

Leadership Styles and Group Dynamics in the Tourism Industry



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Abstract Leadership is one of the most discussed topics in organization management over the past 50 years. Leadership studies have showed direct relationships between leadership styles and a variety of occupational outcomes, such as job satisfaction and self-efficacy. Similarly, (Wolman, *The Journal of Social Psychology* 43:11–25, 1956) was one of the first researchers who identified four leadership styles that influence the dynamics of a group. Nowadays, it is commonly accepted that team leaders provide a supportive context for teams by focusing on the team’s direction, structure, and external relations (Wageman et al., *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*. 41:373–398, 2005). One of the primary roles of the team leader is to set the direction for the team. This is very important because establishing a clear and engaging direction for the team is a crucial part of motivating team performance (Levi, D. (2017). *Group dynamics for Teams* (5th edition). Sage Publications, Inc.). Although there is an efficient amount of papers on leadership styles, there seems to be a scientific research lack on the connection between leadership styles and group dynamics. In addition, whereas there are a few papers connecting leadership and group dynamics (Barnett and McCormick, *Educational Management Administration & Leadership* 40:653–671, 2012; Yammarino et al., 2010), there is a significant research gap on the connection between leadership and group in the tourism industry. The aim of this paper is to examine the current literature review concerning the relationship between organizational leadership styles and group dynamics in general, as well as in tourism industry; the methodology which will be used is literature selection of papers and articles retrieved from online bibliographic databases.

Keywords Leadership styles · Group dynamics · Relationship · Tourism industry

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1 Introduction

One of the first definitions which connects the term of leadership with the term of group dynamics was introduced by Polish-American psychologist Benjamin Wolman. According to Wolman (1956), *“leadership is defined as a relationship between one or more individuals and one or more other individuals within the framework of the social unit called a group. One part of the group is being called leader or leaders, while the other part is called followers. In this relationship the activities of the followers are initiated, stimulated, and sometimes determined and controlled by the leader(s)”*.

During the past 50 years, scholars and practitioners have examined thoroughly the concept of leadership styles. Although there is a plethora of articles and papers which “bring to the surface” the connection of leadership styles with several Human Resources concepts such as job satisfaction, emotional intelligence, job stress and burnout, work conflict, job commitment, change management, employee training, and job well-being (Belias & Trihas, 2022a, 2022b; Belias et al., 2022, 2017, 2020a, 2020b; Koutiva et al., 2020; Rossidis et al., 2021), there seems to be a huge research gap regarding the connection between leadership and group dynamics. Even when there are a few papers concerning these two variables, the majority of them study the relationship between leadership styles and some of the subscales (dimensions) of group dynamics, such as team cohesion, team effectiveness, and team motivation (Mohanty & Mohanty, 2018; Rahbi et al., 2017; Ramzaninezhad & Keshtan, 2009).

Furthermore, another enormous research gap that exists is the fact that there are none or to be more precise a very small amount of researches that examine the linkage between leadership and group dynamics in the tourism and hospitality industry. The most common fields that scholars have investigated the above linkage are: military strategy, educational management, banking, sport management, and multicultural organizations (Aritz & Walker, 2014; Ramzaninezhad & Keshtan, 2009; Yamarino et al., 2010).

The main purpose of the current paper is to examine the current literature regarding the relationship between leadership styles and group dynamics in general, as well as in the tourism and hospitality industry. The methodology which will be used is literature selection of papers, studies, articles retrieved from online scientific databases (such as ScienceDirect, Web of Sciences, Google Scholar, and Elsevier Scopus). Moreover, the current paper will suggest research tools which can be used in order to measure leadership styles and group dynamics. Due to the lack of theoretical and practical models that connect leadership styles and group dynamics (especially in the tourism industry), the authors hope to trigger for future theoretical and practical research with implementation in the tourism/hospitality industry.

2 Methodology

The methodology that is used in the current paper is literature review, accompanied by critical analysis. All the data were collected from high-quality scientific journals, books, conference proceedings, papers, business reports, and scientific websites. Moreover, the databases which used were the following: Google Scholar, ScienceDirect, Elsevier Scopus, and Emerald. Also, the authors used several other sources based on their accessibility the authors have provided by the affiliated institutions. The criteria which the authors based on, in order to select the literature information, were: (a) the relevance to the terms examined by the paper and (b) the date of the publishing (approximately 10 years until July of 2022).

