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**The Role of Effective Leadership Strategy in Enhancing  
Employee Performance: Analysing the Hospitality  
Sector for Economic Growth in UAE**

*Dhafer Ahmed Al Dhaferi*



# The Role of Effective Leadership Strategy in Enhancing Employee Performance: Analysing the Hospitality Sector for Economic Growth in UAE

 **Dhaher Ahmed Al Dhaheri**

Senior Services Support Officer, Abu Dhabi Sustainable Water Solutions Company (SWS)



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## Abstract

**Purpose:** The purpose of this study was to understand the challenges and opportunities related to effective leadership within the UAE's hospitality sector.

**Materials and Methods:** The research uses qualitative methods, including interviews, to explore the relationship between leadership techniques and employee performance. A case study from the UAE hotel industry provided an engaging case study for analysing leadership tactics and their effects on staff performance.

**Findings:** Transformational leadership styles, fostering a shared vision, are effective in boosting employee motivation, job satisfaction, and performance, while autocratic leadership

can lead to decreased satisfaction. Cultural diversity challenges highlight the need for cultural sensitivity, cross-cultural training, and inclusive work environments. Hospitality leaders in the UAE should cater to diverse backgrounds for exceptional guest experiences.

**Implications to Theory, Practice and Policy:** This study is significant as it fills a gap in scholarly literature by analysing the relationship between leadership strategies and worker performance in the UAE hotel industry, thereby significantly impacting both academic and practical aspects of the industry.

**Keywords:** *Effective Leadership, Hospitality, Employees Performance, Economic Growth*

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The hospitality business in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) is a flourishing and diverse sector that has witnessed significant expansion in recent decades. The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has intentionally positioned itself as a prominent global centre for tourism, trade, and business, strategically located at the intersection of Europe, Asia, and Africa. The country's advantageous geographical position, along with substantial investments in infrastructure and projects related to tourism, has rendered it a highly appealing destination for both individuals traveling for leisure purposes and those traveling for business reasons (Kellerman, 2016). The industry comprises a diverse array of enterprises, encompassing upscale hotels, resorts, high-end dining establishments, fast-food franchises, travel agents, and a variety of entertainment venues. The hospitality business in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) is distinguished by its dedication to providing exceptional services, opulent experiences, and a varied gastronomic environment. Additionally, the city is renowned for its role as a home to a multitude of major events and exhibitions, thereby augmenting its global prominence and economic importance. The hotel business, as a prominent employer in the United Arab Emirates, makes substantial contributions to the country's gross domestic product (GDP) while concurrently serving as a crucial catalyst for cultural interchange and economic diversification. The comprehension of how leadership tactics influence employee performance in the UAE is crucial for maintaining growth and competitiveness in this industry, considering its dynamic character and economic significance.

Effective leadership within the hospitality industry holds a position of utmost significance due to the unique and demanding nature of this sector. Hospitality businesses are characterized by high customer expectations, a diverse and multicultural workforce, and a fast-paced environment where service quality is paramount (Wagener et al., 2010). Effective leaders in this industry are responsible for guiding their teams to deliver exceptional customer experiences, ensuring the smooth operation of services, and maintaining a positive and motivating work environment. Leadership in hospitality goes beyond traditional management; it involves inspiring and empowering employees to provide personalized and memorable experiences to guests. Furthermore, the sector's reputation and profitability are heavily dependent on guest satisfaction and loyalty, making leadership's role in cultivating a customer-centric culture absolutely critical. Effective leaders are also tasked with navigating challenges such as workforce diversity, talent retention, and industry-specific regulations, which require specialized skills and strategies. In a sector where first impressions and lasting memories matter greatly, the impact of leadership on employee performance reverberates throughout the entire organization and ultimately determines the hospitality business's success, competitiveness, and long-term sustainability.

### Research Problem Statement

The research problem statement for this study revolves around the need to understand and address the specific challenges and opportunities related to effective leadership within the hospitality sector of the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Despite the sector's rapid growth and economic importance, there is a lack of in-depth research that examines the complicated relationship between leadership strategies and employee performance in this unique context. The central concern under consideration pertains to the impact and degree to which proficient leadership tactics help to the augmentation of employee performance within the hospitality sector of the UAE.

