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Could Responsible Leadership Be the Key to Job Satisfaction?

İş Tatmininin Anahtarı Sorumlu Liderlik Olabilir Mi?

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study, which utilizes conservation of resources theory, is to explicate the relationship between responsible leadership and job satisfaction. In line with this purpose, the sample of the research consists of employees working in restaurants with high service quality in Istanbul. The sample size was determined by using G*Power software and 213 participants were reached by convenience sampling method. In the study, data were collected by questionnaire method and the questionnaire included the Responsible Leadership Scale, Job Satisfaction Scale and demographic questions. The questionnaire was administered online in order to increase the number of participants and to prevent disruption of the services provided. The data collected for the research model were analyzed using SPSS and AMOS software. Confirmatory factor analysis was performed to determine the reliability and validity of the scales and structural equation modeling was employed to test the research hypothesis. The results revealed that responsible leadership had a significant and positive impact on job satisfaction. Contributions and limitations of the study were discussed and suggestions for future studies were presented.

Keywords: Responsible Leadership, Job Satisfaction, Conservation of Resources Theory.

ÖZET

Kaynakları koruma teorisinden yararlanan bu araştırmanın amacı sorumlu liderlik ile iş tatmini arasındaki ilişkiyi incelemektir. Bu amaç doğrultusunda araştırmanın örneklemi, İstanbul ilinde hizmet kalitesi yüksek olan restaurantlarda görev yapan çalışanlardan oluşmaktadır. Araştırmada örneklem büyüklüğü G*Power programı kullanılarak belirlenmiş ve kolayda örnekleme yöntemi ile 213 katılımcıya ulaşılmıştır. Çalışmada anket yöntemi ile veri toplanmış ve ankette Sorumlu Liderlik Ölçeği, İş Tatmini Ölçeği ve demografik sorular yer almıştır. Yürütülen hizmetlerin aksamaması ve katılımcı sayısını artırmak amacı ile anket uygulaması online olarak yapılmıştır. Araştırma modeline ilişkin toplanan veriler SPSS ve AMOS programları kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir. Ölçeklerin güvenirlik ve geçerlik değerlerini incelemek için doğrulayıcı faktör analizi gerçekleştirilmiş ve araştırma hipotezini test etmek amacıyla yapısal eşitlik modellemesi kullanılmıştır. Araştırma sonucunda, sorumlu liderliğin iş tatmini üzerinde pozitif ve anlamlı bir etkisinin olduğu ortaya konulmuştur. Araştırmanın katkıları ve kısıtları tartışılmış, gelecek çalışmalar için öneriler sunulmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sorumlu Liderlik, İş Tatmini, Kaynakları Koruma Teorisi.

1. INTRODUCTION

Sensitivity to the consequences of global warming and the use of natural resources is increasing day by day worldwide. It is also stated that tourism is a sector that is predisposed to contribute to social, environmental and economic sustainability (Jones et al., 2016). Sustainable practices such as reducing carbon footprint (Zientara and Bohdanowicz, 2010), avoiding waste in food consumption (Lin and Chung, 2019), and saving water and energy resources (Jones et al., 2016) find a place in the tourism sector (Tian and Suo, 2021). All of these are indicators that business plans to meet stakeholder expectations are being implemented in the tourism sector (Wellton and Lainpelto, 2021). In this context, there is a search for an effective leadership style in the tourism sector (Huertas-Valdivia et al., 2022).

With responsible leadership (RL), tourism can contribute to sustainability as a tool for social and economic development (Pounder, 2021). RL is a macro-based leadership style (Liao and Zhang, 2020; Maak and Pless, 2006) that combines ethical and moral values with corporate social responsibility (CSR) (Lips-Wiersma et al., 2020), and is capable of taking actions that benefit all stakeholders and conducting this process in a relationship-based manner. The macro-based perspective implies that RL adopts strategies to fulfill the expectations of all stakeholders, including employees, customers, shareholders, suppliers, and society (Özkan, 2022). To comprehend the impact of the responsible leader, who is the transmitter of

business strategies in organizations, on employees, the conservation of resources (COR) theory is used (Hobfoll, 1989).

