

# Leadership Styles in the Hotel Sector and Its Effect on Employees' Creativity and Organizational Commitment

Hatem Radwan Ibrahim Radwan

**Abstract**—Leadership is crucial for hotel survival and success. It enables hotels to develop and compete effectively. This research intends to explore the implementation of six leadership styles by frontline hotel managers in four star hotels in Cairo and assess its impact on employees' creativity and organizational commitment. The leadership patterns considered in this study includes: democratic, autocratic, laissez-faire, transformational, transactional, and ethical leaderships. Questionnaire was used as a research method to gather data. A structured survey was established and distributed on employees in Cairo's four star hotels. A total of 284 questionnaire forms were returned and usable for statistical analysis. The results of this study identified that transactional and autocratic leadership were the prevalent styles used in four star hotels in Cairo. Two leadership styles proved to have significant high correlation and impact on employees' creativity and organizational commitment including: transformational and democratic leadership. Besides, laissez-faire leadership was found had a smaller effect on employees' creativity and ethical leadership had a lesser influence on employees' commitment. The autocratic leadership had strong negative correlation and significant impact on both dependent variables. This research concludes that frontline hotel managers should adopt transformational and/or democratic leadership style in managing their subordinates.

**Keywords**—Creativity, hotels, leadership styles, organizational commitment.

## I. INTRODUCTION

EMPLOYEES are considered the cornerstone in delivering excellent services. Therefore it is essential to maintain staff well-motivated, trained and committed to the organization to assure customer satisfaction and loyalty, an aspect which represents a great challenge to any hotel manager [1]. Firth et al. [2] pointed out leadership style has a direct influence on employees' job satisfaction and commitment which in turn influences and shapes employees' turnover intentions and behaviors. A good leader must recognize the importance of employees in order to achieve organizational targets and thus motivating them is of great importance to achieve goals. Admittedly, varied leadership styles have different consequences which influence employees' attitudes and behaviors [3].

Hospitality businesses are under pressure to implement an

effective leadership style to improve employees' performance, stay innovative, maintain and develop structures and meet the continuous changes in customers' demand [4]. The success of any business depends largely on the style of leadership implemented [5]. Saleem [6] explained that the function of leaders has changed dramatically in today's organization and leadership has significant impact on staff attitude towards work. No longer are leaders able to use their power to convince subordinates to do work as per their directions. Instead they should strongly sustain interaction and consultation with subordinates [7]. Veliu et al. [3] revealed that leadership is crucial to control and manage employees in all organizations. A good leader is the one who recognizes how to enhance employees' motivation, inspire subordinates' creativity and make them more committed to the organization. The type of leadership style chosen to be implemented in an organization depends on the business sector in which they are operating.

As a result of a complex and changing environment along with strong competitions, many organizations encounter an increasing demand to alter their way of thinking and the manner of handling different situations occurring on a daily basis [8]. Leadership and creativity are interrelated processes for leading organizations towards change. No doubt, stimulating and involving employees into creative thinking is considered a distinctive feature of leadership which supports organizational transformation [9]. Organizations must have supportive organizational structure and culture that enable leaders to provide an environment encouraging employees' creativity. They should always inspire and motivate employees to generate imaginative ideas [10]. This study marked a general lack of research conducted on leadership behavior particularly in the hospitality sector [4], [11]. Previous research has given little attention to the effects of leadership styles on subordinates' creativity in the hospitality sector [12], [13]. Therefore, this research comes to explore and assess leadership styles implemented in four star hotels in Cairo and identify the most effective styles that can lead to hotel success. This research also investigates the effects of leadership styles on followers' creativity and organizational commitment.

## II. RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

- 1- Democratic and transformational leadership styles are the prevalent styles used in the hotel sector.
- 2- There is a high significant correlation between leadership

H. R. I. Radwan is with the Hotel Studies Department, Faculty of Tourism and Hotels, Suez Canal University, Ismailia, Egypt and with the Tourism and Hospitality Department, College of Business, Umm Al-Qura University, Makka, Saudi Arabia (phone: 00966560561763; e-mail: hatterradwan@yahoo.com).

styles (democratic, autocratic and transformational) and employees' organizational commitment and creativity behavior.

- 3- Transformational, democratic and laissez-faire leadership are the most styles contribute significantly to improve employees' creativity.
- 4- Leadership styles (democratic, autocratic, transformational and ethical) are the most patterns of leadership significantly influence employees' organizational commitment.

### III. LITERATURE REVIEW

Leadership can be defined as the art of influencing, guiding and motivating followers to do their functions enthusiastically and proficiently for accomplishing organization's objectives [14]. Leadership is the ability of a person to influence followers towards achieving an organization's targets. This process entails motivating and inspiring subordinates to put more efforts to attain desired outcomes. The hospitality industry in last years is characterized by high staff turnover, high level of absenteeism and low labor stability and commitment [14]. Awee et al. [1] found that many employees were not convinced of their managers and left their work because of their leaders. Those leaders lacked the necessary leadership skills. They failed to motivate and/or engage their staff and had poor interaction with their teamwork. Indeed, many leaders did not possess the basic requirements for building a health employee-manager relationship. Petkovski [15] showed that hospitality managers should have certain characteristics to be successful leaders. They should be highly educated and experienced in various domains along with believing in strong norms and ethical standards. They should have the ability to adapt to different personalities and circumstances. They should sustain work relations, be good motivator, problem solver and work towards achieving their aspirations. They should have the capability to establish goals and pursue its achievement.

Leadership is an integral aspect of the hospitality industry's success. The most significant challenge confronted by hotel managers is how to engage employees to accomplish business objectives. Managers must possess the capabilities and the qualities of management and leadership to influence and motivate subordinates [14]. Woods and King [16] made a clear distinction between the roles of leaders and managers. The emphasis of managers is built upon controlling staff, setting rules and creating stability whereas leaders focus on setting visions and directing employees towards achieving them. Leaders support and motivate followers and encourage them to align their personal needs with the organization's objectives. Leaders must ensure the fulfillment of both the motives of subordinates and the company's objectives. This assures that both leader and staff members work towards the same vision. Currently, traditional leadership approaches used in the hospitality industry are no longer effective in motivating, involving and empowering workforce, particularly when considering the complexity of the contemporary world [17].

