



Research Article

**THE EFFECT OF DEMOCRATIC LEADERSHIP ON ORGANIZATIONAL DISSENT AND ORGANIZATIONAL CREATIVITY: A STUDY ON HOTEL BUSINESSES\*\***

Engin AYTEKİN<sup>1\*</sup> (orcid.org/ 0000-0002-0296-7368)

Rahman TEMİZKAN<sup>2</sup> (orcid.org/ 0000-0002-9750-1543)

<sup>1</sup>Afyon Kocatepe University, Tourism Faculty, Department of Tourism Guidance, Afyonkarahisar, Türkiye

<sup>2</sup>Eskişehir Osmangazi University, Tourism Faculty, Department of Gastronomy and Culinary Arts, Eskişehir, Türkiye

Özet

Bu çalışma, çalışanların demokratik liderlik algılarının örgütsel muhalefet ve yaratıcılık üzerindeki etkisini araştırmaktadır. Anket ile işgörenlerin görüşlerine ulaşıldı. Örneklemi Antalya ve İzmir'deki beş yıldızlı otellerde çalışan 785 kişi oluşturmuştur. Çalışmada demokratik liderlik, örgütsel muhalefet ve yaratıcılık ile ilgili tüm alt boyutlar yapısal eşitlik modellemesi ile analiz edilmiş ve tüm faktörler açıklayıcı faktör analizine tabi tutulmuştur. Ayrıca değişkenler için korelasyon katsayıları hesaplanmıştır. Analiz sonuçlarına göre, çalışanların demokratik liderlik algıları ile örgütsel muhalefet davranışları arasında orta düzeyde pozitif yakın bir ilişki vardır. Ayrıca çalışanların demokratik liderlik algıları ile örgütsel yaratıcılık davranışları arasında orta düzeyde pozitif bir ilişki bulunmuştur.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Demokratik Liderlik, Örgütsel Muhalefet, Örgütsel Yaratıcılık, Oteller, YEM.

Abstract

This study explores the effect of employees' democratic leadership perceptions on organizational dissent and creativity. Opinions of employees were reached with a survey. The sample consisted of 785 people working in five-star hotels in Antalya and Izmir. In the study, democratic leadership, all sub-dimensions related to organizational dissent and creativity were analyzed by structural equation modeling and all factors were subjected to explanatory factor analysis. In addition, correlation coefficients for variables were calculated. According to the analysis, there is an almost moderate positive relationship between the democratic leadership perceptions of the employees and their organizational dissent behavior. Also, a moderate positive relationship was found between the democratic leadership perceptions of the employees and their organizational creativity behaviors. Lastly, it was observed that there is a moderate positive relationship between organizational dissent and employees' creativity behavior.

**Keywords:** Democratic Leadership, Organizational Dissent, Organizational Creativity, Hotels, SEM.

\*\* Bu makale, 2019 yılı Ağustos ayında Osmangazi Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Turizm İşletmeciliği Doktora Programında doktora tezi olarak gerçekleştirilmiştir.

\* Sorumlu yazar: [eytekin@aku.edu.tr](mailto:eytekin@aku.edu.tr)

DOI: 10.33083/joghat.2022.188

## **Introduction**

According to Leng et al. (2014), leadership style employed in an organization is a crucial determinant of any organization's success or failure, and they claim that leadership is the first element in gaining organizational values and sharing the vision and affecting the determination of employees with passion and honesty to realize their full potential. In addition, Krieg (2017) mentions that involving employees in decision-making is one of the significant pillars of democratic leadership. The manager applying democratic leadership informs the employees on all matters affecting their work and shares their responsibilities for decision-making and problem-solving. This leadership style reports that the leader should be the coach to utter the last word but reports that the leader needs to gather information from the staff before making a decision (Khan et al., 2015).

Likewise, Bilginoğlu and Yozgat (2020) express that dissenting plays a vital part for organizations, especially in the work environment. They assert that for any organization to progress, there is a necessity that employees are able to submit resolutions to issues, bring up points about unfair procedures, and inquire about the way they may work more effectively. Where opposing views are fostered, employees recount more job satisfaction. As a result, leaders should be happy to view a broader choice of suggestions (Garner, 2013). Organizational dissent means voicing controversies or differing ideas about organizational practices, policies, and operations (Kassing, 1998).