For the implementation of the research, the authors used a combination of keywords such as “Leadership styles”, “Leadership”, “Group Dynamics”, “Team Dynamics”, “Team Cohesion”, “Team Effectiveness”, “Team Performance”, “Relationship”, “Impact”, “Effect”, “Tourism Industry”, “Hospitality Industry”, “Hotels”, and “Organizations”. The authors chose those keywords because these keywords are related directly with the subject of their research; keywords that are associated with the effect of leadership and group dynamics in the hospitality industry. All the sources used should have contained some of the keywords in their topic, abstract, keywords, or the research section.

To sum up, the selection criteria of the literature information were associated with three factors: (a) the publishing should be as recent as possible, (b) the publishing should cover a wide geographic coverage including different countries and cities, and (c) the publishing should provide useful insights, conclusions, and theoretical framework and practical–empirical researches.

Thus, this paper aims on investigating the existing literature review. In order to succeed its goal, the paper will make a thorough examination on the hypotheses and results of the papers that have been already published.

Eventually, the current study through literature review should try to shed some light on the following questions:

- RQ 1 Is there a positive connection between leadership styles and group dynamics on organizations in general and more specifically in the tourism industry?
- RQ 2 Which leadership styles have stronger effect on group dynamics?
- RQ 3 Do leadership styles have an effect on group dynamics subscales, such as team effectiveness or team cohesion?
- RQ 4 Are there any practical models in order to measure leadership styles and group dynamics?
- RQ 5 Is there any model to connect leadership styles and group dynamics? Does it have an apply on the tourism industry?

3 Literature Review

3.1 *The Concept of Leadership Styles—Definitions and Measurement Tools*

The concept of leadership has attracted the interest of scholars during the past 100 years (Rossidis et al., 2020). According to Yukl and Becker (2006), an effective leadership can be defined by the fact that it can provide meaning to events, it can align goals and objectives, it can support the followers in order to be committed to the organization, and finally it can establish trust and support between leaders and followers.

In previous studies, leadership styles have been associated with several terms of management, such as organizational culture, organizational learning culture, job satisfaction, job conflict, work stress, work burnout, and emotional intelligence (Belias & Koustelios, 2014; Belias et al., 2015a, 2015b; Ntalakos et al., 2022b; Viterouli & Belias, 2021).

Over the past 100 years, scholars have defined leadership through four main categories (Northouse, 2021; Rossidis et al., 2020):

- (a) **Trait Theory:** It suggests that leaders are born with the skills and characteristics that make them an effective leader.
- (b) **Behavioral Theory:** It suggests that leaders have behavioral characteristics which they can be adopted by the others in order to be leaders.
- (c) **Contingency/Situational Theory:** It suggests that leaders act according to the situation they are involved in.
- (d) **New charismatic Theory:** It includes all the updated theories about leadership.

The above-forth main category consists of the modern theories that are associated with the leadership styles, and they are widely used nowadays by scholars. Some of the most famous leadership styles are the following:

- **Transformational leadership**
- **Transactional leadership**
- **Laissez-faire leadership.**

Transformational leader is defined as a leader who can vision the future of the organization and can share this vision with peers and subordinates; he/she can also stimulate subordinates in an intellectual way as well as he/she can take into serious consideration the individual differences among people (Yammarino & Bass, 1990). Transformational leadership consists of four dimensions (Bass & Avolio, 1990; Crews et al., 2019; Ghuzayyil, 2021): (a) idealized influence (charisma) (leader shows commitment, trust and he/she can handle difficult situations), (b) inspirational motivation (leader communicates the vision to the followers, motivates, and encourages the followers to achieve the best they can do), (c) intellectual stimulation (leader questions the old fashioned beliefs and encourage the implementation of new ideas and

perspectives made by the followers), and (d) individual consideration (leader communicates clearly and efficiently with the followers in order to consider their thoughts, needs, and abilities).

