospitality industry's future and fate.

Researchers postulated that a transactional leadership style identifies and uses techniques to control employees' behavior, reward approved behaviors, and use corrective agreements established between the leader and employee to improve their intention to stay (Sudha et al., 2016). Transformational leadership style on the other hand, has captured the interests of many researchers over the past few decades since it became one of the most common leadership paradigms that is often associated with subordinates' moral values (Joo & Nimon, 2014). Studies (e.g., Dai et al., 2013; Hoch et al., 2018; Islam, Tariq & Usman, 2018) showed that the responsibility of transformational and transactional leaders in an organization could influence organizational commitment.

Jacobsen and Abderson (2015) assert that transformational leadership is "a set of behaviors that seek to develop, share, and sustain a vision intended to encourage employees to transcend their self-interest and achieve organizational goals. Northouse (2018) believes that transformational leadership refers to the process whereby a person engages with others ad creates a connection that raises motivation and morality in both the leader and follower. Jenson and Bro (2018) argued that transformational leadership encourages employees to "pull" in the same direction to achieve designated outcomes and that this distinguishes the organization—and its members—from other groups, evoking an in-group feeling and a sense of shared purpose and being connected to others in work.

Northouse (2015) contends that transformational leaders seek to change those they lead. In doing so, they can represent sustainable, self-replicating leadership and not content to use the force of personality (charismatic) or bargaining (transactional) to persuade followers. Transformational leaders use knowledge, expertise, and vision to change those around them in a way that makes them followers with deeply embedded buy-in that remains even when the leader that created it is no longer on the scene.

One could define transactional leadership as a leadership approach founded on a contractual agreement between a leader and his followers (Penn, 2015). Each side expects the other fulfillment of the agreed terms of a transaction to ensure the relationship's survival. Mclaggan, Bezuidenhout, and Botha (2013) believe that transactional leaders focus on rewards to fulfill duties.

Figure 1. The Transformational and Transactional leadership model
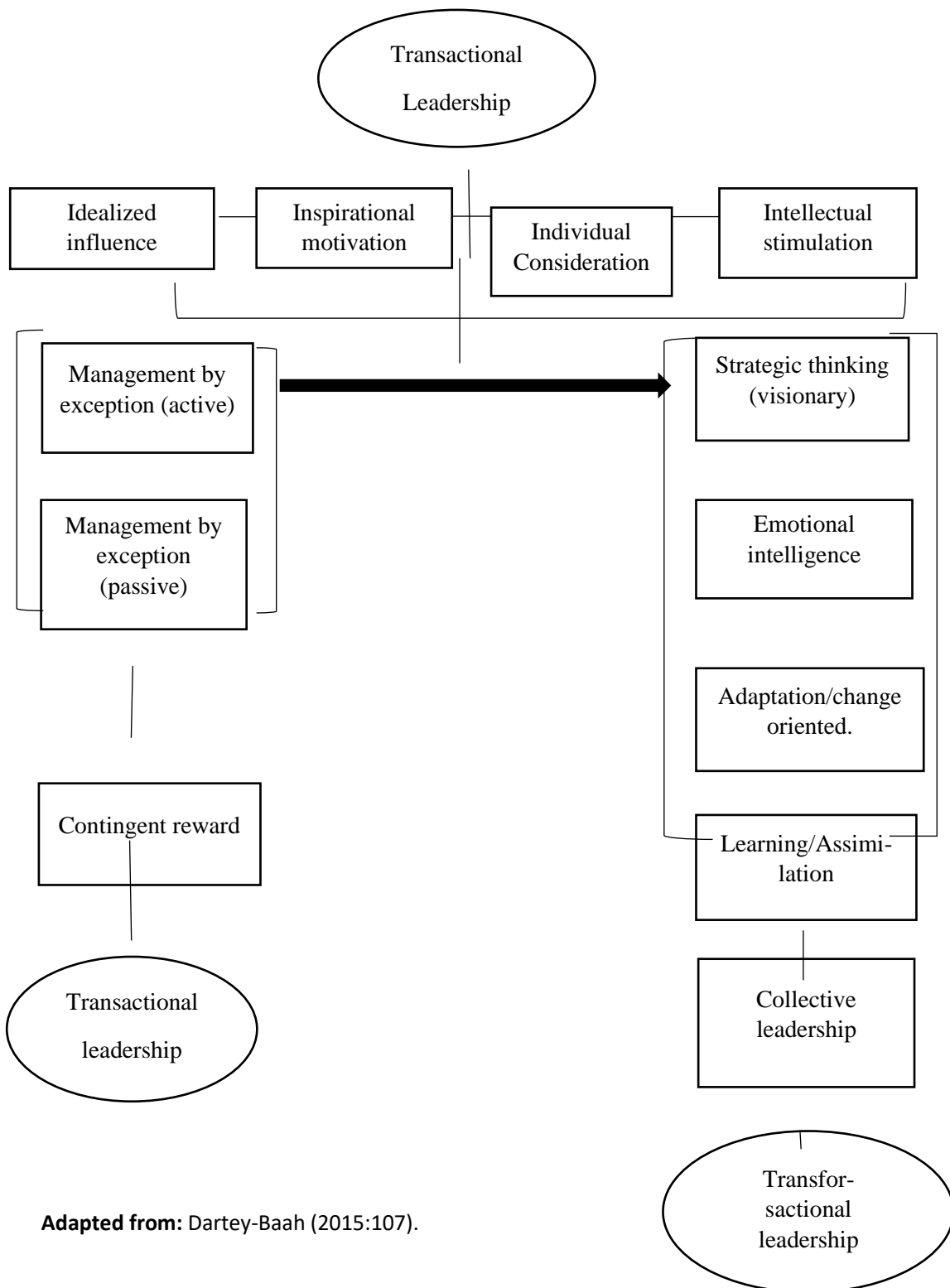
Adapted from: Dartey-Baah (2015:107).