### Research Questions

The research questions for this study are formulated to guide the investigation into the intricate relationship between effective leadership strategies and employee performance within the United Arab Emirates (UAE) hospitality sector.



- The goal of the study was to provide an answer to the fundamental question of how various leadership philosophies and tactics are used in the UAE hospitality sector and how they affect worker productivity.
- The focus of the study is on how much effective leadership improves worker performance in the hotel industry in the United Arab Emirates.
- The study focused on the difficulties and hindrances that managers have when overseeing a culturally diverse staff in the hospitality sector in the United Arab Emirates.
- The study questions looked at these issues and suggested doable solutions and suggestions to improve leadership efficiency in the hotel industry.

### **Research Objectives**

The goals of this study were to develop a thorough framework for evaluating how effective leadership techniques might improve employee performance in the United Arab Emirates' (UAE) hospitality industry.

- The study's main objective was to investigate and comprehend the various leadership philosophies and tactics used in the UAE's hospitality sector, with a particular emphasis on how these things affected worker productivity.
- The goal was to evaluate the degree to which better employee performance, including elements like job satisfaction, motivation, and productivity, is a result of successful leadership.
- The goal of this study was to pinpoint the distinctive difficulties and hindrances that hospitality sector leaders in the UAE confront, especially in light of the country's diverse population and the industry's quick expansion.
- The research's goals included disseminating information and suggestions that, by supporting a workforce that excels at providing visitors with first-rate service and experiences, can help the hospitality sector in the United Arab Emirates achieve overall economic growth and sustainability.

### **Research Significance**

The study is very significant due to its potential to significantly impact both the academic and practical landscape of the hotel business in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). It is important to note, first and foremost, that this study fills a significant gap in the body of scholarly literature by offering a brief analysis of the relationship between leadership strategies and worker performance, specifically in the unique context of the hotel industry in the United Arab Emirates. This study has significantly added to the amount of knowledge already known about leadership and organizational studies. It provides crucial insights for researchers and scholars who want to learn more about leadership dynamics in organizations that exhibit diversity and rapid growth. Additionally, the findings of the study provided significant advantages for executives and decision-makers in the hospitality sector of the United Arab Emirates, from a pragmatic standpoint. Industry professionals can gain practical guidance for improving their management practices by uncovering effective leadership strategies that enhance employee performance (Eriksson and Kovalainen 2015). Furthermore, the identification of challenges specific to this context can help leaders develop targeted solutions, thereby elevating the quality of leadership within the sector and fostering a more productive and satisfied workforce. Ultimately, these enhancements led to increased guest satisfaction, competitiveness, and economic growth within the UAE's vital hospitality industry.

## 2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

### Concept of Effective Leadership

The comprehension and assessment of leadership strategies within businesses, particularly in the hospitality sector of the United Arab Emirates, heavily rely on the fundamental principles of leadership theories such as transformational, transactional, and servant leadership. The concept of transformational leadership centers around the idea of inspiring and encouraging individuals to surpass their own anticipated achievements through the provision of a compelling vision, the cultivation of creativity, and the encouragement of personal development (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Within the framework of the hospitality business in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), leaders who exhibit transformational qualities has the ability to invigorate their teams, so enabling them to provide excellent service and effectively respond to the ever-changing demands of visitors and the industry as a whole. In contrast, transactional leadership places emphasis on the reciprocal nature of rewards and punishments in relation to performance. This particular strategy entails the establishment of explicit expectations, diligent monitoring, and the provision of constructive feedback (Howell & Avolio, 1993). Transactional leadership is evident in the United Arab Emirates' hospitality sector through its establishment and enforcement of service quality standards and adherence to industry laws. The concept of servant leadership places emphasis on the leader's responsibility to serve their team, giving priority to their needs and fostering their growth (Russell & Stone 2002).

The evaluation and analysis of leadership strategies in the context of enterprises, specifically in the hotel industry of the United Arab Emirates, are significantly influenced by the core concepts of leadership theories, including transformational, transactional, and servant leadership. The central focus of transformational leadership revolves around the notion of motivating and empowering individuals to exceed their own expected accomplishments by offering a compelling vision, fostering creativity, and promoting personal growth (Bass & Riggio, 2006). In the context of the hospitality industry in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), leaders who demonstrate transformational attributes possess the capacity to energize their teams, thereby facilitating the delivery of exceptional service and adeptly addressing the dynamic needs of visitors and the industry at large. On the other hand, transactional leadership lays significance on the mutual exchange of incentives and penalties in relation to individual achievement.