Transactional leader is defined as a leader who can operate in the existing set values and culture of the organization; he/she also prefers to avoid risks and pays attention to time deadlines and the product efficiency of the organization (Bass, 1985). Transactional leadership consists of three dimensions (Crews et al., 2019; Jensen et al., 2016): (a) contingent reward (leader focuses on giving rewards to subordinates for increased job performance, (b) active management—by—exception (leader intervenes according to leader–follower transactions), and (c) passive management—by—exception (leader leaves the subordinates to take responsibility for their action, and intervenes when problems arise).

Laissez-faire leadership is defined as a complete lack of leadership (Avolio, 1999). Leaders apply laissez-faire leadership due to the fact that they avoid responsibility by waiting for another person to take action and they cannot decide easily what to do. However, Avolio (1999) suggest that there are some situations that laissez-faire leadership is the appropriate one in order for a problem to be solved (such as sport management, when an athlete leader thinks that this attitude will bring the individual's perceived effectiveness) (Loughead et al., 2020).

Some other leadership styles that are used frequently by scholars are the following.

Authoritarian Leadership Style: In this type of leadership, leaders are distant from their employees. Authoritarian leaders apply this type of leadership using demands, punishments, regulations, and orders (Rahbi et al., 2017). In addition, authoritarian leaders make all the decisions by themselves and the subordinates have to follow their instructions without question or comment (Greenfield, 2007). This leadership style weakens the creativity and innovation of the followers due to the fact that managers consider themselves always to be correct (Rahbi et al., 2017). However, authoritarian leadership style has a major advantage: When there is an emergency and a task must be completed in a few time, then an employee needs to be disciplined and structured in order for a job to be quickly done. In this situation, authoritarian leadership can be adopted (Wiesenthal et al., 2015).

Democratic Leadership Style: This leadership style is also called participative leadership style. Some basic principles that are supported in democratic leadership style are equality, self-determination, cooperation, and active participation. For this reason, democratic leaders involve their followers on decision making as well as they offer them support to their choices (Rahbi et al., 2017). As a result, followers feel that they are free to decide and act according to their will as well as they feel that they can maintain the freedom and autonomy of the group they belong (Avolio et al., 2009). However, democratic leadership style has several disadvantages. If the roles and the duties of the employees are not clearly defined and the employees are feeling stressed due to deadline, then it is possible that mistakes will occur that may lead to a failure. Moreover, there are cases when the members of an organization are not experienced on the process of decision making. Finally, decision making in the democratic style is a procedure which can take a lot of time, so it can be very

frustrating when the employees are pressured because of time limit (Rahbi et al., 2017).

Dynamic Leadership Style: This leadership style adapts to the nature of situation; in other words, this leadership style changes and applies to different situations. Furthermore, these types of leadership suggest that a leader should not have a permanent style but his/her leadership style should be adjusted according to the team that he/she leads (Rahbi et al., 2017; Tucker & Lam, 2014). Dynamic leadership style has a direct effect on the whole team and not only particularly to one individual, as promotes team motivation. Thus, the whole team recognizes its contribution to the overall success of the organization. Furthermore, dynamic leaders are adaptable leaders who share a common vision with the team. They inspire and influence the team (Tucker & Lam, 2014); they do not give orders or have a dictatorial attitude toward the team. Dynamic leader also finds opportunities behind obstacles as well as they take action in difficult and risky situations (Pershing Yoakley & Associates, 2014). Finally, dynamic leaders are appreciated by teams because of the fact that they are being caring, fair, and inspiring (Mostovicz, 2009).

As a conclusion, scholars are very fond of the term of leadership styles. Thus, researchers had to find out ways in order to measure the several levels of leadership style. One of the most common tools (instrument) so as to measure the leadership style is the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) which was developed by Avolio and Bass (2004). The MLQ tool consists of 45 questions; 36 questions measure the three basic leadership styles (transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire), while 9 questions measure the leadership results (greater effort, efficiency, and satisfaction from leadership). Besides, the MLQ instrument measures the dimensions of each leadership style and the dimensions of the outcome. More specifically:

- (a) Transformational leadership dimensions: Idealized influence (features), Idealized influence (behavior), Inspirational motivation, Intellectual stimulation, Individual consideration.
- (b) Transactional leadership dimensions: Contingent Reward, Management—by—Exception (active)
- (c) Passive/Avoidant leadership dimensions: Management—by—Exception (passive), Laissez-faire leadership
- (d) Leadership Outcome dimensions: Extra effort, Effectiveness, Satisfaction

Eventually, all the questions are measured through a five-point Likert scale (0 = Not at all, 1 = Rarely, 2 = Occasionally, 3 = Quite often, 4 = Almost always) (Avolio & Bass, 2004).