#### A. Leadership Styles

Miller et al. [18] defined leadership style as the pattern of behavior used by leaders in the workplace to interact and communicate with their subordinates. This includes the ways used by leaders to control and direct subordinates along with the techniques used to encourage employees to implement instructions. Leadership style is regarded as a combination of behaviors, traits and skills in which leaders can use in behaving towards employees [19]. Leadership styles can be categorized according to leaders' power and behavior into: democratic, autocratic and laissez-faire. This reflects the influence of leaders on subordinates [20]. The democratic (participative) leadership style indicates that leaders share their subordinates the authority of decision making [21]. With participative/democratic leadership style, leaders should have the ability to control and manage discussion, maintain effective communication with and between the group members, resolve conflicting issues and make all the followers comfortable to give their point of view. Most employees appreciate the trust they get from their leaders and react with high spirit, passion and cooperation. Democratic leaders set plans in place in which followers can use to assess their performance, develop their abilities and get promoted [22]. Despite its advantages in developing effective relationships with followers participative/democratic leaders should know how to deal with employees' faults and when to take decisive and strong action. Employees should understand that having a good relationship with the manager does not mean that they will be safe from punishment when making mistakes [23].

The autocratic (dictatorial) leadership style implies that leaders keep the whole power and authority in their hands and decision taken without sharing employees [21]. Autocratic leadership influences employees' mood negatively. Autocratic leaders use their power to force their decisions and extensively to control and force their followers to work according to their instructions. They do not allow any opposition from staff and always take strict action against them [23]. The autocratic leader is described as task-focused in which leaders allocate tasks to members and make all the decisions. Autocratic leadership style has many drawbacks: it limits employees' creativity and innovation as subordinates are not allowed to participate in decision-taking or think about work-related issues. Furthermore, this leadership style makes a distance between leaders and team members, an issue which has negative consequences on job satisfaction and commitment [22]. It is considered a destructive leadership behavior. However, autocratic leadership has the advantages of getting things done quickly, listening to the leader and allowing followers to realize when their behavior is not acceptable [24].

Besides, laissez-faire is a leadership pattern in which employees will be given the power and authority to set goals and managers will provide little directions to subordinates [25]. Bass and Riggio [26] added that there is little or no interface between leaders and employees by following laissez-faire leadership style. Leaders do not consider the needs of employees and rarely provide feedback and guides to followers. The process of decision making is always delayed.

Since there is no control or guidance provided by leaders following this leadership style incorrect decisions can result in destructive consequences on organizations [27]. With the absence of leader's control some team members can dominate the group's decision. Therefore laissez-faire is considered a destructive leadership behavior [22]. Egri and Herman [28] added that laissez-faire leadership can be described as 'hands-off' approach. This style is not effective in situations where subordinates do not have the necessary knowledge or experience to fulfill their tasks and make decisions. Erkutlu and Chafra [29] found that laissez-faire leadership style had negative consequences on organizational performance in boutique hotels. Following this style will make employees less satisfied, highly stressed and less committed to their organizations.

Transactional leadership is a traditional pattern of leadership centered on the leader-follower exchange to accomplish business's targets and keep stability and control of workforce. The exchange process implies that leaders will reward followers (e.g. high salary) for good performance or punish them for bad work [30], [31]. This style of leadership emphasizes the role of leaders in monitoring subordinates, detecting mistakes and setting appropriate actions to solve problems [32]. Bass [33] revealed that transactional leadership involves three main components: contingent reward, management by exception (active) and management by exception (passive). First, contingent reward is explained by setting goals for employees to be met and performance will be assessed and then rewarded or sanctioned accordingly. Contingent reward is centered on the interaction between leaders and followers. Second, active management by exception means that leader actively involved with followers and intervenes when there is a diversion on planned rules and standards and takes corrective action. Third, passive management by exception implies that leader intervenes only when there is a big issue and/or problem occurred such as when targets are not met [34].

Transformational leadership consists of four main parts: idealized influence; inspirational motivation; intellectual stimulation; individualized consideration [33]. Idealized influence indicates that leaders can act as strong models for subordinates. Leaders were respected, appreciated and trusted by followers. It emphasizes high level of ethical, values and spiritual behavior [35]. Inspirational motivation implies that leaders should have the ability to enhance the motivation of followers beyond their expectations. It involves challenging followers to perform tasks and inspiring their emotions [36]. Inspirational motivation can be used to stimulate subordinates to recognize new tasks as a challenge, think creatively about the work problems and increase followers' confidence in their abilities to provide creative solutions [37]. Intellectual stimulation is another important dimension of transformational leadership. It indicates the capability of leaders to encourage subordinates' rationality, intelligence and problem solving [34]. Intellectual stimulation emphasizes the leaders' capability to engage followers, challenge them to handle problems themselves and motivate followers to reconsider old

business practices in creative ways [38]. Individualized consideration refers that leader focuses on employee's needs and emotions and attempt to fulfill such needs towards achieving excellent performance. Transformational leader's behavior centers on engaging followers in organizational goals and motivating them to perform beyond their expected levels. Leaders reward employees when they did extra efforts and achieved better work outcomes [39].

Ethical leadership is the demonstration and reinforcement of an appropriate conduct that organizes personal action and interpersonal relationships and communicates such conduct to followers. It entails creating open communication and developing ethical culture and behavior among subordinates. There are several features distinguish ethical leader including a strong belief in fairness, trustworthy, transparent and kindness [40]. De Hoogh and Den Hartog [41] identified three main components of ethical leadership, including: ethical role clarification, morality and fairness and power sharing. Ethical leader maintains justice at the workplace and puts great effort in encouraging followers to follow the principles and moral standards. The core component of ethical leadership is the leader's fair and concern for morality. Ethical leadership proved to have a positive influence on job performance. It was found that ethical leadership increased positive work results, employees' commitment and job involvement in the context of public and private sector in India [42].