The concept of Well-being

Interest in the experience of well-being, as both a research topic and as a policy goal, has significantly increased in recent decades (Martela & Sheldon, 2019). OECD (2013) reports that three elements define subjective well-being: life evaluations, positive and negative feelings, and eudaimonic well-being as developed in Aristotle's ethics, such as life's meaning and purpose. Measurement of subjective well-being is often limited to measurement of happiness, which does not encompass eudaimonic well-being. Subjective well-being, however, is not limited merely to happiness (OECD 2013), so with these three elements, the OECD created a more comprehensive definition of subjective well-being (Kumano, 2017).

Organizational commitment and Leadership style

An important aspect that is important to this study is organizational commitment. The kind of leadership adopted by leaders impacts the well-being and perceived work-life of employees. According to Kumar (2017), job satisfaction is essential for both the employee and the organization. A study by Dahie, Mohamed, and Mohamed (2017) established the relationship that leadership styles have on organizational commitment.

Researchers have investigated the relationship between employees and their employing organization for decades (Stinglhamber, Marique, Caesens, Desmette, Hansez, Hanin, & Bertrand, 2015). Since researchers are aware of employees' importance, who are the driving force of every organization (Jordan, Miglič & Marič, 2016). Organizational commitment is defined as an individual's identification and involvement with a specific organization (Kalantarkousheh, Sharghi, Soleimani & Ramezani, 2014).

Organizational commitment has attracted considerable interest as attempts have been made to come to a better understanding of the intensity and stability of an employee's dedication to the organization (Lumley, 2010). Hence, by adopting an appropriate leadership style, managers will positively affect job satisfaction, productivity, and organizational commitment of supervisors and employees (Rad & Yarmohammadian, 2006). Rad and Yarmohammadian (2006) hypothesize that leadership styles and organizational commitment are highly interrelated. Leaders who practice effective leadership in planning and administering organizational functions will strongly motivate their employees to commit to the organization. Lee (2005) also maintains that there is a positive association between transformational leadership and organizational commitment: a transformational leader's consideration for their followers' individuality and willingness to coach them will, in effect, create meaningful exchanges (Lee, 2005). Recently, Douglas (2012) found that transformational leaders who make clear communication set the goals and motivate employees to inspire followers to reach beyond their self-interests and further encourage them to do more than expected.

