

## **Organisational Culture as a Mediator on The Relationship between Leadership style and Organisational Effectiveness: Polish Hotel Industry**

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**Abstract:** The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between leadership style, and organisational effectiveness by taking organisational culture as mediator in Hotel industry in Poland. Studies on the relationship between organisational culture and leadership style, or leadership style and organisational effectiveness have been frequently published. However some gaps remain in the literature on whether organisational culture mediates the relationship between leadership style and organisational effectiveness. For the purpose of this study, the researcher adopted a deductive, quantitative survey research method, in which data collection was done using self-administrated questionnaires that were presented as a hard copy to participants. Questionnaires were then to be returned to the researcher. In total there were 289 respondents to the 950 questionnaires distributed. Overall, the results indicate that organisational culture partially mediate the relationship between leadership style and organisational effectiveness apart from Passive leadership style.

**Keywords:** Leadership Styles, Mediator, Organizational Culture, Organizational Effectiveness.

### **Introduction**

Since 1980s there has been a persistent interest among organisational studies scholars in investigating the impact of organisational culture on different organisational dimensions including leadership style, organisational performance and staff motivation. Scholars such as Schein (2010) and Ogbonna & Harris (2000) have investigated the relationship between organisational culture and leadership also the relationship between culture and organisational effectiveness in large size organisation has been investigated by Peters and Waterman (1982). The impact of leadership and leadership style on organisational effectiveness has always been, and always will be, of interest not only to organisational studies scholars but also practitioner and managers. There are many studies that have investigated the impact of leadership and leaderships style on improving organisational performance (de Poel et al., 2012) or how these factors contribute significantly to the success or failure of any organisation (Lok & Crawford, 2004; Robinson et al., 2008; Wang et al., 2010).

This paper argues that managers in hotel industry attempting to achieve higher organisational effectiveness should not put major emphasis only on leadership style but on the combination of leadership style and organisational culture. This study places an emphasis on the potential mediating role of organisational culture in the leadership-effectiveness relationship because a better understanding of this relationship could provide both researchers and practitioners with insight into how to achieve higher organisational effectiveness. Therefore, this study conducts an empirical investigation by testing if the mediating impact of organisational culture is one possible way that leadership can influence organisational effectiveness.

## **Literature Review**

### **Leadership Styles**

Leadership phenomenon has captured the attention and the interest of many academics in the past decades all over the world within the organizational context since it is crucial role in organizations, and its direct influence on group process and outcomes (Bass, 1990). Furthermore, Leadership has a significant importance in the growth and development of any organization (Schein, 2010). Where, leadership is considered one of the most extensively researched topics in behavioral science. There is no one single definition of the leadership process where, leadership has been studied in different ways in different situations from different researcher's perspectives and methodological preferences (Northouse, 2001; Yukl, 2006).

Additionally, many researchers as well as academics tried to define leadership: Yukl and Van Fleet (1992,p.149): "leadership is a process that includes influencing the task objectives and strategies of a group or organization, influencing people in the organization to implement the strategies and achieve the objectives, influencing group maintenance and identification, and influencing the culture of the organization". Tosi, Rizzo, and Carroll (1994,p.550) suggested, "Leadership is interpersonal influence in which one person is able to gain compliance from another in the direction of organizationally desired goals". Finally, Robbins (2001, p.134) defined leadership "As the ability to influence a group toward the achievement of goals".