Abomeh [5] assessed various leadership styles used by lodging businesses and found that leadership styles did not have an equal influence on business performance. Transformational leadership had the largest positive effect on hospitality businesses. The study concluded that transformational leadership is the most relevant and efficient style used in the hospitality sector. Babaita et al. [43] pointed out that effective leader should recognize, use and combine different leadership styles in order to be successful. Managers should adapt their leadership style to the situation that occurred. Saner and Eyupoglu [4] examined the impact of gender on leaders' behavior in five star hotels in North Cyprus and found that there was no statistical significant differences between male's and female's leadership behavior. This indicated that gender had no influence on leadership behavior among hotel managers in North Cyprus. They also found that democratic leadership was the style that was highly preferred and employed by hotel managers.

### *B. Employees' Creativity*

Creativity is about employees' using of their knowledge, aptitudes, experiences and visions to solve problems, accomplish their duties in effective ways and create ideas for decision making. The organization must provide a number of factors to create an atmosphere supporting to organizational creativity, including: allocating time and resources, providing training opportunities for competence-building and problem solving, setting clear targets and vision, developing a reward and recognition system for praising staff who made innovative efforts [8]. De Jong and Den Hartog [44] identified that three contextual factors act as motivators for individual employee's

creativity and innovation in organizations, including: leadership, working environment and organization's support. Leadership is an important contextual factor influencing creativity of employees [45]. Leaders must set an effective vision to encourage creativity and communicate it to followers via formal and/or informal communication channels [10].

Akbar et al. [46] used structural equation modeling and found that transactional leadership style had significant positive impact on employees' creativity. This style of leadership clearly identifies responsibilities and work roles for subordinates and provides appropriate rewards suitable to their performance. Slatten et al. [47] investigated the issue of creativity in Norway hotel industry and found that empowering leadership had a strong positive relationship with employee's innovation and creativity in frontline jobs. Empowering behaviors indicates that employees are given the authority and autonomy to act freely and make decision without direct supervision. It provides employees with considerable responsibility in dealing with problems and achieving duties creatively [48]. Shin and Zhou [45] identified a significant positive correlation between transformational leadership and creativity of subordinates. It focuses on providing employees with inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration. They found that transformational leadership style had more favorable effects on the creativity of subordinates in comparison to transactional style. According to Akbar et al. [46], transformational leaders empower followers and give them the authority to act freely, challenge employees' perceptions and give them the chance to set and implement new ideas.

### C. Organizational Commitment

Allen and Meyer [49] defined organizational commitment as the psychological attachment of an employee to a specific organization which leads the employee to keep on working in the organization. Organizational commitment is the employees' sense of loyalty towards their organization. It is a process by which staff members show concern for their organization, its achievements and well-being. Allen and Meyer [49] pointed out that organizational commitment involves three main dimensions: affective, normative and

continuance commitment. (1) Affective commitment – the employees emotionally attached to the organization. They are involved in setting organizational goals and are willing to accomplish these goals. (2) Continuance commitment – the employees often decide to stay and continue working in an organization because it will be expensive to leave it and difficult to search and/or find out another effective work opportunities. (3) Normative commitment – employees believe that they have to stay within the organization because it is the proper action to do. Lim et al. [50] revealed that leaders' adoption of transformational leadership can improve employees' job satisfaction and organizational commitment whereas reducing turnover intention.

Dlamini et al. [11] identified a strong positive correlation between transformational leadership and affective commitment. This reflects that employees will be more enthusiastic to achieve organization goals if their leaders trust, support and encourage their innovation. Those employees continue working for the organization as they feel accepted by their leaders. In addition, there was a modest relationship between transformational leadership and continuance and normative commitment. This indicates that employees may continue working for an organization because of the absence of job substitutes and sacrifices linked with leaving. In order to enhance employees' organizational commitment, the management must consider empowering employees and assisting them to align personal goals with the company's organizational objectives [50].

### D. Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework was developed guiding this study based on previous research and empirical evidences. The focus of this research is to evaluate leadership styles applied and determine its effect on employees' creativity and organizational commitment in the context of four star hotel sector. The model identifies six leadership styles act as independent variables, including: democratic, autocratic, laissez-faire, transformational, transactional and ethical leadership. These leadership styles supposed to influence and explain the variance in employees' creativity and organizational commitment (dependent variables) (see Fig. 1).

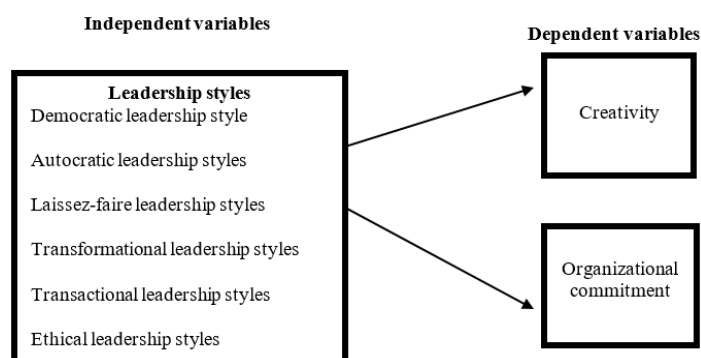


Fig. 1 Conceptual framework

## IV. METHODOLOGY

This research uses quantitative approach to explore frontline managers' styles of leadership in four star hotels in Cairo and assess its consequences on employees' creativity and organizational commitment. A questionnaire survey was developed to examine the research issue. A total of 40 statements were developed to measure six leadership patterns that might be practiced by frontline managers in four star hotels. The questionnaire was formulated based on previous research. The statements used to describe democratic and autocratic leadership were built upon previous surveys i.e. [51], [23] while items of ethical leadership were based on former research i.e. [40], [41]. Moreover, the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) was adapted to determine transformational, transactional and laissez-faire leadership styles as it is broadly known as a standard, reliable and valid tool for assessing these patterns of leadership [52].