Leadership style and quality of work life (QWL)

Management scholars have long recognized the importance of leadership style concerning a spectrum of organizational processes and outcomes – ranging from acceptance of innovations and work attitudes, perceptions, behavior, service quality, and client outcomes (Aarons, 2006). Leadership style was initially conceptualized as transactional versus transformational in the 1970s and 1980s (Bennett, 2009).

Van Dierendonck, Haynes, Borrill, and Stride (2004) investigated leadership style and its effects on job-related affective well-being and context-free psychological well-being. It was suggested that high-quality leadership (transformational as opposed to transactional) is associated with increased employee well-being (cf. Arnold, Turner, Barling, Kelloway & McKee, 2007). Thus, one can argue that the hospitality industry's transformational leadership style should enhance the QWL and QOL of hospitality employees (cf. Firth-Cozens and Mowbray, 2001; Kuoppala, Lamminpa, Liira & Vainio, 2008). Thus, this study proposes the following hypotheses that will be subjected to an empirical test:
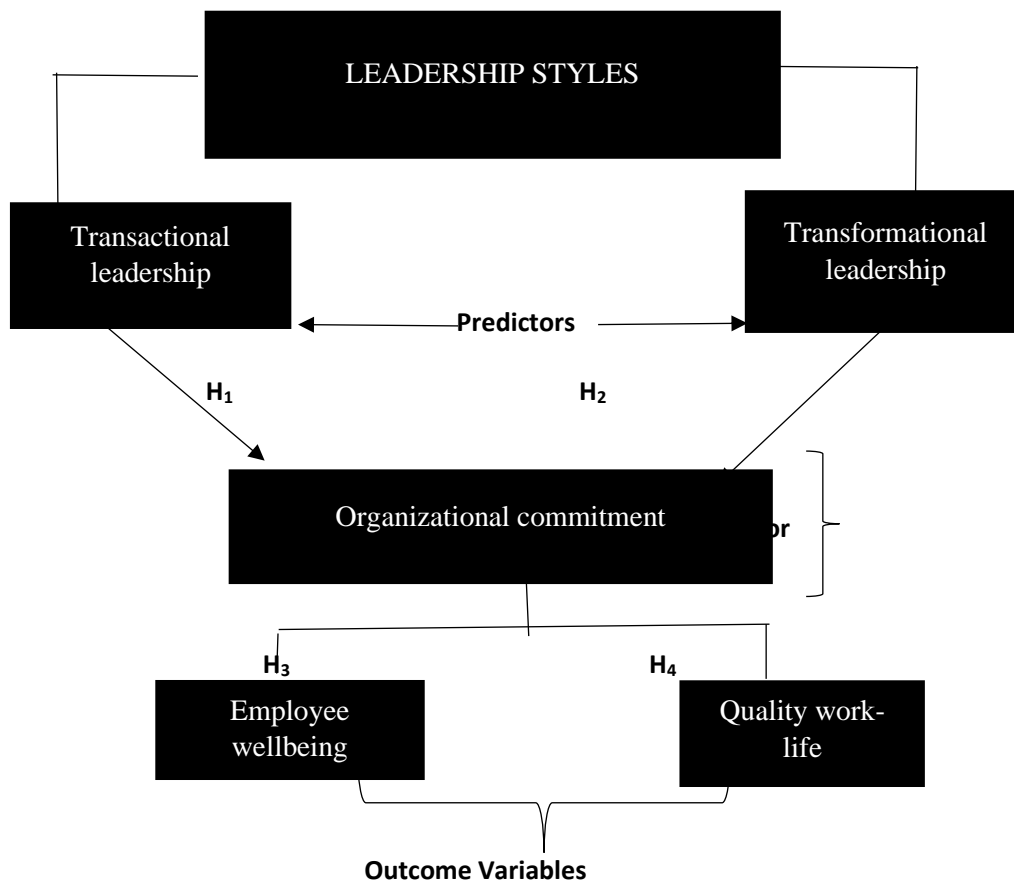
H1: Transformational leadership is positively related to organizational commitment (see relationship in Figure 2).