3.2 The Concept of Group Dynamics—Terms and Measurement Tools

The concept of group dynamics has generated interest of several scholars and practitioners during the past decades. Before analyzing the concept of group dynamics,

the authors want to point out the difference between the term group and team, due to the fact that a lot of people think that they have the same meaning.

Hence, according to Forsyth (2019) “group is defined as two or more individuals who are connected by and within social relationship”, while “team is defined as a special type of group in which people work independently to accomplish a goal, especially when being members of an organization” (Levi, 2017).

Someone would easily conclude that “a group is just a collection of people”. On the contrary, a group is not just a collection of people. A group can have the following characteristics (Johnson & Johnson, 1997):

- **Goal orientation:** People joining together for some purpose in order to achieve a goal
- **Interdependent:** People that are connected with some type of relationship, or they believe that they are living a common fate
- **Interpersonal Interaction:** People who communicate with each other
- **Perception of Membership:** Recognition that a member belongs to a collective
- **Structures Relations:** Roles, rules, and norms which control the interactions of people
- **Mutual Influence:** The impact that people have to each other due to their connections
- **Individual Motivation:** Satisfaction of personal needs as a group member.

Organizations use several types of similar or different teams in order to achieve their goals and purposes (Ntalakos et al., 2022a, 2022b). For this reason, the study of group dynamics can provide a plethora of useful insights about the way teams operate as well as how they can be improved (Levi, 2017).

According to Forsyth (2019), some of the major topics that group dynamics examines (regarding groups) are: formation, inclusion and identity, cohesion and development, structure, influence, power, leadership, performance, decision making, conflict, intergroup relations.

Furthermore, Tuckman (1965) developed a theory about the formation of groups; the model of five stages as follows (Tuckman & Jensen, 1977; Forsyth, 2019, WCU, 2020):

- (a) **Forming:** The first initial stage—structure of the team. Team members feel ambiguous and avoid conflict because of the need to be accepted as a part of the group. For that reason, the team members listen to the guidance of the team leader.
- (b) **Storming:** The second stage—organizing tasks. The first interpersonal conflicts come to the surface. The three basic elements of this stage are: power, leadership, and structure.
- (c) **Norming:** The third stage—new ways of communicating and being together. The group develops cohesion, and the leader is not only one person but shared leadership is starting to be created. The team members accept that they have to trust each other in order for the shared leadership to be effective.

- (d) **Performing:** The fourth stage—not all groups reach this stage. In order for a group to reach this stage, they have to evolve in depth their personal relations and start work independently in subgroups (or as a total) with equal competencies.
- (e) **Adjourning:** The fifth stage—this is the termination of the team. The members of the team experience change and transition as well as regret and withdrawal due to the termination of the team.

Regarding group dynamics measurements, unfortunately there are very few tools in order to measure group dynamics. One of them is the Group Dynamics Inventory (GDI) which was developed by Phan et al. (2004). The GDI consists of 20 items which measure some of the subscales of group dynamics which measures group dynamics using a four-point Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). The instruments measure three subscales of group dynamics which are cohesiveness, altruism, and universality. The tool was firstly used to measure group dynamics in group of postgraduate psychology students.

Another tool is the instrument for group dynamics developed by Schultz et al. (2003). This tool was designed in order to measure the following dimensions of group dynamics: participation, communication, influence, trust, cohesion, group empowerment, and collaborative work. This tool was adapted by Greenlee and Karanxha (2010); Greenlee & Karanxha transform the items from questions to statements which were measured through a five-point Likert Scale.

Eventually, there is a number of tools which can measure some of the subscales of group dynamics. For example, there is the Group Environment Questionnaire (Carron et al., 1985) which is a very famous tool for measuring the team's cohesion. Similarly, there is the Team Effectiveness Questionnaire (TEQ) (developed by London Leadership Academy, National Health Service) which is consisted of 56 items and it is used for measuring the levels of effectiveness in a team (TEQ, 2022).