The questionnaire consists of two parts. The first part is concerned with identifying sample's demographics to recognize the type of respondent in terms of age, gender, experience and educational level. The second part involves 40 statements designed to measure and describe leadership style adopted by frontline managers from the perspective of subordinates (democratic, autocratic, laissez-faire, transformational, transactional and ethical). Also, this part focuses on determining to which extent leaders' strategy encourages employees' creativity and organizational commitment. For validation purposes, the survey was reviewed by some experts in the area of leadership and a number of staff working in the hotel sector to ensure the accuracy of statements and there was no misunderstanding. Reviewers' comments were considered and the survey was modified accordingly. The questionnaire survey was self-administered and distributed on employees in four star hotels in Cairo particularly staff of front office, housekeeping and food and beverage departments. Sum of 472 forms were distributed. Only 292 forms were returned achieving a response rate of 61.9%. Among them, eight completed questionnaires were removed as they were not correctly filled. All statements were closed-ended in nature and participants were asked to evaluate the items based on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1- Never applied to 5 - Always Applied. All respondents were informed that the information given would be used only for research purposes and confidentiality of the information is top priority. This action is crucial to remove the anxiety as respondents will assess their superiors' leadership behavior. They were given a period of time (3-4 weeks) to answer the survey freely.

A list of four star hotels in Cairo was developed involving 17 hotels based in Egyptian hotel guides and marketing sources. All hotels identified were targeted and a probability sampling approach was used to select a sample of staff working in Cairo's four star hotels in which all employees had the same opportunity to take part in this study. The statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 18 was used to analyze the data obtained. Descriptive analysis involving percentages of frequencies, mean and standard deviation was

used in this study. Pearson Correlation was utilized to determine the relationship between variables. Besides, Linear Regression test was employed to assess the influence of each of leadership style as the independent variable on employees' creativity and organizational commitment as the dependent variable.

## V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

## A. Sample Characteristics

Preliminary results showed a normal distribution of the sample as skewness and kurtosis's values for most constructs ranged between -1 and +1 and this was the acceptable level (see Table I). The features of the sample showed that 66.2% of participants were male and 33.8% were female. In addition, a large proportion of respondents (41.5%) were aged between 20 to 30 years followed by 35.6% between 31- 45 years while 13.4% of respondents were over 45 years and 9.5% were aged less than 20 years. The educational level of respondents revealed that the highest proportion of the sample had a bachelor degree (67.6%) while 29.6% of participants had intermediate education and only 2.8% had a post graduate education like diploma, master's etc. Finally, the experience level of participants was varied. Most participants (42.3%) had experience between a year to 3 years whereas 28.2% fell between 3 to 5 years of experience, followed by 18.3% of participants had experience less than a year and 11.3% had an experience more than 5 years.

TABLE I  
SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

|                                 | Frequency | Percent % | Mean   | Skewness | Kurtosis |
|---------------------------------|-----------|-----------|--------|----------|----------|
| Gender:                         |           |           |        |          |          |
| Male                            | 188       | 66.2      | 1.3380 | 688.     | 1.537-   |
| Female                          | 96        | 33.8      |        |          |          |
| Age                             |           |           |        |          |          |
| Less than 20 years              | 27        | 9.5       | 2.5282 | 107.     | 596.-    |
| From 20 to 30 years             | 118       | 41.5      |        |          |          |
| From 31 to 45 years             | 101       | 35.6      |        |          |          |
| Over 45                         | 38        | 13.4      |        |          |          |
| Education:                      |           |           |        |          |          |
| Intermediate certificate        | 84        | 29.6      | 1.7324 | 364.-    | 454.-    |
| Bachelor degree                 | 192       | 67.6      |        |          |          |
| Post graduate (diploma, master) | 8         | 2.8       |        |          |          |
| Other                           | 0         | 0         |        |          |          |
| Experience:                     |           |           |        |          |          |
| Less than a year                | 52        | 18.3      | 2.3239 | 246.     | 685.-    |
| From a year to 3 years          | 120       | 42.3      |        |          |          |
| From 3 years to 5 years         | 80        | 28.2      |        |          |          |
| More than 5 years               | 32        | 11.3      |        |          |          |

## B. Leadership Styles Implemented in Four Star Hotels Sector

This research explored the implementation of six styles of leadership in four star hotels. The results revealed that transactional leadership was the most applied style of leadership by frontline managers in four star hotels as the Grand Mean was 3.805 (see Table II). This was followed by the autocratic leadership (3.501), laissez-faire leadership

(3.405), transformational leadership (3.135), democratic leadership (2.799) and finally ethical leadership (2.573) respectively. Most of the practices involved in transactional leadership were highly adopted. The majority of respondents referred that their managers motivated staff to achieve organizational targets by giving them rewards and/or punishment. Managers did not intervene in work processes and/or take action unless problems occurred. Therefore, they spend much time handling faults and failures made by staff. The results also showed that autocratic leadership was highly implemented by managers. Most participants indicated that the whole power and authority was on the hands of managers. They intimidated staff with punishment to accomplish targets and monitored employees very closely while doing their work. Moreover, laissez-faire leadership was robustly followed by many managers in leading staff. More than half of participants demonstrated that managers keep away from staff while doing their work and never handle significant problems emerged in work. Instead they require all staff to deal with issues/problems themselves without intervention.

Overall transformational leadership was occasionally

applied. Most managers did not have an idealized influence over their subordinates. The majority of participants indicated that their leaders occasionally demonstrated their beliefs and values to staff. In terms of intellectual stimulation, most participants showed that their leaders seldom encourage staff to act creatively and reconsider old practices in new manners. They rarely search for different views and opinions from staff when handling problems. In respect of individualized consideration, most managers did not provide sufficient support to staff to develop their skills and capabilities or even care about their individual needs and well-being. Furthermore, Democratic leadership was ranked fifth as a leadership style adopted by frontline managers in hotels. More than two thirds of participants showed that their leaders were not democratic. They did not apply democratic practices i.e. providing a work environment that enables subordinates to participate in the decision-making process; requesting staff to set up and apply their views in developing their jobs and guiding staff without pressure. Finally, ethical leadership was lastly followed by frontline managers. This pattern of leadership was low and/or occasionally implemented in most of its actions (see Table II).