Meeting expectations regarding the use of limited resources and using resources effectively (Wellton and Lainpelto, 2021), using energy and water efficiently (Jones et al., 2016), reusing waste oils in biodiesel production, reusing renewable wastes generated before service in food production in different products are examples of responsible behaviors of restaurants for sustainability (Çirişoğlu and Akoğlu, 2021). It is known that most of the wastes in the sector are biodegradable and can be recycled through composting (Pham Phu et al., 2018). All of this also benefits brand image development (Lin and Chung, 2019). Factors such as the structure of the workforce, close communication with customers, and working hours draw attention to the need for RL in restaurants (Jones et al., 2016).

Upon examining the research on the impacts of RL on employee behaviors in the Turkish sample, it is seen that RL reduces the power of Machiavellianism to encourage negative employee behaviors (Üzüm and Özkan, 2023), and the relationship between RL and person-organization fit (POF) strengthens as the working hours of food sector employees increase (Özkan and Üzüm, 2022). RL can provide guidance on how to improve job performance by meeting expectations to prevent food waste (Castañeda Garcia et al., 2023) and motivate behaviors to protect and improve the environment (Han et al., 2019; Zhao and Zhou, 2019). From this perspective, restaurants, which form the infrastructure of the tourism sector, have the potential to provide the best examples of RL (Wellton and Lainpelto, 2021). Castañeda García et al. (2023) focused on the expected practices of RL in restaurants, but not on the outcomes of RL. It was stated that research on RL in restaurant services had been neglected (Elkhwesky, 2022). This study aimed to examine the effect of RL on job satisfaction (JS). Examining RL on a sample of luxury restaurant employees in Turkey, filled the gap in the sector and expanded the literature on RL.
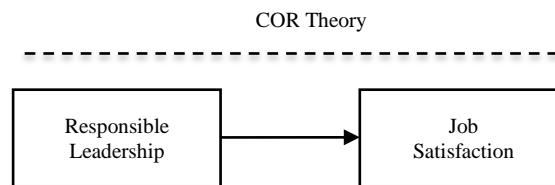
2. THEORETICAL CONCEPT

RL has been defined as a leadership style that focuses on improving society and the economy to make the world more livable through businesses (Bhatti et al., 2023). Tourism, as the sector most quickly affected by the cyclical structure, owes its success in crisis management to RL (Pounder, 2021). Evidence is presented that RL is proactive toward stakeholder expectations (Ntakumba and De Jongh, 2023). RL improves customer relations and leads employees toward job crafting (Luu, 2023). It is a leadership style that cares about and focuses on improving employee well-being in hospitality organizations (He et al., 2019).

RL, which benefits external stakeholders socially and economically, is also known to have benefits for internal stakeholders. RL increases employee engagement in the hospitality industry (Bouichou et al., 2022), improves environmentally focused organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) (Han et al., 2019), and is reported to affirm employee well-being by conveying the messages of human resource management to employees (He et al., 2019). Thus, while both social and customer expectations are met, the satisfaction of employees who are sensitive to sustainability and take responsibility increases with their commitment to their jobs (Bouichou, 2022; Voegtlin, 2011). In the hospitality sector, CSR has been found to be an important extrinsic motivator in increasing JS (Appiah, 2019; Raub and Blunschi, 2014). Locke (1976) defined JS as the state of well-being that an individual derives from his/her job-related experiences. It is noted that RL is a positive predictor of JS (Ansong et al., 2022; Doh et al., 2011; Voegtlin et al., 2012).