### Leadership Strategies

An illustrative example is observed in the context of a prestigious hotel chain that operates within the United Arab Emirates. In this particular instance, the leadership team has chosen to implement a transformational leadership style, which places significant emphasis on fostering a collective vision aimed at providing exceptional guest experiences. Leaders proactively foster employee engagement, thereby promoting and stimulating their creative thinking and innovative contributions in the context of service delivery. The implementation of this particular strategy has yielded notable outcomes in terms of elevated levels of employee enthusiasm and dedication, consequently resulting in great guest ratings and a robust sense of brand loyalty. The success of the hotel exemplifies the ability of transformational leadership to cultivate a culture of excellence and enhance employee performance within the hospitality industry (Xie et al., 2016). Another noteworthy case study pertains to a boutique restaurant chain situated in the United Arab Emirates. In this particular case, the leadership has adopted a servant leadership concept, prioritizing the well-being and development of employees as a primary focus. Leaders actively engage in the process of developing and training their personnel, fostering a robust sense of affiliation and dedication. According to Xie et al. (2016), this methodology has resulted in personnel who have a strong dedication to their responsibilities, display a notable degree of contentment with their work, and regularly provide exceptional service. Both of these case studies have highlighted the significance of ensuring that leadership strategies are in harmony with the distinct expectations and values of the hospitality sector in the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

Leaders within the hospitality business in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) face a multitude of issues that are unique to the economic and cultural environment of the region. One notable obstacle is to the swift expansion of the sector and the subsequent need for proficient personnel. The United Arab Emirates' thriving tourism industry has resulted in a continuous demand for extensively skilled personnel capable of satisfying the demands of discriminating global tourists. Leadership is confronted with the imperative task of addressing talent acquisition, cultivation, and retention strategies in order to secure a skilled staff, a resource that is frequently sought after. The hospitality sector in the UAE is faced with a distinctive difficulty due to cultural diversity. The workforce in this sector is remarkably diverse, including people from a wide range of racial and ethnic backgrounds. Leaders must promote diversity and ensure that every employee is treated fairly while also managing cultural sensitivities and discrepancies effectively. Due to this issue, executives must show cultural sensitivity and adaptability in their managing approaches. The ever-changing nature of consumer tastes, industry trends, and technological advancements need a constant process of innovation and adaptation.

### **3.0 MATERIALS AND METHODS**

#### **Research Design**

##### **Qualitative Research Approach**

The qualitative research methodology selected for this study provided a controlled and methodical technique for examining how effective leadership improved employee performance in the hotel industry in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). This strategy works effectively for gathering and analyzing numerical data, giving accurate and statistically complete information regarding the study issues. The main approach for gathering data was through surveys, which made it possible to gather responses from a substantial sample of workers in the hospitality industry. These surveys were thoughtfully created to elicit qualitative data on many facets of leadership styles, worker performance, and their interactions. The study was able to identify correlations, patterns, and statistical significance between leadership factors and employee performance indicators thanks to qualitative research. Using the hospitality industry in the UAE as an example, it was possible to determine whether there is a significant correlation between a particular leadership style - such as transformational leadership - and greater levels of employee engagement or work satisfaction. Regression analysis and other statistical methods were used to assess the contribution of leadership elements to variances in employee performance outcomes (Kim and Gu 2009).

##### **Data Collection Methods**

In order to thoroughly explore the relationship between leadership techniques and employee performance within the United Arab Emirates (UAE) hospitality sector, a variety of data-gathering methods, including surveys and interviews, were used. The approach used for gathering and compiling the data was through survey method. A prototype sample of workers - that was a representative sample - from the hospitality industry in various roles was given structured questionnaires as collected and discussed by (Ebere & Nwakaego, 2017). The purpose of these surveys was to collect qualitative information on several related topics, including leadership styles, employee motivation, and employee job satisfaction. The benefits of surveys include their ability to reach a wider audience, their facilitation of the quantification of replies, and their facilitation of the use of statistical analysis to uncover patterns and relationships. Along with the distribution of surveys, in-depth interviews with executives, managers, and other players in the hotel business were undertaken to gather qualitative data. The conducted interviews helped us gain a deeper understanding of the subtleties of leadership strategies, the difficulties leaders confront, and the strategies used to increase employee productivity.