H2: Transactional leadership is positively related to organizational commitment (see relationship in Figure 2).

H3: Organizational commitment has a significant positive effect Employee wellbeing (see relationship in Figure 2).

H4: Organizational commitment has a positive effect on Quality of work life (see relationship in Figure 2).

Figure 2. Hypothesized conceptual framework

Source: Author's own hypothesized conceptual framework H_1 , Hypothesis 1; H_2 , Hypothesis 2; H_3 , Hypothesis 3; H_4 , Hypothesis 4

Rowold and Rohman (2009) indicated that transformational leadership is more associated with employees' positive emotions, whereas transactional leadership is more related to negative emotions.

Transformational leaders inspire and motivate employees by clearly articulating a promising and compelling vision for the future. They provide support to employees, encourage employees to learn and develop, and build good relationships with employees, nurturing employees' favorable perception of the company. Transactional leadership offers rewards (or threatens punishments) for the performance of desired behaviors and exerts more control. This type of leadership results in compliance and can be effective in some circumstances but is less likely to generate trust and commitment to work (Zagoršek, Dimovski & Skerlavaj, 2008) and positive assessment of the company.

Transformational leadership and well-being

In two studies, Arnold et al. (2009) provided evidence for the link between transformational leadership and well-being. Moreover, they began to consider the mechanisms through which these linkages occur. Specifically, Arnold et al. (2009) found that transformational leadership helped employees experience more meaning in their work environment and that these perceptions of meaningfulness predicted individual well-being.

Sample

Purposive sampling method is one of the non-probability sampling methods (Vehovar, Toepoel & Steinmetz, 2016). Purposive sampling design is based on the researcher's judgment as to who will provide the best information to succeed for the objectives study (Sharma, 2017). According to Elliott and Valliant (2017), the person conducting the research needs to focus on those people with the same opinion to have the required information and share it.

The sample comprised of 310 employees at a selected tourist hotel was surveyed in Zambia. Livingstone is a tourist town whose economy is anchored on tourism. Grounded upon the local and geographical characteristics of Livingstone, the Tourist Capital in the Southern part of Zambia, this study contacted a selected tourist hotel to collect data for the survey. The research explored employees whose responsibilities included the following activities: conscription of the front office, housekeeping, and food and beverage services. The focus on these employees was that they directly contact customers during client–staff encounters for delivering services. These areas of activities generate a large proportion of total revenue.

Research methodology and approach

The research approach is a plan and procedure that consists of broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection, analysis, and interpretation, and it is based on the nature of the research problem being addressed (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

A quantitative survey method was used in the present study to determine the answers to the research questions and test the proposed model. According to Park and Park (2016), quantitative research is conducted on a significant sample size representing the target market.

On-line questionnaires were adopted as the technique for data collection due to its advantages of low cost and high speed in sending and returning information (Stacks, 2010).

Research Design

According to Creswell (2014), a research design is the set of methods and procedures used in collecting and analyzing measures of the variables specified in the problem research.

This study investigates the effect of transformational and transactional leadership styles on employee well-being using a descriptive and analytical methodology to determine which one works better. Quantitative characteristics research designs are adopted. This study adopted a descriptive research design, and Mohajan (2017) defines descriptive research design as the design characterized by the aim of the study and research objectives. The descriptive research designs are usually structured and specifically designed to measures the characteristics described in the research questions (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2019). The data was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences Version 26 (SPSS 26). The collected data was then analyzed using descriptive statistics.

Data collection method

Data collection can be defined as the procedure of collecting, measuring, and analyzing accurate data for research using standard validated techniques (Ferguson, 2017). A self-administered online questionnaire was used to collect data from the respondents. According to Couper (2017), a self-administered questionnaire is designed for the respondent to complete without any researcher's intervention when collecting the information.

Instrumentation
Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ)

Bass (1985) developed an instrument to measure both transactional and transformational leadership behavior. The resulting instrument, the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ), was conceptually developed and empirically validated to reflect the complementary dimensions of transformational and transactional leadership with sub-scales to differentiate leader behavior further.