### **History and development of Leadership theory**

Leadership as a concept has captured the attention and interest of many researchers and academics in the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century especially in the 1900 with a focus on the theory of "Great Man". Where, this theory emphasized the assumption that leaders are born with special innate qualities and leaders cannot be made. Moreover, this theory referred to leaders as those persons who achieve huge successful stories in military system (Organ, 1996; Bolden, 2004). The trait theory of leadership has emphasized the commonly traits and characteristics that differentiate leaders from their subordinates (Stogdill, 1974; McCall, 1983). Whereas, traits theory has been criticized due to the difficulties related to identification of characteristics related to the leaders. Consequently, another theory of leadership has raised the attention of many research namely Behavior-Traits theories in late of 1960s. In fact, behavioral theory was based on the behaviors and styles that leaders used and adopted (Likert, 1961). Behavioral paradigms were stimulated to know the behavioral aspects of leaders so that people could be trained as leaders or in other words leaders could be made (Robbins and Coulter, 2009). On the other side, the major criticism of the behavioral theory was its great ignorance of the factors that could have an impact on the effectiveness of leaders in different situation of their work life (Mullins, 1999). Few years later, in the late of 1960 till 1980, new school of thought that shed light on situational/contingency theory (Fiedler, 1967; House, 1971). As this theory suggested that leaders effectiveness and performance depends mainly on the situation and specific environment in which leaders are dealing with their followers (Vroom and Yetton, 1974; Griffin, 1999). According, to House, (1971) Contingency Theory has shifted emphasis of leadership from "one best way to lead and manage followers suggested in behavioral theory towards more context-sensitive leadership. At the end of the nineteen-century it appears that the most recent theory of leadership developed by Burns (1978) namely the transformational and transactional leadership. Later on, Bass and Avolio (1993) developed the full-range leadership, which include new style of laissez-faire. Where, Transactional leaders described leaders who focused on exchanging relationship with their subordinates (Bass and Avolio, 1993). While, transformational leaders are argued to be visionary and enthusiastic, with an inherent ability to motivate subordinates (Howell and Avolio, 1993). Finally, Laissez-faire Style: An avoidant leader may either not intervene in the work affairs of subordinates or may

completely avoid responsibilities as a superior and is unlikely to put in effort to build a relationship with them.

### **Organizational Culture**

Researchers as well as human beings at different moments of life in different places all over the world have discussed organizational culture as a terminology from different perspectives and in different situations of life. Organizational culture as a concept has raised the attention of many academics as well as researchers in the last decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, specifically in the 1980's (Smircich, 1983). According Hofstede, study (2001, p. 9) culture is defined as "... the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another." In the same fashion, Shein (2010) stated that culture of a group member was defined as "a pattern of shared basic assumptions that was learned by a group as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems"(p.17, 2010).

At the beginning, Organizational Culture was interchangeably used for with the term of Organizational Climate (Hofstede, 1994). But several studies argued that there exists a difference from the practical or the professional perspectives between the two terminologies (Van den Berg and Wilderson, 2004). According Schein (2010), Organizational culture is defined as the shared values, beliefs, norms, expectations and assumptions which function like a glue holding employees and organization's systems together and stimulating employees' performance and commitment. Whereas, organizational climate was defined as a set of organizational attributes or main effects measured by a variety of methods or as a set of perceptual variables, which are still seen as organizational main effect (James and Jones, 1974; Schneider, 1990).

According to Cameron and Ettington (1988) and Cameron and Quinn (2011) study there exist different perspectives of viewing or investigating culture inside organizations. The first perspective of viewing organizational culture is Anthropological perspective and the second is a sociological one.

Organizational culture can be defined from two different perspectives Anthropology and Sociology. Within each perspective, it is sub-divided into Functionalist and Semiotic. According to Cameron and Quinn (2011):

*Table 1: Two Perspectives Viewing Organisational Culture*

<b>Anthropology.</b>	
<p><b>1. Functionalist</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Organization is culture</li> <li>- Culture is a dependent variable in an organization</li> <li>- Treats culture as something</li> <li>- Focus on collective assumption</li> <li>- Researcher interprets data subjectively</li> <li>- Outside observation by investigation</li> </ul>	<p><b>2. Semiotic</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Culture is everything and is reality</li> <li>- Focus on individual assumption</li> <li>- Natively interpret data by participant involvement</li> <li>- Immersion required for investigation</li> <li>- Culture as dependent</li> </ul>
<b>Sociology.</b>	
<p><b>1. Functionalist</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Organization has culture</li> <li>- Culture is an independent variable in an organization</li> <li>- Treats culture for something</li> <li>- Focus on collective behaviour</li> <li>- Researcher interprets data objectively</li> <li>- Outside observation by observe.</li> </ul>	<p><b>2. Semiotic</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Culture helps to make sense of reality</li> <li>- Focus on individual cognition</li> <li>- Natively interpret data by participant observation</li> <li>- Immersion required for observation</li> <li>- Culture as an independent variable</li> </ul>