This paper hopes to trigger for further future research in order to generalize the use of these tools for measuring the dynamic of groups occupied in organizations in general, and more specifically in the tourism industry.

3.3 Examination of the Current Literature—The Effect of Leadership and Group Dynamics on Organizations

In this section, the authors will present recent researches regarding the connection of leadership and group dynamics in organizations in general, and more specifically in the tourism industry.

Yamarino et al. (2010) studied leadership and team dynamics for dangerous military contexts. More specifically, pragmatic leadership is preferred for the individual level, individualized leadership is preferred at the dyadic level, and shared leadership is preferred at the team leadership. Also, twelve key multilevel propositions and five multilevel exploratory ones are derived from the model of Yamarino et al. (2010).

Ramzanezhad & Keshtan (2009) examined the relationship between coach's leadership styles and team cohesion in professional football clubs. The results from this study reveal that the coach's leadership styles and behaviors have a great impact on team cohesion; also, this study demonstrates the valuable role that the coach plays in the increase of cohesion of the team.

In addition, Aritz and Walker (2014) studied the connection between leadership styles and multicultural groups. The results of their research show that differing discursive leadership styles can have an effect on the participation and the contribution of members as well as they can have an effect of the feelings of inclusion and satisfaction between the members of the group.

Furthermore, Rahbi et al. (2017) studied the connection between three leadership styles (democratic, authoritarian, and laissez-faire) and team motivation. More specifically, the outcome of their study showed that democratic and authoritarian leadership style is positively correlated with team motivation, whereas laissez-faire is negatively correlated with team motivation.

Markulis et al. (2014) conducted a research regarding the effect of leadership modes on team dynamics and performance. More thoroughly, the sample of their research consisted of 77 undergraduate students of management classes. The results of their study showed that emerging leaders do not have significant impact on team dynamics and performance; on the contrary, designated and rotating leaders are the most effective for team dynamic and performance.

Moreover, Sheard and Kakabadse (2016) examined the perspective of leadership and team development. Through a literature review, they present several tools and techniques which help senior managers to adapt their behavior in order to create the organizational structure that is needed so as to make effective teams.

One of the most completed models on leadership and team dynamics was made by Barnett and McCormick (2012). Barnett and McCormick (2012) developed a theoretical model which studied the connection between leadership and team dynamics as well as their effect on team performance and effectiveness. The environment in which they implement their model was secondary educational institutes. The practical methodology of their research consisted of interviews of senior executive of educational institutes (qualitative research). Figure 1 describes the input variables, the procedure variables, and the outcome variables of Barnett & McCormick model. The results of this study showed that complex environmental events need a shift from single leader to team center leadership; also, school principals play an important role (as team leaders) and apply leadership functions in a flexible way in order for teams to be developed and effective.

Last but not least, the only paper that connects group dynamics in the tourism industry is the research of Mohanty and Mohanty (2018). More specifically, Mohanty and Mohanty (2018) investigated the effect of group dynamics on teamwork effectiveness. The findings showed that group dynamics has a significant positive effect on teamwork as far as the hospitality industry (hotels) is concerned. All the above elements are presented in Table 1.