The initial 142-item pool for the MLQ was developed by combining a literature review with an open-ended survey asking 70 executives for their descriptions of attributes of transformational and transactional leaders. The 142 items were categorized into either transformational, transactional, or "can't say" by 11 MBA and social science students. The final questionnaire contained 73 items. The MLQ has since acquired a history of research as the primary quantitative instrument to measure the transformational leadership construct.

Reliability and Validity of the multifactor leadership questionnaire (MLQ)

Tepper and Percy (1994) investigated the latent structure of the multifactor leadership questionnaire. Their investigation revealed two areas of concern regarding the structural validity of the MLQ. First, they found that models that contained items measuring management by exception (passive and active) did not indicate a good fit with the data. They also found the charismatic and inspirational leadership scales failed to display convincing evidence of discriminant validity from each other. They then recommended that the MLQ be refined further before it is employed in further studies.

In response to the concerns raised about the MLQ, Avolio, Bass, and Jung (1995) and Avolio, Bass, and Jung (1999) used Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) on a large pool of data (N= 1394) to provide evidence for the construct validity of the MLQ 5X. According to them, the MLQ 5X scales exhibited high internal consistency and factor loadings. They reported reliabilities for total items and for each leadership factor scale that ranged from .74 to .94. Den Hartog, Van Muijen, and Koopman (1997) also tested the factor structure of the MLQ in a Dutch organization. Their factor analysis results show that although transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership can be found in the data, the scales found are slightly different from Bass' scale.

However, Tejeda, Scandura and Pilai (2001) confirmed the validity of the MLQ 5X. Using four different samples, Tejeda, Scandura and Pilai, (2001) found internal consistency coefficients (Cronbach Alphas) of between .85 and .90 for attributed charisma; between .86 and .91 for idealized influence; between 89 and .94 for inspirational leadership; between .86 and .91 for intellectual stimulation; between .86 and .93 for individual consideration; between .84 and .88 for contingent reward; between .69 and .79 for management by exception (active); between .82 and .90 for management by exception (passive) and .72 - .88 for the non-management positions.

Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ)

The Organizational Commitment Questionnaire adapted from the questionnaire developed by Tayyab and Tariq (2001) was used to measure organizational commitment.

Reliability and Validity of the Organizational Commitment questionnaire (OCQ)

It was deemed reliable (0.93 alpha coefficient on the full scale, with the subscales ranging between 0.89 and 0.95). However, only a select number of questions were included in the combined questionnaire used for this study's purposes. These were those that could be reasonably modified to represent real scenarios that the Hotel staff members could face in a hospitality environment and those aligned to the study's purpose and the proposed hypotheses.

Quality of work life questionnaire (QWL) and the Reliability and Validity of the Quality of work life questionnaire (QWL)

This construct was measured using a 16-item measure developed by Sirgy et al. (2001). Responses were captured using 5-point Likert type scales: from "I do not agree at all" (1) to "I agree" (5). The measure consists of seven dimensions: satisfaction of health and safety needs (employee judgment that the organization does a good job meeting his or her health and safety needs; example items include "I feel physically safe at work" and "My job provides good health benefits"), satisfaction of economic and family needs (employee judgment that the organization does a good job satisfying his or her financial needs and family obligations; example items include "I am satisfied with what I am getting paid for my work" and "My job does well for my family"), satisfaction of social needs (employee judgment of the organization doing a good job meeting his or her social needs; example items include "I have good friends at work" and "I have enough time away from work to enjoy other things in life"), satisfaction of esteem needs (employee judgment that the organization is doing a good job meeting his or her self-esteem needs; example items include "I feel appreciated at work" and "People at work respect me as a professional and an expert in my field of work"), satisfaction of actualization needs (employee judgment that the organization is doing a good job tapping into and making the most use of his or her talents and skills; example items include "I feel that my job allows me to realize my full potential" and "I feel that I am realizing my potential as an expert in my line of work"), satisfaction of knowledge needs (employee judgment that the organization is doing a good job meeting his or her intellectual and educational needs; example items include "I feel I am always learning new things that help do my job better" and "This job allows me to sharpen my professional skills"), and satisfaction of esthetics needs (employee judgment that the organization cares about employees' sense of esthetics and creativity; example items include "There is a lot of creativity involved in my job" and "My job helps me develop my creativity outside of work"). The reliability of these 16 items was good (Cronbach's Alpha = .91). Seven composite values reflecting the seven conceptual dimensions (rather than 16 items) were used for statistical analysis.