TABLE II  
LEADERSHIP STYLES IMPLEMENTED IN FOUR STAR HOTELS SECTOR

| Statements of leadership patterns   | Never applied % | Little applied % | Occasionally applied % | Often applied % | Always applied % | Mean  | SD Deviation |
|---|-----------------|------------------|------------------------|-----------------|------------------|-------|--------------|
| <b>Democratic leadership style</b>  |                 |                  |                        |                 |                  |       |              |
| Encourage all employees to set up their thoughts for developing hotel's future plans                  | 31.7            | 22.9             | 14.1                   | 16.2            | 15.1             | 2.602 | 1.453        |
| Create a work environment where all staff have the option to take-part in the decision making process | 39.4            | 22.5             | 14.8                   | 12.3            | 10.9             | 2.989 | 1.384        |
| Demand staff to put forward their visions on developing their jobs and apply the proper visions       | 31.0            | 25.0             | 12.3                   | 18.3            | 13.4             | 2.581 | 1.428        |
| Provide guidance to staff without pressure  | 27.8            | 23.9             | 20.1                   | 16.9            | 11.3             | 2.598 | 1.348        |
| Maintain an effective communication with all staff  | 12.7            | 19.4             | 20.8                   | 26.8            | 20.4             | 3.228 | 1.318        |
| Grand Mean  |                 |                  |                        |                 |                  | 2.799 |              |
| <b>Autocratic leadership style</b>  |                 |                  |                        |                 |                  |       |              |
| Retain the authority to make the final decision   | 2.1             | 8.5              | 13.7                   | 29.2            | 46.5             | 4.095 | 1.060        |
| Do not take into account suggestions and/or thoughts made by staff                                    | 12.7            | 13.4             | 18.3                   | 25.0            | 30.6             | 3.475 | 1.377        |
| Give staff the instructions on what to do and how to do it  | 9.9             | 11.3             | 14.1                   | 22.5            | 42.3             | 3.760 | 1.360        |
| Observe employees closely to make sure they are well-performing.                                      | 12.3            | 16.2             | 13.4                   | 27.8            | 30.3             | 3.475 | 1.387        |
| Use the power of his position to give commands  | 14.1            | 16.5             | 14.8                   | 28.5            | 26.1             | 3.359 | 1.390        |
| Always threatened staff with punishment to achieve goals  | 16.9            | 18.3             | 19.7                   | 21.1            | 23.9             | 3.169 | 1.416        |
| Believe that most staff are unconfident about their performance and always need guidance              | 16.2            | 19.0             | 20.4                   | 19.7            | 24.6             | 3.176 | 1.413        |
| Grand Mean  |                 |                  |                        |                 |                  | 3.501 |              |
| <b>Laissez-faire leadership style</b>   |                 |                  |                        |                 |                  |       |              |
| Allow staff to continuously use the same ways in working  | 4.9             | 22.9             | 16.9                   | 25.7            | 29.6             | 3.521 | 1.265        |
| Avert getting involved when significant issues arise in work  | 14.8            | 13.0             | 18.3                   | 29.6            | 24.3             | 3.355 | 1.367        |
| Keep away from subordinates while doing their job.  | 11.6            | 15.5             | 12.7                   | 33.8            | 26.4             | 3.478 | 1.338        |
| Give the absolute chance to subordinates to deal with issues alone                                    | 13.0            | 18.7             | 17.3                   | 27.5            | 23.6             | 3.299 | 1.357        |
| Think that laborers lean toward little entering from leaders in work                                  | 16.9            | 14.1             | 13.0                   | 26.8            | 29.2             | 3.373 | 1.456        |
| Grand Mean  |                 |                  |                        |                 |                  | 3.405 |              |
| <b>Transformational leadership style</b>  |                 |                  |                        |                 |                  |       |              |
| <b>Idealized influence</b>  |                 |                  |                        |                 |                  |       |              |
| Talk about his significant convictions and values and subordinates have total confidence in him       | 22.2            | 26.8             | 26.1                   | 15.8            | 9.2              | 2.630 | 1.244        |
| Think about the good and moral outcomes of decisions  | 16.2            | 19.0             | 25.4                   | 17.6            | 21.8             | 3.098 | 1.372        |
| Act in manners that bring others' regard for him  | 2.8             | 5.3              | 34.2                   | 32.7            | 25.0             | 3.718 | .9901        |
| <b>Inspirational motivation</b>   |                 |                  |                        |                 |                  |       |              |