## **Organisational Effectiveness**

Nowadays, Organizational Effectiveness is considered as the prime vehicle for improving organizational performance as well as achieving preset objectives for many organizations. Moreover, effectiveness as a concept is highly related to management philosophy applied by modern organizations to ensure and sustain their future growth (Becerra-Fernandez and Sabherwal, 2001). On the other hand, many researchers attempted to define organizational effectiveness from different perspectives in different situations within the work environment. The concept of organizational effectiveness was highly associated with the productivity level of organization. According Katz and Khan (1978,p.164) organizational effectiveness is defined as ‘...the maximization of return to the organization, by economic and technical means (efficiency) and by political means (effectiveness)’. By the same spoken, Fayol (1916) related the effectiveness of any organizations to its ability in achieving their primary objectives and goals. According to Mayo study’s (1949) organizational goals could be production maximization and cost reduction or minimization. On the other side, scholars like, Price, (1968) and Campbell (1977) related the definition of organizational effectiveness to final output to goal accomplishment. Last but not least, (Yutchman and Seashore, 1967) defined organizational effectiveness to organizational input or as a factor of production in terms of resources acquisitions.

## **Relationship between research variables**

### **Relationship between Leadership styles and Organisational effectiveness**

Studies have shown that organizational effectiveness is highly influenced by the impact of leadership styles inside organizations. Leaders are considered as the key success factors for much of organizational effectiveness (Bass, 1998; Lok and Crawford, 2004; Robinson, et al., 2008; Wang, et al., 2010). In addition, Keller study (2006) focused on the importance role played by the strategic leadership on improving and sustaining organizational performance. Thus we hypothesizes that:

**H1.** There is a relationship between leadership style and organizational effectiveness.

**H1.1** There is a relationship between Transformational leadership style and organizational effectiveness.

**H1.2.** There is a relationship between Transactional leadership style and organizational effectiveness.

**H1.3.** There is a relationship between Laissez-Faire leadership style and organizational effectiveness.

### **Relationship between Leadership Styles and Organisational Culture.**

According to Schein (2010) leadership and culture are considered two different sides of the same coin in many organizations. Where, leaders are considered as the prime factor for creating culture inside organizations. In turn culture has significant impact on leadership. Moreover, both leadership and culture are considered as important key success factors in many modern organizations. Researchers as well as academics have investigated as well as explored the relationship between leadership style and organizational culture by conducting different imperial studies in many countries all over the world. In fact, scholars argued that there exists a relationship between different styles of leadership and organizational culture types within different organizational context (Acar, 2012; El-Nahas, 2013; Stanislavov and Ivanov, 2014), thus we hypothesize that:

**H2.** There is a relationship between Leadership Style and Organisational culture.

**H2.1** There is a relationship between Transformational leadership and organizational culture.

**H2.2.** There is a relationship between Transactional leadership and organizational culture.

**H2.3.** There is a relationship between Laissez-Faire leadership and organizational culture.

### **Relationship between organisational culture and organisational effectiveness.**

Many researchers have been studying the impact of organizational culture type on the overall organizational effectiveness of many firms. According to Denison (1989) and Denison et al. (2004) organizational culture types played a crucial role in obtaining higher organizational performance as well as achieving organizational effectiveness. Furthermore, Shein (2010) suggested that organizational culture is considered as a catalyst factor for all organizational employees in order to perform their job in an effective and efficient way. Last but not least, recent studies of organizational context suggested that many empirical evidences supporting the existing association between the organization's culture and organizational effectiveness (Brookes 2014, Nazarian et al. 2014).

Thus we hypothesize that:

**H3:** There is a relationship between Organisational culture and Organisational effectiveness.

### **Organisational culture as a Mediator in the relationship between leadership styles and organisational effectiveness.**

There is much research conducted to measure the direct relationship or the impact of leadership style on organisational culture, and leadership style and organisational effectiveness (Ogbonna and Harris, 2000; Wang *et al.*, 2010). However, there remains some gap in the existing literature focusing on the indirect relationship between leadership style, organizational culture and organizational effectiveness. In other words, there exists a gap in the existing literature on whether organisational culture mediates the relationship between leadership styles and organizational effectiveness. Thus we hypothesize that:

**H4.** Organisational culture will mediate the impact of leadership style on organisational effectiveness.

**H4.1.** Organisational culture will mediate the impact of Transformational leadership on Organizational effectiveness.

**H4.2.** Organisational culture will mediate the impact of Transactional leadership on Organizational effectiveness.

**H4.3.** Organisational culture will mediate the Impact of Laissez-faire leadership on Organisational effectiveness.

### **Methodological Approach**

In order to achieve the main objectives of the study and to test variables under investigations the researcher adopted positivistic research philosophy followed by a deductive research design. A quantitative research method was applied, in which data collection was done using self-administrated questionnaires that were distributed as a hard copy to target participants. In fact, primary data collection was analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences Version 22 (SPSS 22).