COR theory aims to protect what is valuable (resources). It assumes that individual behaviors are shaped in response to the diminishing of resources or in order to preserve or increase them (Hobfoll et al., 2018). According to COR theory (Hobfoll, 2001), the responsible leader also aims to protect objective resources (air, water, food, etc.). According to Hobfoll and Ford (2007), investing in one resource (JS) may require the use of another resource (RL). A responsible leader engages in responsible practices regarding food use in restaurants and motivates employees in the same direction (Lin and Chung, 2019). When employees are aware of their organizational, social and economic contribution, their JS will increase. In this study, responsible leaders who implement practices that create and increase value (resources) are considered as organizational resources that motivate their employees. Employees who share the more livable emphasis of RL enjoy this experience (JS) (Voegtlin et al., 2012), thus increasing employees' personal resources. The hypothesis designed in this direction is presented below:

H_1: *RL is positively related to JS.*

COR Theory

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┌──────────────┐        ┌──────────────┐
│ Responsible  │───────▶│     Job      │
│  Leadership  │        │ Satisfaction │
└──────────────┘        └──────────────┘
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Figure 1. Research Model

3. METHOD

In this study, which aims to determine the impact of RL on JS, firstly, information about the population and sample of the research and the scales used in the research are given. Then, descriptive statistics and correlation between variables were determined. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted to examine the reliability and validity of the scales and structural equation modeling (SEM) was employed to test the research model.

3.1. Population and Sample

The population of the study consists of employees working in restaurants with high service quality located in various districts of Istanbul. The sample of the research consists of 213 employees who are employed in these restaurants and who are not in managerial positions.

In the study, the sample size was determined using the G^*Power software developed by Faul et al. (2007). The required sample size at 95% statistical power level, $\alpha=.05$ significance level and .15 effect size (Cohen, 1988) was calculated as 89. It can be said that the sample size reached in order to reveal the relationships between the variables is sufficient for statistical analysis.

3.2. Data Collection Method and Measurement Tools

In the study, the survey questionnaire technique was employed to collect data. The questionnaire was administered online in order to avoid disruption of services and to increase the number of participants. On the first page of the questionnaire form, an information form regarding the aim of the research and the confidentiality of the participant's responses was presented. In the questionnaire, information on protecting the aim of the research and the confidentiality of the participant's responses were presented on the first page. In the questionnaire, there is a first section with scales consisting of Likert-style statements and a second section with statements to determine the demographic information of the participants.

Responsible Leadership: A 5-item scale developed by Voegtlin (2011) and adapted into Turkish by Özkan and Üzüm (2021) was used. Participants in the study were asked to rate their leaders using the statements on the scale. One of the items in the scale is the statement "My leader is aware of the expectations of different stakeholders."

Job Satisfaction: A five-item scale developed by Brayfield and Rothe (1951), short-formed by Judge et al. (1998) and adapted into Turkish by Keser and Bilir (2019) was used in the study. A sample item is "I am satisfied with my current job."

4. FINDINGS

In the study, SPSS was used to analyze descriptive statistics and correlational relationships, and AMOS was used to test the measurement model and structural model. The results obtained are presented in Tables 1 and 2.

When the descriptive statistics of the sample (n=213) are analyzed, it can be said that the majority of the participants were male (59%), single (41%), with high school education (45%) and 1-5 years of experience (47%). In terms of correlation values, a positive relationship exists between RL (mean=3.57) and JS (mean=3.61) (r=.32; <.01).