| Statements of leadership patterns   | Never applied % | Little applied % | Occasionally applied % | Often applied % | Always applied % | Mean  | SD Deviation |
|---|-----------------|------------------|------------------------|-----------------|------------------|-------|--------------|
| Talk excitedly about what should be achieved  | 8.5             | 16.5             | 19.7                   | 29.6            | 25.7             | 3.475 | 1.267        |
| Express certainty that objectives will be attained  | 2.1             | 7.4              | 23.9                   | 34.2            | 32.4             | 3.873 | 1.018        |
| Intellectual stimulation  |                 |                  |                        |                 |                  |       |              |
| Empower staff to consider old issues in new manners   | 19.0            | 25.7             | 25.0                   | 12.3            | 18.0             | 2.845 | 1.357        |
| Look for different points of view when tackling problems  | 22.2            | 28.5             | 19.7                   | 15.5            | 14.1             | 2.707 | 1.346        |
| Individualized consideration  |                 |                  |                        |                 |                  |       |              |
| Assist subordinates to develop their skills and capabilities  | 13.7            | 25.4             | 21.1                   | 22.9            | 16.9             | 3.038 | 1.308        |
| Consider staff personal needs and well-being  | 26.1            | 20.4             | 15.1                   | 21.1            | 17.3             | 2.831 | 1.458        |
| Grand Mean  |                 |                  |                        |                 |                  | 3.135 |              |
| Transactional leadership style  |                 |                  |                        |                 |                  |       |              |
| Contingent reward   |                 |                  |                        |                 |                  |       |              |
| Explain to staff what to do if they want to get remunerated   | 8.5             | 13.4             | 18.7                   | 30.3            | 29.2             | 3.584 | 1.267        |
| Talk in explicit terms who is accountable for accomplishing targets   | 5.3             | 12.3             | 20.8                   | 29.2            | 32.4             | 3.711 | 1.192        |
| Believe that workers must be given remunerates or disciplines so as to encourage them to accomplish organizational targets. | 6.3             | 7.7              | 16.5                   | 31.0            | 38.4             | 3.873 | 1.191        |
| Management by exception (active)  |                 |                  |                        |                 |                  |       |              |
| Be content when subordinates fulfill agreed standards   | 0               | 0                | 0                      | 12.3            | 87.7             | 4.876 | .3292        |
| Advise subordinates about work standards to do their duties   | 4.2             | 13.4             | 14.8                   | 37.3            | 30.3             | 3.760 | 1.146        |
| Focus on handling errors, failures and objections   | 13.7            | 14.1             | 16.9                   | 26.8            | 28.5             | 3.422 | 1.388        |
| Management by exception (passive)   |                 |                  |                        |                 |                  |       |              |
| Do not attempt to alter anything providing that things working  | 9.2             | 16.5             | 18.3                   | 23.6            | 32.4             | 3.535 | 1.335        |
| Do not undertake action until things turn out badly   | 8.8             | 12.7             | 14.8                   | 29.2            | 34.5             | 3.679 | 1.302        |
| Grand Mean  |                 |                  |                        |                 |                  | 3.805 |              |
| Ethical leadership style  |                 |                  |                        |                 |                  |       |              |
| Develop high moral measures for his conduct towards workers and abide by those standards                                    | 31.0            | 27.8             | 23.9                   | 11.3            | 6.0              | 2.334 | 1.196        |
| Treat all staff fairly and undertake equitable decisions  | 16.2            | 26.1             | 18.0                   | 22.2            | 17.6             | 2.327 | 1.356        |
| Undertake followers' point of views in critical decisions   | 28.2            | 22.9             | 19.0                   | 16.9            | 13.0             | 2.637 | 1.386        |
| Explain integrity and ethical guidelines in which staff can reflect it in their behavior                                    | 22.5            | 25.4             | 15.1                   | 18.0            | 19.0             | 2.855 | 1.442        |
| Punish staff who disregard moral standards  | 31.3            | 27.5             | 18.7                   | 12.7            | 9.9              | 2.422 | 1.312        |
| Believe that success is not only measured by results but also how they achieve it   | 20.8            | 22.9             | 21.8                   | 18.0            | 16.5             | 2.866 | 1.374        |
| Grand Mean  |                 |                  |                        |                 |                  | 2.573 |              |

These results implied that transactional leadership followed by autocratic leadership were the most patterns used by frontline managers in leading their subordinates. Thus, Hypothesis 1 is rejected:

- *H1: Democratic and transformational leadership styles are the prevalent styles used in the hotel sector.*

These findings contradict with previous research [4], [51], [5] that indicated that democratic and transformational leadership styles were greatly implemented by managers in the hospitality sector. Saner and Eyupoglu [4] examined the effect of gender on the behavior of leaders in five-star hotels in North Cyprus and found that hotel managers highly preferred and implemented democratic leadership style. Similarly, Al-Ababneh [51] investigated the effect of leadership in five-star hotels in Jordan on job satisfaction and found that democratic leadership was the dominant style used in Jordanian hotels. Al-Ababneh showed that the democratic style was the most suitable pattern for managing hotels. Abomeh [5] investigated leadership patterns in hospitality firms and found that transformational leadership was the most style applied by hospitality managers and had favorable consequences on businesses.

Although transactional leadership was the most

implemented style by frontline managers in four-star hotels, previous studies indicated that the transactional pattern was less effective in engaging and/or motivating followers. Transactional leaders manage followers using rewards or punishments techniques. They focus on their faults and do not intervene in work until a big issue occurs [30], [31]. Moreover, autocratic leadership comes in the second position between leadership styles investigated. However autocratic leaders keep the authority and never allow followers to participate in decision-making [21]. This type of leadership makes employees feel stressful and demotivated as a result of being not respected and forced to do things without their opinions listened to [23]. The results also determined that laissez-faire leadership ranked third as a style adopted by frontline managers. Previous research [27], [28] revealed that this leadership style can result in negative consequences on organizations since there is no control or guidance provided by leaders and also employees lack the experience and/or knowledge to perform their duties or undertake work-related decisions.

Despite the positive consequences of adopting transformational or democratic leadership style on business, the results of this study indicated that both leadership styles

were low utilized by frontline managers in administering their subordinates. Transformational leadership involves providing support, motivation and development to followers [53]. Transformational leader motivates employees to think creatively and consider the individual needs and capabilities for every employee and assist in developing employees' confidence levels [37], [53]. Similarly, the democratic leader keeps employees informed about all aspects that influence their performance and makes them take-part in problem solving and decision making. Democratic leadership style can enhance employees' productivity [21].

### C. The Relationship between Leadership Styles and Employees' Creativity and Organizational Commitment

The Pearson correlation test was used to identify the association between the study variables including: leadership patterns and employees' motivation and organizational commitment. The findings revealed that employees' creativity and organizational commitment were high positively connected (.622) and statistically significant at the level of .05 (see Table III). This reflects that when employees have greater sense of commitment to the organization they will be more innovative and creative in doing their jobs. This finding is consistent with Natarajan [54], who showed that organizational commitment had positive consequences on the operation's outcomes. It can lead to an increased level of job satisfaction, better quality and innovation, higher levels of performance and production and reduced levels of employees' absenteeism and turnover.