#### **Sample of the Study**

A convenient sample technique was used in order to collect data from 125 hotels from variety of sizes and level were contacted in different cities. However, only 67 of them agreed to participate in this study and rest either did not respond or refused to participate. Hotels chosen for this study were from Warsaw, Karsaw, Torun, Poznan and Gdansk. In total, 950 employees received the questionnaire both electronically and hard copy out of which 289 were returned which provided us with 30.42 response rate. According to Creswell (2014), Saunders et al (2015) and Bryman and Bell (2011) in mail survey a response rate 30.4% could be considered as very good response rate as normally the response rate in this type of data collection method is very low and around 10% in general

#### **Research instruments**

The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ form 5X) developed by Bass and Avolio (2004) has been used to measure Full range leadership styles (independent variable) in Polish



Hotel industry. In fact the full range leadership styles developed by Aass and Avolio were derived from Burns study (1978) on the transformational and transactional leadership.

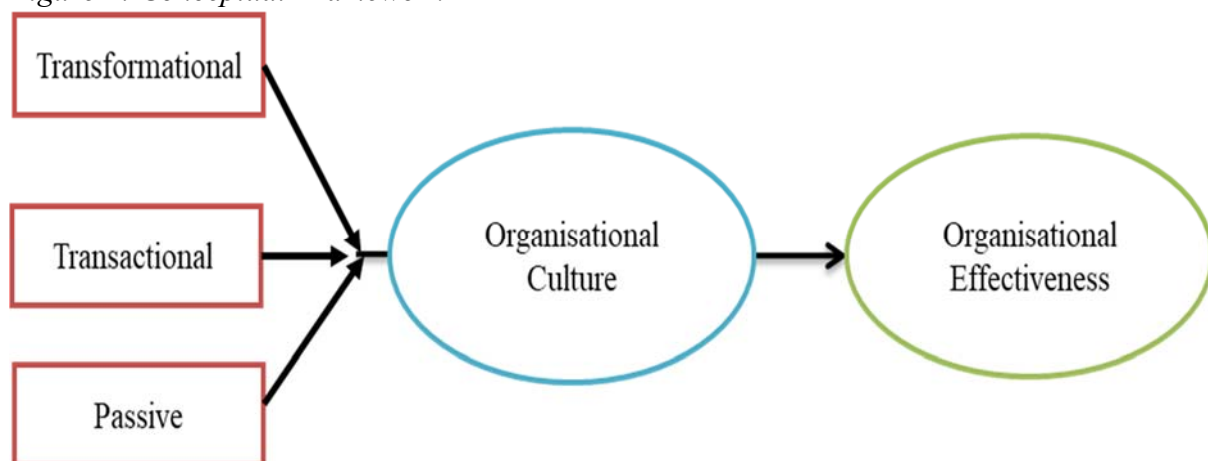
Transformational leadership style was measured based on 5 different dimensions (a) Idealized Attributes (b) Idealized Behaviours (c) Inspirational Motivation, (d) Intellectual Stimulation, (e) Individual Consideration. Consequently, transactional leadership style was measured using 2 dimensions: (a) Contingent Reward (b) Management by Expectation Active. In addition, Passive/Avoidant leadership style was measured using 2 dimensions: (a) Management by Expectation Passive and (b) Laissez-Faire. In fact, a 5-point Likert scale ranging from not at all to frequently, if not always (5) was used in assessing leadership styles in this specific study. On the other hand, the mediator variable Organizational Culture in this study was measured using the Competing Values Framework (CVF). Since it has been considered as the most appropriate measurement instrument for assessing Organizational Culture. Moreover, CVF has been widely used by many researchers as well as academics all over the world (Dastmalchian et al., 2000; Helfrich, et al., 2007; Kock and Merwe, 2009; Nazarian and Atinkson, 2014). The CVF developed by Cameron and Quinn 2011) consisted of 4 main types: (a) Clan Culture (b) Adhocracy culture (c) Market culture (d) hierarchy culture. In fact, a 7-point Likert scale was used for assessing Organizational Culture.