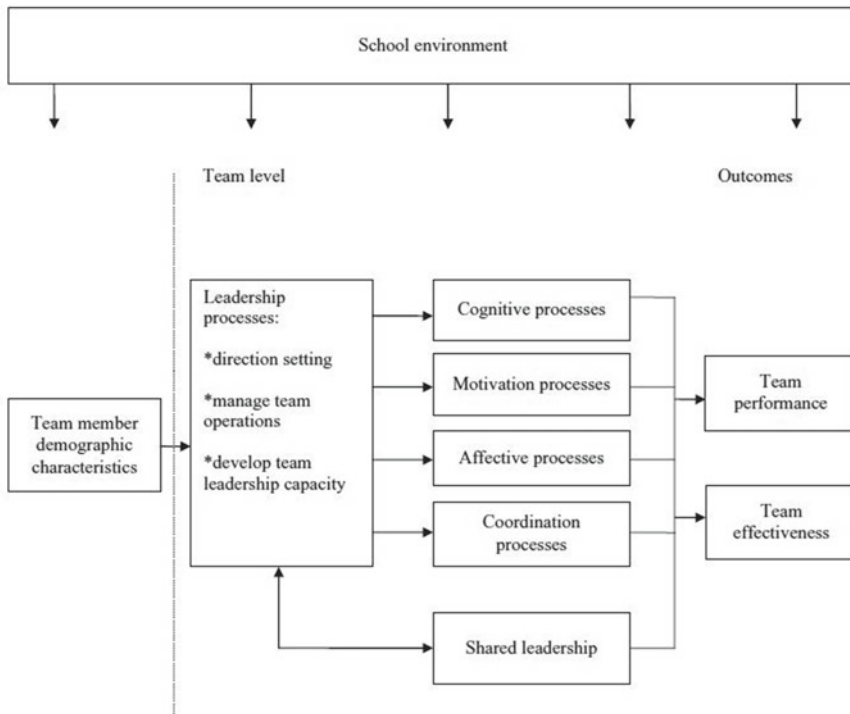


Fig. 1 Model of leadership and team dynamics developed by Barnett and McCormick (2012)

4 Conclusions

This paper has examined the linkage between leadership styles and group dynamics in organizations. As it is already mentioned, leadership styles seem to be connected with group dynamics and especially with some of the dimensions of group dynamics, such as team cohesion, team motivation, team building, team effectiveness, and team formation. The problem is that there is not enough research evidence to prove in detail the above relationship, especially as far as tourism and hospitality industry is concerned. In other words, although there are a few researches pointing out the relationship between these two terms (in the fields of military strategy, educational management, banking, sport management, organizations), there is no empirical research to support this connection.

For that reason, this paper strongly supports and hopes to trigger for future research in the field of tourism/hospitality industry. The authors suggest that a theoretical/practical model should be developed, based on the tools that already discussed (such as Barnett & McCormick model, 2012), that it would have direct implementation on the tourism and hospitality industry.

Table 1 Examination of existing literature research

Authors	Methods used	Conclusions	Area of research
Mohanty and Mohanty (2018)	Quantitative research made in a sample of 98 hotel employees in the city of Bhubaneswar	Group dynamics has a significant positive effect on teamwork in hotels	Group dynamics, team effectiveness, hospitality industry
Rahbi et al. (2017)	Literature review in the context of the healthcare sector of Abu Dhabi	Democratic and authoritarian leadership style is positively correlated with team motivation, whereas laissez-faire is negatively correlated with team motivation	Leadership styles and team motivation in health department
Sheard and Kakabadse (2016)	Literature review in the context of organization in general	Several tools and techniques which help senior managers to adapt their behavior to create effective teams	Leadership and team development in organizations
Aritz and Walker (2014)	Quantitative research made in a sample of 146 business professionals enrolled in an MBA program at a private university of Southern California, coming from China, Japan, Korea, USA	Differing discursive leadership styles can have an effect on the participation and the contribution of members; affect the feelings of inclusion and satisfaction between the members of the group	Leadership styles, multicultural groups
Markulis (2014)	Quantitative research made in a sample of 77 undergraduate students of management classes	Emerging leaders no significant impact on team dynamics and performance; designated and rotating leaders are the most effective for team dynamic and performance	Leadership modes and team dynamics and performance
Barnett and McCormick (2012)	Qualitative research made in the senior executives of secondary educational institutes	Single leader to center leadership; team leaders (principals) play an important role for the development and effectiveness of a team	Leadership, team dynamics, educational management

(continued)

Table 1 (continued)

Authors	Methods used	Conclusions	Area of research
Yamarino et al. (2010)	Qualitative research made in the US army	The results of their research revealed pragmatic leadership are preferred for the individual level, individualized leadership is preferred at the dyadic level, and shared leadership is preferred at the team leadership	Leadership and team dynamics for dangerous military context
Ramzaninezhad and Keshtan (2009)	Quantitative research made in a sample of 264 athletes of 12 football teams from Iran	The results from this study reveal that the coach's leadership styles and behaviors have a great impact on team cohesion	Leadership styles and team cohesion, sport management

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