The results showed a strong positive correlation between employees' creativity and two leadership styles including: transformational leadership (.715) and democratic leadership (.705) which was significant at the level of 0.05. A very modest positive correlation was identified and at the same time insignificant between employees' creativity and transactional leadership (.263), ethical leadership (.217) and laissez-faire leadership (.206). Furthermore, a strong significant positive correlation was identified between employees' organizational commitment and the patterns of

democratic leadership (.790  $p < 0.05$ ) and transformational leadership (.732  $p < 0.05$ ). The ethical leadership maintained a significant moderate correlation with employees' commitment (.344  $p < 0.05$ ). While the other leadership styles were positively associated with employees' organizational commitment but such correlation was marked as very weak and not significant for transactional leadership (.220) and laissez-faire leadership (.211). On the other hand, autocratic leadership had a high negative association with employees' creativity (-.776  $p < 0.05$ ) and organizational commitment (-.530  $p < 0.05$ ). This leadership is described as authoritarian in which leaders have the ultimate power and free to make decisions, draw plans and policies for the organization without giving subordinates any importance. These findings refer that hypothesis 2 can be accepted:

- *H2: There is a high significant correlation between leadership styles (democratic, autocratic and transformational) and employees' organizational commitment and creativity behavior.*

These findings reflect that transformational and democratic leadership were highly associated with employees' creativity and organizational commitment. This can be explained by the fact that transformational leadership through its main constructs (idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized considerations) provides a number of mechanisms that raises the morale of subordinates and boosts their motivation and creativity to achieve the desired objectives. Transformational leader considers the personal interests of followers and inspires them to develop creative methods of problem solving and continually strives to develop subordinate skills. Moreover, democratic leadership depends on developing good relations between the leader and individuals by satisfying their needs and caring for them. Democratic leaders recognize the importance of employees' role in the organization. They believe in the abilities of their subordinates in making decisions related to their work. They always consult with their followers and lend their ideas the necessary attention.

TABLE III  
CORRELATION BETWEEN LEADERSHIP STYLES AND EMPLOYEES' CREATIVITY AND ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

| Variables                               | 1      | 2      | 3     | 4      | 5     | 6     | 7    | 8 |
|---|--------|--------|-------|--------|-------|-------|------|---|
| 1- Employees' creativity                | 1      |        |       |        |       |       |      |   |
| 2- Employees' organizational commitment | .622*  | 1      |       |        |       |       |      |   |
| 3- Democratic leadership                | .705*  | .790*  | 1     |        |       |       |      |   |
| 4- Autocratic leadership                | -.776* | -.530* | -.477 | 1      |       |       |      |   |
| 5- Laissez-faire leadership             | .206   | .211   | .141  | -.050  | 1     |       |      |   |
| 6- Transformational leadership          | .715*  | .732*  | .408  | -.124  | .137  | 1     |      |   |
| 7- Transactional leadership             | .263   | .220   | .107  | -.012  | -.136 | -.074 | 1    |   |
| 8- Ethical leadership                   | .217   | .344*  | .129  | -.322* | .363  | .205  | .121 | 1 |

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

### D. The Impact of Leadership Styles on Employees' Creativity

A multiple regression is utilized to assess the impact of leadership styles on employees' creativity. The results revealed that coefficient R Square is .438 which indicates that

43% of employees' creativity is ascribed to the leadership manner adopted by frontline managers in leading their subordinates (see Table IV). The model shows that F value is 12.606 with sig.  $p < .01$ . This means that the null hypothesis is rejected and so there is a significant relationship between all



and/or at least one of the investigated leadership patterns and the dependent variable (employees' creativity). The results determined that transformational leadership had the largest positive effect on employees' creativity amongst leadership patterns investigated as transformational leadership had the highest beta value with sig. = .000 ( $\beta = .358$   $t = 4.383$ ,  $p < .01$ ) followed by democratic leadership ( $\beta = .223$   $t = 2.808$ ,  $p < .05$ ) and finally laissez-faire leadership occupied the third position ( $\beta = .161$   $t = 2.128$ ,  $p < .05$ ). The regression also identified that autocratic leadership had significant negative effect on employees' creativity ( $\beta = -.255$   $t = -2.933$ ,  $p < .05$ ). The other leadership patterns including: transactional and ethical leaderships do not significantly effect on employees' creativity, as the p-value is greater than .05. These findings indicate that hypothesis 3 can be accepted:

- *H3: Transformational, democratic and laissez-faire leadership are the most styles contribute significantly to improve employees' creativity.*

TABLE IV  
REGRESSION ANALYSIS MODEL

| Model                       | Unstandardized Coefficient |            | Standardized Coefficients Beta | t      | Sig. |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|------------|--------------------------------|--------|------|
|                             | B                          | Std. Error |                                |        |      |
| (Constant)                  | 2.963                      | 1.009      |                                | 2.937  | .000 |
| Democratic leadership       | .197                       | .070       | .223                           | 2.808  | .002 |
| Autocratic leadership       | -.236                      | .080       | -.255                          | -2.933 | .004 |
| Laissez-faire leadership    | .142                       | .067       | .161                           | 2.128  | .043 |
| Transformational leadership | .360                       | .082       | .358                           | 4.383  | .000 |
| Transactional leadership    | .120                       | .069       | .129                           | 1.733  | .085 |
| Ethical leadership          | .100                       | .082       | .106                           | 1.217  | .226 |
| R Square                    |                            |            | .438                           |        |      |
| Adjusted R Square           |                            |            | .403                           |        |      |
| F-value                     |                            |            | 12.606**                       |        |      |
| Sig. F                      |                            |            | .000                           |        |      |

a. Dependent Variable: Employees' creativity

These results agreed with empirical research [45] which showed that transformational leadership was the greatest significant pattern affecting subordinates' creativity. Transformational leadership had positive consequences on employees' creativity in contrast with transactional style. Nusair et al. [55] found that transformational leadership alone was responsible on 47% of variations in employees' innovative work behavior. According to Akbar et al. [46], transformational leadership provides the base for increasing employees' creativity by motivating followers, communicating with them and providing opportunities for growth and development. Transformational leaders always have vision and support followers to do challenging tasks and thus affect employees' creativity. Furthermore, Judge et al. [56] identified a positive effect of participative (democratic) leadership on employees' innovation. De Jong and Den Hartog [44] found that employees' participation in decision making was considered a significant determinant of creative behavior. Janssen [57] showed that employees will be engaged in more

creative activities if they perceive that their leaders are supportive. The results of this study also identified that autocratic leadership had significant negative influence on employees' creativity. This agreed with Kagwiria [22] revealed that autocratic leadership style restricted employees' innovation and participation as employees were not given the chance to think about work problems.