Finally, Organizational Effectiveness as the dependent variable of this study was measured based on 41 questions as result of the combination the CVF, developed by Cameron's (1978, 1986) and Organizational Effectiveness Questionnaire (OEQ) developed by (Steele, 1988). Where, a 7-point Likert scale was used for assessing Organizational Effectiveness. The final part of the questionnaire was dealing with the demographic of the sample respondents.

#### **Method of analysis:**

In order to test the hypothesis of this study and achieve the research objectives, researchers undertook 4 different stages of data analysis using the SPSS version 21. The first stage aimed towards checking reliability analysis of all variables under investigation through the Cronbach alpha method. Consequently, the second stage was dealing with the demographic part of the questionnaire regarding the sample respondents. Where, a descriptive statistics was used in this particular stage. The third stage was concerned with testing the direct relationship between the independent variable (leadership styles), dependent variable (organizational effectiveness) and the mediator variable (organizational culture) using the correlation coefficients and the regression analysis in order to determine the degree of associations between pairs of variables. Finally, the last stage aimed towards testing the indirect relationship between research variables and determines whether the organizational culture is considered as mediator of the relationship between leadership styles and organizational culture within Polish hotel industry. A multiple regression analysis was used in order to test proposed hypothesis in this stage.

*Figure 1: Conceptual Framework*



## Results

### Descriptive statistics

Description of the demographic analysis of this study indicated in Table 1 exhibits that 54% of the Survey respondents are males and 46 % are females. In addition, it was found that the majority of the sample respondent, 67 % of the sample belonged to 35-54 years of age. Furthermore, more than 50% of the total respondents obtained a post-graduate educational level and only 5% were not university graduate. Finally, results showed that more than 70% of the respondents are lying between middle and senior management level in their organizations.

Table 1. Demographic analysis.

Variable	N	%
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	120	41.5
Female	169	58.5
<b>Age</b>		
Under 25	40	13.8
25-34	75	26.0
35-44	84	29.1
45-54	57	19.7
55-64	31	10.7
above 65	2	.7
<b>Education Level</b>		
A-level and below	65	22.5
Colleges	88	30.4
Undergraduate	108	37.4
Postgraduate	28	9.7
<b>Position</b>		
CEO	26	9.0
Senior management	58	20.1
Middle management	81	28.0
Junior Management	39	13.5
Employee	85	29.4

### Reliability Analyses, Mean, Standard Deviation and Correlations Analysis

Table (2) indicates that all variables under investigation are considered as highly reliable. Where results from Cronbach alpha for measuring internal consistency of the variables corroborate with previous scholars suggestions about the acceptable level of reliability analysis (De Vaus, 2002; Bryman, 2012; Sekaran and Boogie, 2014).

On the other hand, Table (2) shows that there exists a strong positive relationship between organizational culture and organizational effectiveness ( $r=0.523^{**}$ ). Moreover, transformational and transactional leadership are positively strongly correlated with organizational effectiveness. Finally, there exists a strong negative relationship between laissez-faire and organizational effectiveness.

Table 2. Reliability, and Correlation

	Transform	Transac	passive	Clan	Adhoc	Market	Hierarchy	OC	OE	Cronbach alpha
TLF	1									.841
TLS	.655**	1								.835
passive	.771**	.759**	1							.93
Clan	.636**	.559**	.621**	1						.905
Adhoc	.741**	.731**	.846**	.757**	1					.915
Market	.147*	.223**	.176**	-.136*	.180**	1				.839

<b>Hierarchy</b>	.297**	.434**	.395**	.009	.345**		1			.857
<b>OC</b>	.706**	.735**	.784**	.686**	.892**	.509**	.624**	1		.91
<b>OE</b>	.452**	.559**	.491**	.370**	.551**	.413**	.503**	.661**	1	.90