## Sampling Strategy

The selection methodology employed in this research was an important aspect in ensuring that the findings of the study were both representative of the larger population and reliable. In light of the multifaceted nature of the hospitality sector in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), encompassing many subsectors like hotels, restaurants, travel agencies, and entertainment venues, the implementation of a methodical sample strategy was imperative. The study utilized simple random sampling techniques in order to assure the inclusion of participants from diverse segments within the hotel industry (Ampofo, 2020). The aforementioned methodology acknowledged the presence of diversity within the industry and sought to obtain a balanced representation from various subcategories. To ensure a representative sample that encompasses the diverse terrain of the sector, participants were carefully chosen from a range of establishments including luxury hotels, boutique restaurants, and other relevant sorts of enterprises.

The selection of participants was conducted by using the simple random sampling method within each level, as discussed by (Harwina, 2021). Consequently, the study successfully mitigated selection bias by ensuring that all eligible individuals within a specific subsector were equally likely to be included. The research also focused on a range of occupational positions within the hotel business, encompassing front-line employees, middle-level managers, and senior executives. The implementation of this stratification for a comprehensive investigation of the impact of diverse leadership approaches on employees across different tiers within the business, leading to a nuanced comprehension of the underlying dynamics. Participants were selected from various countries and cultural backgrounds, reflecting the diverse workforce in the United Arab Emirates.

## Data Analysis Techniques

Drawing insightful conclusions from the gathered data and successfully answering the research objectives were made possible by the data analysis methodologies used in this study. For the qualitative data from the interviews, the study combined descriptive and inferential statistical approaches with theme analysis. The first step was descriptive analysis, which involved calculating fundamental statistical quantities including means, frequencies, and standard deviations. This clarified and helped to summarize the qualitative survey results (Achmad & Yulianah 2022). Key findings, including the distribution of leadership styles in the hotel industry of the United Arab Emirates and the average levels of employee performance metrics, were best presented using descriptive statistics.

Inferential analysis was used to investigate the connections and associations between leadership variables and employee performance outcomes, using regression and correlation analysis. Regression analysis, for instance, identified the magnitude and direction of the association between particular leadership philosophies and worker inspiration or job satisfaction (Kim & Gu 2006). The results of a correlation analysis revealed statistically significant connections between effective leadership and total employee performance. The qualitative information acquired through interviews with leaders and significant stakeholders underwent thematic analysis. Using this qualitative analysis technique, the interview transcripts' themes and patterns were methodically found and coded. It enabled a more thorough investigation of the difficulties managers faced and the techniques they used to improve worker performance in the hospitality sector in the United Arab Emirates.

## Ethical Considerations

When doing research in the hospitality industry of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), ethical issues were of utmost concern. A primary ethical responsibility is to protect study participants' rights, privacy, and general well-being. A key ethical aspect of this study was gaining the informed consent of interviews and survey participants to ensure that they were aware of the study's objectives and how their data would be utilized. Furthermore, maintaining participant anonymity and confidentiality is essential, particularly when talking about delicate topics like workplace relationships and leadership concerns. Given the diverse workforce in the UAE, cultural sensitivity is also essential; it is crucial to



respect cultural conventions and beliefs when collecting and analyzing data. Last but not least, the study complied with ethical standards and obtained all required clearances and approvals from appropriate organizations or authorities. Maintaining these moral obligations was not only necessary for upholding the integrity and credibility of the research in the UAE's hotel industry (Coughlan, 2001).

## **Leadership Strategies in the UAE Hospitality Sector**

### **Case Studies of Leading Hospitality Organizations**

#### **Organization A: Leadership Strategy**

Organization A, a major participant in the hotel industry in the United Arab Emirates, offered an engaging case study for analysing leadership tactics and their effects on staff performance. This reputable hotel chain has been successful in adopting a transformational leadership strategy, creating a clear vision, and motivating its staff to go above and beyond industry norms for guest care. Within the organization, transformational leaders actively connect with their staff to promote creativity and individual development. As a result, the workforce is highly devoted to providing outstanding guest experiences in addition to being highly motivated. This leadership approach has a significant effect on workforce performance. A common sense of purpose and a commitment to the company's objective encourage employees at Organization A to report high levels of job satisfaction. Additionally, this motivation results in observable performance outcomes like repeat business and consistently favourable customer ratings (Chathoth & Olsen 2002). The achievement of Organization A demonstrated the value of matching leadership tactics with the particular requirements of the hospitality industry in the United Arab Emirates.