Results

Descriptive statistics of the sample demographics (see Table 1) reveal that 25.7% of the respondents (N = 310) were male, and 49% were single. Overall, the subjects ranged in age from 20 to 54, with a mean age of 32 years. Respondents worked for an average of 4.6 years in their current organization, with 21.0875 % having been with their current organization for more than ten years. Their primary functional areas were:

- Food and beverage departments (6.425%).
- Rooms side (6.425%).
- A variety of other areas such as sales and marketing (3.2125%).
  On average, sample respondents had 6.6 years of hotel experience.
  According to the overall demographics of respondents, as shown in Table 1, it was considered that a variety of hotel employees, representing a population properly, participated in this research.

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of respondents

Total (N = 310)		
	N	**Percentage (%)**
Gender		
Male	98	25.7
Female	212	74.3
Marital status		
Married	160	51
Not Married	150	49
Age		
19–26 years old	98	25.7
27–34 years old	49	12.85
35–42 years old	23	6.425
43–50 years old	117	48.6
51 years old	23	6.425
Tenure in current org.		
Less than 1 year	11	3.2125
1–5 years	196	51.4
6–10 years	58	24.3
11 years and over	45	21.0875
Organizational level		
General manager	5	1.60625
General manager assistant	11	3.2125
Departmental manager	**5**	1.60625
Other supervisorial level	23	6.425
Employees	266	87.15
Employment status		
Full-time	220	80.1
Part-time	90	19.9
Department		
Department Front office	24	6.5
Accounting	45	21.0875
Housekeeping	23	6.425
Food and beverage	23	6.425
Human resources	49	12.85
Sales and marketing	11	3.2125
Public relations	23	6.425
Other (security, laundry, technical)	112	37.075
Education		
Primary education	155	50
High school	49	12.85
Technical college	59	24.225
Hospitality college	24	6.5
Graduate	23	6.425

The following are the results of structural equation model analysis used to test the hypothesis of the study.

Table 2. Results of structural equation model analysis

Hypothesized relationship	Hypothesis	Path coefficients	T-statistics	Hypothesis rejected or supported
Transformational leadership and Organizational commitment	H1	0.229	2.039	Supported (Significant)
Transactional leadership and Organizational commitment	H2	0.013	0.056	Supported (Insignificant)
Organizational commitment and Employee wellbeing	H3	0.688	8.568	Supported (Significant)
Organizational commitment and Quality of work life	H4	0.367	2.295	Supported (Significant)

Table 2 presents the Partial Least Squares regression (PLS) analysis procedure on the structural model, along with the path estimates and t-values. Partial Least Squares regression (PLS) analysis (PLS) is used to find the fundamental relations between two matrices. Support for the study hypotheses, which are labelled on their corresponding paths, could be ascertained by examining the directionality (positive or negative) of the path coefficients and the significance of the t-values. The standardized path coefficients are expected to be at least 0.2 and preferably greater than 0.3.

Hypothesis 1: Transformational leadership is positively related to organizational commitment was significantly supported by a path coefficient of 0.229 and T-statistics of 2.039. Hypothesis 2: Transactional leadership is positively associated with organizational commitment was supported though the relationship was found to be insignificant by a path coefficient of 0.013 and T-statistics of 0.056. Hypothesis 3: Organizational commitment has a significant positive effect on employee wellbeing and was substantial and supported by a path coefficient of 0.688 and T-statistics of 8.568. Hypothesis 4: Organizational commitment has a positive impact on the Quality of work-life and was significant and supported by a path coefficient of 0.367 and T-statistics of 2.295.