### Testing Research hypothesis

Table (3) is divided into two parts, the first part shows the direct relationship between the variables, and the second part shows the indirect relationship between the variables. For the direct relationship between the variables, there are 7 relationships defined. (1) There is a positive direct relationship between transactional leadership to organizational effectiveness. (2) There is a negative direct relationship between laissez-faire and organizational effectiveness. (3) There is a positive direct relationship between transformational leadership and organizational effectiveness. (4) There is a positive direct relationship between transactional leadership to organizational culture. (5) There is a negative direct relationship between laissez-faire and organizational culture. (6) There is a positive direct relationship between transformational leadership and organizational culture. All of these 7 outcome relationships are supporting this study's hypotheses

As for the indirect relationship, three outcome relationship results were found. (1) There exists a positive indirect relationship between transactional leadership and organizational effectiveness. Therefore, organizational culture mediates the relationship between Transactional leadership and organizational effectiveness. (2) There is a negative indirect relationship between Laissez-faire and organizational effectiveness, which is mediated by the organizational culture. (3) There exists a positive indirect relationship between transformational leadership and organizational effectiveness, where, this relationship is mediating by the existence of organizational culture. As a conclusion, results suggest that organizational culture is considered as a mediator on the relationship between different leadership style (transformational, transactional and laissez-faire) and organizational culture within Polish hotel industry. Again, this entire outcome relationships are supported the previously mentioned hypotheses of this study.

Table (3) Hypothesis Testing

<b>Direct Relationships</b>					
Relationships	R <sup>2</sup>	F-statistics	T-statistics	β	Supported/Not Supported
TLS ----> OE	.322	99.918**	9.996**	.471**	Supported
LFL----> OE	.240	57.146**	7.560**	-.374**	Supported
TFL-----> OE	.279	95.627**	10.754**	.523**	Supported
<b>OC ----&gt; OE</b>					
OC ----> OE	.303	152.289**	12.341**	.510	Supported
<b>TLS ----&gt; OC</b>					
TLS ----> OC	.267	80.455**	9.251**	.707**	Supported
<b>LFL----&gt; OC</b>					
LFL----> OC	.166	55.394**	7.241**	-.442**	Supported
<b>TFL-----&gt; OC</b>					
TFL-----> OC	.316	96.576**	9.827**	.465**	Supported
<b>Indirect Relationship</b>					
TLS ----> OC----> OE	.382	108.060**	6.695** 9.522**	.305** .961**	Supported
LFL----> OC----> OE	.326	84.828**	4.3208** 9.756**	-.183 * -.483**	Supported
TFL-----> OC----> OE	.331	89.545**	4.558** 9.380**	.224** .471**	Supported



## Discussions and Conclusion

This study aims towards investigating the mediating influence of organizational culture of the relationship between leadership style and organizational effectiveness in the Hotel industry in Poland. The hypotheses were tested with Leadership Styles as an independent variable and organizational culture as mediating variable and organizational culture as a dependent variable. In fact, the results of this study corroborates with the findings of previous studies suggested that there exists a relationship between different leadership styles and organizational effectiveness, and organizational culture from one side (Robinson, et al., 2008; Wang, et al., 2010; Acar, 2012; El-Nahas, 2013; Stanislavov and Ivanov, 2014). From the other side, there is a relationship between organizational culture and organizational effectiveness (Brookes 2014, Nazarian et al.2014). Moreover, the study proves that organizational culture mediates the relationship between leadership styles and organizational effectiveness within hotel industry in Poland.

Additionally, this paper provides a significant contribution to the existing knowledge, through its theoretical and practical significance. First of all, this paper enriches the existing literature review on Leadership Style, the mediating role of Organizational Culture and Organizational Effectiveness within Eastern European context. From the practical perspective this paper provides Polish managers with appropriate information regarding the crucial role of organizational culture in mediating the relationship between leadership style and organizational effectiveness.

Furthermore, this paper provides managers with evidential outcomes on the practical importance of different leadership styles in relationship with organizational culture and the way of improving firm's effectiveness. Finally, this study has demonstrated that organizational culture is a significant mediator of the relationship between leadership styles and organizational effectiveness, which has received limited attention from many scholars in the existing literature. Finally, future research direction could focus on comparative analysis of the same variable between different size hotels, or between different countries in both developing and developed context.

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