#### **Organization B: Leadership Challenges and Adaptations**

A captivating case study by Organization B, another significant participant in the hospitality market in the United Arab Emirates, provided insight into the difficulties faced by industry leaders and their creative solutions. In order to succeed, this specific hotel chain must uphold excellent service standards and guarantee employee happiness in a cutthroat market niche. It has, however, faced a number of particular difficulties specific to the industry. The high turnover rate typical of the hospitality sector in the United Arab Emirates is one major issue that executives in Organization B must deal with. Leaders have had to adjust their retention and recruitment methods as a result of the frequent personnel turnover. The corporation has made significant investments in talent development initiatives to provide employees with chances for growth and progress within the business as a result of the turnover challenge. In this setting, cultural diversity poses another significant barrier for leaders. Organization B's staff is made up of people from a wide range of backgrounds and countries. Leaders at Organization B also have to be flexible and creative as the hospitality sector in the UAE constantly changes to meet shifting customer demands. Despite these difficulties, Organization B has proven its leadership tactics to be resilient and flexible. The company has been able to maintain competitive service standards and promote a healthy work environment by identifying and adapting to the specific worker demographics and industry dynamics (Tracey & Hinkin 1994).

### **Commonalities and Differences among Leadership Approaches**

When looking at the similarities and contrasts between various leadership philosophies used throughout the United Arab Emirates, the hospitality industry displayed a deep understanding of leadership dynamics. Successful hospitality businesses in the UAE share a trait known as transformational leadership, which is characterized by inspiring and motivating workers. These businesses' leaders frequently stress a shared vision, support innovation, and promote personal development among their staff members, all of which improve both the guest experience and employee performance (Hinkin & Tracey 1994).

The sector did, however, show a range of leadership styles. To ensure adherence to norms and laws, some firms chose a more transactional leadership approach that emphasizes rewards and penalties.



Large, globally operating hotel chains that place a high priority on consistency and efficiency in service delivery were very clear in their use of this strategy. Smaller boutique businesses, on the other hand, frequently use a servant leadership style. These leaders actively engaged with their teams fostered a sense of community and placed a high value on employee growth and well-being (Sung et al., 2019). The workforce created as a result of this strategy is extremely motivated and committed to offering distinctive and memorable visitor experiences.

### **Employee Perspectives on Leadership Effectiveness**

Employee perspectives on leadership effectiveness within the United Arab Emirates hospitality sector provided valuable insights into the impact of leadership strategies on their experiences and performance. Interviews and surveys conducted among employees revealed that transformational leadership is highly regarded. Employees appreciated leaders who inspired and motivated them, setting a compelling vision for delivering exceptional guest service (Dai et al., 2013). They often described such leaders as role models who encouraged innovation and personal growth. This leadership style fostered a sense of purpose and pride among employees, contributing to heightened motivation and job satisfaction. Conversely, employees tend to express reservations about autocratic leadership approaches. In a culturally diverse and dynamic industry like hospitality, employees value a participative and inclusive leadership style. Autocratic leaders, who make decisions unilaterally and exert strict control, were often seen as hindrances to employee empowerment and creativity.

### **Impact of Effective Leadership on Employee Performance**

#### **Analysis of Survey and Interview Findings**

The hospitality industry in the United Arab Emirates survey and interview thematic analysis yielded important insights into the complex relationship between leadership tactics and worker performance. Staff survey showed a high positive association between transformational leadership philosophies and a number of performance measures, including staff motivation, job satisfaction, and general service quality (Siyal et al., 2023). These results supported the opinions of the interviewees, who underlined the significance of leaders who inspire and drive their workers to provide top-notch service. However, the study also made clear several difficulties facing the sector. While authoritarian leadership styles were linked to lower employee morale and satisfaction, transformational leadership was typically regarded favourably. Employees indicated a preference for bosses who encouraged candid dialogue, approachability, and group decision-making. Given the diversity of the workforce in the UAE, it is important for leaders to be flexible and sensitive to cultural differences.