#### *E. The Impact of Leadership Styles on Employees' Organizational Commitment*

Table V shows the results of regression analysis test in respect of identifying the effect of independent variables that involve six leadership patterns on employees' organizational commitment as a dependent variable. The model revealed that the R square value was .382. This means that the leadership style followed contributes with 38% of the prediction of employees' organizational commitment. The F-value is 8.563 and significant at the level .01. This reflects the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis that there is a statistical significant relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The results identified three leadership styles positively influence employees' organizational commitment respectively, including: transformational leadership ( $\beta = .390$   $t = 4.769$ ,  $p < .01$ ), democratic leadership ( $\beta = .288$   $t = 4.014$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and ethical leadership ( $\beta = .158$   $t = 2.068$ ,  $p < .05$ ). While the autocratic leadership was found had negative influence on employees' organization commitment and significant at the level of .01 ( $\beta = -.285$   $t = -3.833$ ,  $p < .01$ ). In addition, both laissez-faire and transactional leadership patterns did not have significant effect on enhancing employees' organizational commitment as the p-value is greater than .05. These results reflect that hypothesis 4 can be accepted:

- *H4: Leadership styles (democratic, autocratic, transformational and ethical) are the most patterns of leadership significantly influence employees' organizational commitment.*

TABLE V  
REGRESSION ANALYSIS MODEL

| Model                       | Unstandardized Coefficient |            | Standardized Coefficients Beta | t      | Sig. |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|------------|--------------------------------|--------|------|
|                             | B                          | Std. Error |                                |        |      |
| (Constant)                  | 2.274                      | .793       |                                | 2.866  | .000 |
| Democratic leadership       | .254                       | .063       | .288                           | 4.014  | .000 |
| Autocratic leadership       | -.264                      | .069       | -.285                          | -3.833 | .000 |
| Laissez-faire leadership    | .039                       | .079       | .043                           | .494   | .622 |
| Transformational leadership | .391                       | .082       | .390                           | 4.769  | .000 |
| Transactional leadership    | .021                       | .065       | .024                           | .327   | .744 |
| Ethical leadership          | .171                       | .083       | .158                           | 2.068  | .040 |
| R Square                    |                            |            | .382                           |        |      |
| Adjusted R Square           |                            |            | .314                           |        |      |
| F-value                     |                            |            | 8.563**                        |        |      |
| Sig. F                      |                            |            | .000                           |        |      |

a. Dependent Variable: Employees' organizational commitment

These findings are consistent with Al-Ababneh [51], who found that democratic leadership style had a significant impact on job satisfaction and commitment in five-star hotels in

Jordan. In addition, Kagwiria [22] showed that autocratic leadership had a great negative influence on employees' commitment as autocratic leaders keep away from their team members and have poor relations and communications with them. Previous research [53], [50] also showed that transformational leadership can move employees' performance beyond expectations and enhance employees' job satisfaction and organizational commitment while reducing their intentions to leave the organization. The results also agreed with Khuntia and Suar [42] found that ethical leadership positively influenced employees' performance, commitment and job involvement in the setting of Indian public and private sectors.

## VI. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Leadership is considered an important aspect largely contributes to hotel success. There are ranges of old and modern leadership patterns in which frontline hotel managers can use to lead their subordinates. This study investigates the implementation of six leadership styles in four-star hotels including: democratic, autocratic, laissez-faire, transformational, transactional and ethical leaderships and evaluate its influence on employees' creativity and organizational commitment. Leadership is considered the key factor that encourages employees' motivation, creativity and organizational commitment. The leadership pattern used can have a profound impact on employees' behavior and attitudes in the work setting which in turn influences customers' demand. The results of this research revealed that transactional leadership followed by autocratic leadership are the dominant styles used in four-star hotels in Egypt. Both styles have adverse consequences on employees' performance, job satisfaction and motivation which badly influence the quality of services provided to customers. The transactional style encompasses drawbacks particularly if there is absence of clear measures to assess employees' performance and in some cases, staff receive rewards that do not meet their expectations as a result of limited resources. Moreover, the autocratic leadership would put staff in very low spirit and feel disappointed as their views and opinions are ignored by their superiors. These traditional styles of leadership are no longer useful in helping hotels to achieve its organizational goals. This implies that hotels' managers should implement effective leadership patterns like transformational and democratic leadership that provide support and interaction with staff. The pattern chosen should consider their views in work-related issues and share with them the responsibility of making decision.

The study identified two leadership patterns including transformational and democratic leadership that were highly associated with employees' creativity and organizational commitment. These patterns were considered strong significant predictors of the two dependent variables. These leadership patterns positively influence and contribute to employees' creativity and organizational commitment. The results also identified a lesser effect of laissez-faire leadership on employees' creativity. Likewise a minor influence exists of

ethical leadership on employees' commitment. On the other side, autocratic leadership proved to have strong negative association and influence on employees' creativity and commitment. This recommends that transformational and/or democratic leadership should be prioritized and used by frontline hotel managers if they need to sustain employees' creativity and commitment. Both styles are built upon empowering staff, respecting them and considering their individual needs. The transformational, along with democratic patterns, encourage staff innovation, creative thinking, loyalty and maintain an effective communication with all subordinates. Finally, the boundaries of this study provide ideas for further research, including: to explore leadership styles from the perspectives of hotel frontline managers, assess more leadership patterns along with those used in this study and determine their effects on employees' creativity and commitment. Future research also can conduct a comparative study by investigating case studies of hotels in different context.

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