Table 1. Measurement Model Results

Constructs	Items	Standardized Loadings	Cronbach's Alpha	CR	AVE
RL	RL1	.38			
	RL2	.62			
	RL3	.69	.79	.79	.43
	RL4	.79			
	RL5	.74			
JS	JS1	.60			
	JS2	.77			
	JS3	.48 [a]	.76	.74	.41
	JS4	.64			
	JS5	.55			
Fit Indices	χ^2/df=1.58	GFI=.95	Fornell-Larcker Criterion	RL	JS
	RMSEA=.05	CFI=.97	RL	(.66)	-
	SRMR=.05	TLI=.96	JS	.42	(.64)

Notes: CR=Composite Reliability; AVE=Average Variance Extracted.
RL=Responsible Leadership; JS=Job Satisfaction.
Values in parentheses indicate the square root of the AVE.
χ^2/df=Chi-Square/Degrees of Freedom; RMSEA=Root Mean Square Error of Approximation; SRMR=Standardized Root Mean Square Residual; GFI=Goodness of Fit Index; CFI=Comparative Fit Index; TLI=Tucker-Lewis Index.
[a] =Excluded Item; it was removed to increase AVE value.

As a result of CFA, it was determined that the measurement model met the specified index values and was compatible with the data (Hu and Bentler, 1999). According to the values in Table 1, it can be said that the internal consistency reliability (α and CR$\geq$.70), convergent (CR>AVE) and discriminant (square root of AVE exceeds the correlation between constructs) validity of the scales belonging to the variables (Bagozzi and Yi, 1988; Fornell and Larcker, 1981).

The hypothesis of the study was tested by SEM method and the results are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. SEM Results

Effect	β	SE	t-value	p-value	R^2 value	Conclusion
RL → JS	.45	0.08	4.58	.000[***]	.21	H₁=Supported

Notes: [***]p<.001; SE=Standard Error; R^2=Explained Variance; RL=Responsible Leadership; JS=Job Satisfaction; Coefficients are standardized (β).

According to the results in Table 2, RL has a significant and positive impact on JS (β=.45; p<.001). Approximately 21% (R^2) of the change in JS is explained by RL. Accordingly, hypothesis H_1 is accepted.

5. CONCLUSION

This study extends Castañeda García et al.'s (2023) emphasis that economic, social and environmental expectations in restaurants can be solved through RL by revealing the impact of RL on JS. Nonetheless, it also responded to Elkhwesky's (2022) emphasis on the neglect of research on the outcomes of RL in restaurants. This research adds to the RL literature in the context of restaurants (Wellton and Lainpelto, 2021). In the study, it was determined that RL increases the JS of restaurant employees.

In studies conducted outside the tourism sector, it is seen that RL predicts JS (Ansong et al., 2022; Doh et al., 2011; Voegtlin et al., 2012) and CSR has a positive impact on JS in the context of the hospitality sector (Appiah, 2019; Raub and Blunschi, 2014). To the best of our knowledge, this study is the only one that examines the relationship between RL and JS in restaurants. The results of the study are in line with the findings in the literature. The results of the research are also supported by COR theory (Hobfoll, 1989).

RL has been suggested as a resource that can be used to overcome the challenges of globalization (Voegtlin, 2011). This study provides restaurateurs with an insight into the importance of RL and encourages them to train and develop their leaders to be responsible leaders. Stakeholder-oriented, relationship-based, ethical and moral values-appreciating leadership style improves employees' JS (Voegtlin, 2011). In addition, RL practices should be taught in tourism and hospitality schools before students start their professional lives (Huertas-Valdivia et al., 2021). Being able to train and sustain personnel who undertake responsible behaviors should take its place as a basic function in human resources practices (Tuan, 2022). It is possible to multiply resources with positive attitudes and behaviors.

The research was designed for employee perceptions and conducted through a single source. Relevant results were reached with cross-sectional data. Future research can be conducted by including the perceptions of other stakeholders representing the macro perspective of the responsible leader (multi-source). Future research can be designed on concepts such as turnover intention, OCB and its derivatives,

job stress, which can be considered as personal sources for employees, and mediating and moderating effects can be evaluated. The results on the relationship between RL and JS were obtained from restaurants in Turkey. In order to generalize the results obtained, it is recommended to increase the sample size and repeat the study with different samples. On the other hand, it is recommended to make cross-country comparisons to reveal cross-cultural differences.

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