#### **Correlation between Leadership Effectiveness and Employee Performance**

The hospitality industry in the United Arab Emirates showed a large and favourable association between leadership effectiveness and staff performance. Improvements in employee performance metrics were frequently linked to leadership practices including transformational and servant leadership, which place a strong emphasis on inspiration, motivation, and a common goal (Huang et al., 2016). According to survey results, staff members working under these types of leaders expressed increased levels of job satisfaction, motivation, and dedication to providing visitors with superior service. These results were further supported by interviews with business experts, which highlighted particular instances where good leadership resulted in observable enhancements in worker performance and general service quality. Employees were encouraged to perform well and felt valued at work when leaders promoted a healthy workplace culture, offered opportunities for growth and connected with their teams. On the other hand, authoritarian leadership styles, which are characterized by strict control and little employee input, were linked to lower performance metrics, such as lower job satisfaction and lower motivation (Fouad 2019). The research's conclusions emphasized the value of leadership that promotes employees' progress, listens to their opinions, and empowers them, closely fitting with the country's diverse and vibrant hospitality sector.

## **Identification of Key Drivers of Improved Performance**

The hotel industry of the United Arab Emirates' primary drivers of enhanced performance were identified, and this process unearthed a number of significant elements that complement strong leadership tactics. First, a distinct motivator emerged: a crystal-clear and compelling company vision, frequently established by transformative leaders. Employees were inspired to go above and beyond as a result of this sense of unity, regularly providing remarkable visitor experiences. Additionally, it was shown that employee empowerment and engagement were crucial factors in increased performance. Employees are empowered to take responsibility for their responsibilities by leaders who encourage open communication, are actively involved with their teams, and create opportunities for growth and development (Empowerment et al., 2018). This feeling of ownership led to more drive and dedication, which in turn improved performance outcomes. The study also emphasized the need to develop a supportive work environment and a positive workplace culture. Higher job satisfaction and overall employee happiness are a result of leaders who place a high priority on employee well-being and work-life balance. This had a favorable effect on their ability to provide top-notch service.

## **Challenges and Barriers to Effective Leadership in the UAE Hospitality Sector**

### **Cultural and Diversity Challenges**

The hospitality industry in the United Arab Emirates had complicated concerns brought on by cultural and diversity challenges, which called for thoughtful thinking and skilful leadership. Leaders must successfully negotiate this multicultural environment because the industry draws a diversified workforce from different ethnicities and cultural backgrounds (Gong 2008). Managing cultural sensitivity and disparities among personnel and visitors was a huge problem. Miscommunication and conflict caused by cultural misconceptions could hurt employee morale and guest satisfaction. To guarantee that staff members are prepared to handle a variety of encounters, leaders must establish an inclusive and culturally sensitive environment by providing training and counselling.

Additionally, it was difficult to find and keep talent in such a diversified environment. The industry has a high rate of employee turnover, thus business owners must constantly modify their hiring and retention methods. This problem is made more complex by cultural differences and the adaptation of personnel to UAE cultural standards. The job of leaders was to build work environments that support these changes and provide chances for professional development (Csaba, 2013).

The task also has a leadership component to it. To effectively manage diverse teams, hospitality sector leaders in the UAE must modify their leadership philosophies. For leaders to comprehend and appreciate the cultural nuances and preferences of their workforce, cultural intelligence becomes a crucial ability (Manoharan & Singal 2017). Additionally, leaders need to be adept at fostering diversity and inclusion, making sure that everyone on the team—regardless of their cultural backgrounds—feels respected and heard.

### **Recruitment and Talent Management**

Leaders in the hospitality industry of the United Arab Emirates faced unique challenges and chances when it came to hiring and managing talent. Because the business was growing quickly and was popular around the world, it was important to find and keep top talent. Leaders were told to come up with new ways to find skilled workers to meet the demand in a competitive job market (Quinn, 2013). Also, because the sector's workers come from many different backgrounds, leaders must use inclusive hiring practices that respect cultural diversity and adapt to people from different countries and backgrounds.

It was also hard to manage people in the business. Because some jobs in hospitality are short-term, there is often a lot of change. Leaders needed to come up with ways to keep good employees that went beyond competitive pay, like giving them a chance to advance in their careers, learn new skills, and learn about other cultures. Investing in employee development not only made workers happier at work

but also gave them the skills they needed to give great customer service (Dogru et al., 2020). Moreover, leadership in talent management entails recognizing and nurturing emerging leaders within the organization. Identifying individuals with leadership potential and providing them with mentorship and opportunities for growth helped ensure a pipeline of skilled leaders who can contribute to the sector's success.