Discussion of the findings

The construct of transformational leadership style is more effective than transactional leadership style by fostering employee well-being in a selected tourist hotel in Livingstone, the Tourist Capital of Zambia. Whether independently or in some combinations, transformational leadership has been examined extensively. Its assumed relationship to well-being and quality of life has been empirically demonstrated in a hospitality setting. This study was an initial attempt to understand and empirically test hypothesized effects of transactional and transformational leadership style on hotel employees' well-being and, to some extent, quality of life. The hypnotized model postulates that the impact of leadership style on employee well-being is mediated first and foremost by organizational commitment. The study results supported the model at large: Transactional leadership is positively related to organizational commitment was supported. However, the relationship was insignificant by a path coefficient of 0.013 and T-statistics of 0.056. this is in line with Jacobsen and Andersen's (2015) study that highlighted the importance of considering employees' views when examining leadership practices; employees' attitudes and actions are only affected by leadership if they notice it. Additionally, Sigala (2020) asserts that the transition in which hoteliers operate in terms of leadership will increase the social capital of hoteliers, thus aiding them in better planning for and recovering from future external disruptions, be it the subsequent waves of COVID-19 or any other natural or man-made disasters. In addition, Antonakis et al. (2021) also highlight that Leaders make a difference, whether in terms of affecting the preferences or beliefs of followers.

Hypotheses 1 and 2 are supported by findings by Dahie, Mohamed, and Mohamed (2017), who highlighted the consistent interaction between the dimensions of leadership style. The results suggested that

leadership could support organizational commitment using transformation and transaction styles. The first dimension of the independent variable that transformation style has a positive relationship with organizational commitment, the second dimension of which transaction style has a positive relationship with organizational commitment. In reference to the result and findings, it is revealed that organizational commitment has a positive relationship with the two dimensions of the independent variable. There are no doubts about the significant role of leadership style on organizational commitment.

The results concerning hypotheses 1 and 2 are supported by Filimonau et. al (2020) ascertain that, the case study of the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrates that the adoption of dynamic leadership practices by hoteliers extends beyond reputational gains and customer loyalty. Instead, as Filimonau et. al (2020) continue, it holds important implications for retaining quality hotel staff by enhancing their confidence in the hotel sector and particular hotel businesses operating within as 'caring' and 'responsible' employment providers.

Hypothesis 3 is supported by findings by Martela and Sheldon (2019). who found that future consensus by arguing that within the broader category of well-being, there are two sub-categories of "doing well" and "feeling well," with employee well-being involving both elements. This is also in line with Antonakis et. al (2021) who studied the social dilemma in public good situations. It is in everyone's interest to voluntarily cooperate and contribute selflessly to protecting the public good and identified that acting selfishly by not contributing to the public good, though benefiting from it, creates what is called a "free-rider" problem.

Hypothesis 4 is also supported by findings by Kumano (2017), who found that well-being is associated with feelings of accomplishment and fulfillment, which include awareness of values such as one's purpose in life and the meaning of existence, and is oriented toward the future, as in goal-seeking and well-being and life evaluation as defined by the OECD (2013).

As a transformational leader's behavior is likely to increase employees' effectiveness and productivity in the organization, employees feel better. This positivity may also spill over into their quality of life and work-life. The study findings have both theoretical and practical implications. From a theoretical perspective, this study demonstrated and further confirmed that leadership style (transformational leadership in particular) does have a significant predictive effect on employee perceived quality of work life. This finding reinforces the findings of Sirgy et al.'s (2001) study and also empirically demonstrates that need satisfaction related to supervisory behavior tends to impact QWL positively. The results also correlate with Northouse (2015), who found that transactional leaders are always willing to give you something in return for following them. It can be any number of things, including a good performance review, a raise, a promotion, new responsibilities, or the desired change in duties.

Practical implications

The findings provide fruitful implications to both tourism practitioners and academicians. Academically, this study contributes to the leadership literature by systematically exploring the impact of transactional leadership style by fostering employee well-being through the mediating role of organizational commitment in a hospitality context in Zambia. This study points out that Hotel leaders should adopt and exhibit transformational leadership qualities to make their employees feel committed and consequently stimulate their well-being and quality of work-life on the practitioners' side. Giudici and Filimonau (2019) found that senior managers in larger hotels were found to have lower levels of organizational commitment. This can be attributed to the vertical management structure of such hotels, as per above, which is a known job demotivator. In addition, Carnevale and Hatak (2020) assert that smaller hotels' flat structures can be seen as more attractive. A more 'humane' touch in the form of more personalized/sympathetic human resources management. Filimonau et. al (2020) concludes by stating that, staff empowerment may increase organizational commitment of senior hotel managers in larger organizations in crisis times.