### **Employee Turnover and Retention**

Employee turnover and retention were pressing concerns within the United Arab Emirates hospitality sector, demanding astute leadership to address them. High turnover rates, a common challenge in this industry, disrupted operations and impacted guest satisfaction (Ghani et al., 2022). Leaders must proactively address the root causes of turnover, including factors such as work stress, limited career growth, and cultural adjustments. Leaders can augment employee retention rates and minimize the adverse consequences of turnover by identifying these causes and executing solutions to alleviate them.

Retention strategies should extend beyond the mere mitigation of turnover and instead prioritize the cultivation of talent and advancement of career trajectories. Successful leaders prioritize the allocation of resources towards the professional growth and advancement of their workforce, thereby providing them with valuable training and skill enhancement prospects. Moreover, organizations have well-defined career trajectories, which serve as a means to encourage employees to remain with the company and advance professionally (Cheng-Hua et al., 2009). These tactics not only have a positive impact on retention rates but also enhance employee performance and job satisfaction. Leadership also has a crucial role in cultivating a constructive work atmosphere that fosters a feeling of inclusion and active participation among the workforce. Leaders can establish a workplace culture that fosters a sense of value and motivation among employees, achieved through the recognition and appreciation of their contributions.

### **Legal and Regulatory Factors**

The effective management of legal and regulatory considerations constituted a vital element of leadership within the hotel industry in the United Arab Emirates. The industry was subject to a multifaceted network of local and federal restrictions, in addition to cultural conventions and sensitivities (Barth & Barber 2017). Leaders must enforce stringent adherence to these regulations to mitigate legal complications and uphold the sector's standing. A significant legal aspect revolved around labor laws and employment rules within the United Arab Emirates (UAE). To ensure equitable treatment of employees in several aspects including working hours, pay, and occupational safety, leaders must possess a comprehensive understanding of these standards.

The hospitality industry in the UAE was also influenced by societal factors that are, cultural values and religious practices. Leaders must recognize and consider high regard for local customs and sensitivities about practical customs like food restrictions, dress codes, and various other cultural issues (Astuti et al., 2018). The failure to observe and follow this practice led to adverse guest experiences and resultantly face legal or reputational and economic repercussions. Additionally, leaders must be aware of the changing regulatory environment because it is directly proportional to economic or geopolitical influences. To ensure compliance and the continuous functioning of the industry, it is important for leaders to stay informed and adaptable about new laws and regulations.

## 4.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Conclusion

In conclusion, this research has shed light on the critical role of effective leadership strategies in enhancing employee performance within the United Arab Emirates hospitality sector. Transformational leadership styles, which inspire and motivate employees while fostering a shared vision, have been identified as particularly effective in driving higher levels of employee motivation, job satisfaction, and overall performance (Tracey & Hinkin 1994). Conversely, autocratic leadership styles have been associated with decreased employee satisfaction and motivation. The challenges posed by cultural diversity underscore the importance of leadership approaches that promote cultural sensitivity, cross-cultural training, and an inclusive work environment. Hospitality leaders in the UAE must be attuned to the diverse backgrounds and needs of their employees to provide exceptional guest experiences. Talent development and succession planning have been revealed as essential strategies for retaining skilled employees and preparing them for leadership roles. Investment in continuous learning, mentorship programs, and clear career paths is crucial for nurturing a motivated and committed workforce. Moreover, effective communication, recognition, and rewards programs play a pivotal role in employee engagement and retention (Shen et al., 2020). Leaders who actively listen to employee feedback and acknowledge their contributions create a positive work culture that fosters employee loyalty and performance. Lastly, compliance with UAE labour laws and regulations is fundamental for upholding ethical and responsible practices within the hospitality sector. Leaders must ensure strict adherence to legal requirements to protect employee rights and maintain the industry's reputation. Thereby, the implications of these findings highlight the need for leadership development, cultural sensitivity, talent nurturing, and legal compliance within the UAE's hospitality sector. The sector can enhance its competitiveness, elevate service quality, and contribute to the continued economic growth of the UAE by embracing these insights and implementing effective leadership strategies.