This research has several practical implications to consider. Hospitality employees seek mutual work environments whereby their contributions to the hospitality industry's profession are valued. A positive, supportive, and healthy work environment will help to harness development in the hospitality practice. This suggests that transformational leadership and well-being are vital to hospitality employees while also an intangible asset to organizational success.

Managerial implications

The managerial implication of this study is evident to management in the hospitality industry. Practicing transformational leadership is a good thing and is highly recommended. Transformational leadership enhances hotel employees' perceived quality of work-life and well-being, which in turn enhances organizational commitment and, most importantly, enhances employees' overall life satisfaction. In a developing country such as Zambia, hospitality leaders constantly face improving working conditions and providing incentives for

employees. Thus, these managers must understand and accept the importance of innovative leadership and fit individuals' specific needs into their organization and decision-making.

Concerning the study limitations and future research, the current study firstly is that the study sample may not be generalizable to the selected tourist hotel's employee population in Zambia. Future research should employ a better probability sample to ensure generalizability. Second, the study's generalizability is even further restricted to employees of the selected tourist hotel in Zambia. Future research should test the model in the context of other types of hotels and outside of Zambia. Third, the study is essentially a cross-sectional survey (i.e., correlational study), which means that it cannot demonstrate cause and effect. Future research should employ a longitudinal design that is better equipped to test for causation. Finally, this study has shown that transformational leadership plays an essential role in predicting employee well-being, quality of work-life and organizational commitment. However, this study does not address the specific mechanism or mechanisms by which this occurs. Future research should explore the mediating constructs that may help researchers and other stakeholders better understand transformational leadership's influence on well-being and quality of work life.

The findings of the present study have implications for the training and development of managers. Training programmes should be designed and delivered to hone behavior and skills that lead to transformational leadership style.

Limitations

The study conducted has certain methodological disadvantages. The data used in the study were gathered and interpreted by the authors, which increases the possibility of overestimating the significance of the examined variables. The study was conducted in the tourism sector, which is specific in its dynamics, and apart from that, all of the constructs were measured in one moment in time, i.e., from the statistical perspective.

Conclusions

The empirical results supported all four of the research hypotheses and three in a significant way. The findings indicate that organizational commitment has the most substantial impact on employee wellbeing behavior followed by organizational commitment and quality of work-life, then organizational commitment and employee wellbeing, all of which were found to have positive and significant relationships. Transactional leadership and organizational commitment were positively related, but the relationship was insignificant. As Sigala (2020) posits, in a post-pandemic world, there is a need for hoteliers to re-consider the way how they have operated to date, so that they could drop a 'silo mentality' and gradually transit from competition towards (more) collaboration, or even coopetition.

The study demonstrated the important role of leadership in making hotel businesses more respondent to crises and disasters, and in this case the Covid-19 pandemic. The study established an important role of adopting a more transformational leadership style in building organizational commitment and well-being and, consequently, shaping hotel's response to the COVID-19 crisis and any prospective shocks and disastrous events that may disrupt
the hotel industry in the future. Hotels adopting transformational leadership styles and practices in a more pro-active and effective manner will increase their competitiveness in the domestic and international (labor) market and enhance their employees' commitment and well-being towards the forthcoming environmental changes.

In conclusion, the study contributes to theory of organizational commitment in the hotel sector by showcasing the cumulative impact of leadership practices in response to a disaster/crisis such as COVID-19 on employee well-being and quality of work-life. This highlights the critical range of operational areas that hoteliers should focus on to retain employees and increase their organizational loyalty. This will become predominantly vital in the conceivable future given the scale and incidence of global disastrous events are projected to increase with their potential, adverse bearing on the (inter)national hotel sector.

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