### Recommendations

#### Strategies for Addressing Cultural Diversity

It was a critical task to create a harmonious and inclusive work environment for leaders in the hospitality sector in the culturally diversified UAE. Leaders must adopt a comprehensive strategy to meet the demands of workers from different countries and backgrounds (Hai-yan & Baum 2006). Leaders must have a responsibility to provide their team members with the essential knowledge and abilities to effectively recognize and comprehend the cultural disparities they frequently encounter. Promoting intercultural cooperation and teamwork was a crucial additional tactic. Leaders may promote a feeling of harmony and understanding by providing opportunities for workers from different backgrounds to collaborate. Cultural boundaries can be broken down and respect for one another can be promoted through team-building exercises, projects, and cross-training programs. It was essential to have effective communication when dealing with cultural diversity. Leaders should promote open and transparent channels of communication so that staff members may express their worries and share their experiences.

#### Talent Development and Succession Planning

In the hospitality industry of the United Arab Emirates, where the need for trained and knowledgeable workers is always growing, leaders need to train and plan for the next generation of workers. Effective leaders know how important it is to develop talent within their organizations to make sure there is a steady supply of skilled workers (Johnson et al., 2019). One important approach was to put money into programs that help people learn and grow all the time. Leaders should give their workers chances to improve their skills and move up in their careers. This includes training programs, qualifications, and mentorship programs that not only make employees better at their jobs but also make them more motivated and happy at work. Leaders must also give employees clear ways to move up in the company



and give them reasons to stay and grow there. Succession planning was important to find and train employees who could be leaders in the future. Effective leaders actively assess and groom individuals who demonstrate leadership potential, ensuring a seamless transition when leadership positions become vacant (Collins, 2002). Moreover, leaders can implement cross-training initiatives to broaden employees' skill sets and enhance their versatility.

### **Employee Engagement and Retention Initiatives**

Employee engagement and retention initiatives hold significant importance in leadership within the United Arab Emirates hospitality sector. Leaders recognize that engaged and satisfied employees are more likely to provide exceptional service and stay with the organization (Book, 2019). Therefore, they implemented various strategies to enhance employee engagement and retention. One essential initiative was the creation of a positive work culture. Leaders set the tone for the organization, and a culture that values employee well-being, recognizes their contributions and promotes work-life balance is more likely to retain talent. Leaders who prioritize employee happiness foster a sense of loyalty and commitment among their workforce.

Open communication was another key initiative. Leaders who actively listen to employees' concerns and feedback and respond transparently create an environment where employees feel heard and valued. This not only boosts engagement but also enables leaders to address issues promptly, improving job satisfaction and retention rates. Recognition and rewards programs are vital for retaining top talent (Younies & Na 2020). Leaders who recognize and celebrate employee successes with incentives, bonuses, or awards encourage workers to do their best work and stay with the company. When workers feel appreciated, they tend to be happier at work and are less likely to look for work elsewhere. Leaders should also make sure there are chances for professional growth and progress. Employees are more likely to stay committed and involved if they can see how they can move up in the company.

### **Labour Laws and Regulations**

Leaders in the nation's hospitality industry have a fundamental obligation to abide by the laws and regulations governing labour in the UAE. Leaders must ensure rigorous respect for the UAE's well-defined labour laws, which safeguard the rights and interests of both employers and employees. The issue of working hours and rest times was a crucial component of compliance (Axelsson et al., 2017). The maximum working hours, pay rates for overtime, and required rest breaks are all outlined in UAE labour law. It was the responsibility of managers to coordinate employee schedules with these legal obligations to prevent any infractions that would result in fines and reputational harm. Another important factor was compliance with wages and benefits. Leaders are responsible for ensuring that workers receive the required pay, perks, and allowances under UAE labour regulations.

Also, it was important to follow rules about health and safety at work. Leaders must maintain safe working conditions, provide necessary safety equipment, and conduct regular safety training to prevent workplace accidents and injuries (Da Cunha et al, 2014). Non-compliance in this area can result in serious legal consequences and harm the well-being of employees. Leaders should also remain updated with any changes or updates in UAE labour laws and promptly implement them within their organizations. Staying informed about evolving regulations is essential to maintain compliance and prevent any legal issues.

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