Creativity is a fundamental aspect of human society, but it is also complicated to conceive and specify. Historically, creativity has had a link to art, imagination, and intelligence. Technological advancement, global growth, and demographic transformations have prompted changes in business rationale and work applications and expanded rivalry among nations, areas, and businesses. Therefore, they pushed the creative concept to new areas (Blomberg, 2016).

Given the mentioned information, this research investigates the relationship between the democratic leadership perception levels and organizational dissent and creativity behaviors of employees in five-star city hotels in Izmir and five-star resort hotels in Antalya. It is useful to review the relationships since the leadership styles preferred by leaders in organizations are of great value for organizations. Thus, examining the effects of the concept of democratic leadership can make serious contributions to industry stakeholders in the tourism and hospitality sector where the human factor stands out. Besides, there is a minimal number of national and international studies on determining the impact of democratic leadership on organizational dissent and organizational creativity. Moreover, a similar study in Turkey, primarily in the tourism and hospitality sector, has not been found made it determinant in carrying out this research. It is predicted that research results can be used to regulate the relations between hotel managers and employees, correct leadership practices can turn the dissent behaviors into a positive feedback system and add vitality to the productive and creative dimension of the organization.

## **Conceptual Framework**

### **Democratic Leadership**

According to Cherry (2018), democratic leadership is often one of the most forceful ways as it results in greater capability and refined participation from group members and enhanced the morale of the group. ConnectUs (2017) announces that democratic leadership promotes a creative environment, and thus democratic leadership style creates a creative environment by promoting innovation and entry among team members. In this context, leadership styles used by organization leaders take the lead role for organizations. Al-Ababneh (2013) states that managers can increase the level of job satisfaction of employees by adopting the appropriate leadership style.

According to Manners, (2008), a democratic leadership style is outlined as the involvement of employees in major matters in the organization, and thus its impact on reaching open consensus among team members. Feedback and response from subordinates are very critical as well. Because subordinates have the responsibility to inform their leaders or superiors of any difficulties that prevent them from reaching the set goals by the organization (Ping, 2015). In addition to that, Cherry (2018) puts forward that democratic leadership can come up with original solutions to difficulties with better ideas since employees are invited to share their thoughts. Group members may also want to be more involved in projects and dedicate themselves to these jobs and are more likely to care about the final results of the jobs. Additionally, Nemaie (2012) states that this leadership style is a process that has turned into a democratic leadership style over time and emphasized that the leader produces a master-follower relationship with the leader group members in this

process. In short, democratic leaders point to the engagement and consultation of the group and decisions made by the group.

Consequently, democratic leadership means taking into the suggestions of the employees on any issue/decision account, evaluating the suggestions of the employees while making a decision, asking them to take part in decision-making, and knowing how to use the creativity and skill of the employees in solving problems in the organization.

### **Organizational Dissent**

According to Argyres and Mui (2007), organizational dissent holds the potential to improve organizational performance by providing information that improves decision quality. Parallel to their views, Ötken and Cenkci (2013) emphasize that organizational dissent serves a fundamental function in the democratization of organizations and contributes to discerning the issues in the organization, adopting imperative precautions for the solution of these problems and the development of the organization. In addition, the authors argue that the companies that manage organizational dissent can adapt to the changes faster and gain an advantage over their competitors. In support of the researchers, it was asserted by Chen and Croucher (2016) that no matter how well-designed and organized, organizations may fail to accommodate the needs of parties involved if they are at odds with sound, moral, and decent conducts. Therefore, it can be expected that employees who can make their voices heard by decision-makers and practitioners will take ownership of their workplaces and jobs more (Kobasa et al., 1982). In addition, these false behaviors and/or control may cause stakeholders into disagreement and resistance. When the employees face situations that create dissatisfaction in the workplace, it is required that the managers give a voice to the employees to let them say something, to understand and manage all of them to express their decisions. Moreover, organizational dissent serves as an indicator. For instance, when the expression of organizational dissent takes place, it displays the quality of employees' relationships with their supervisors in some respects (Kassing, 1997).

Although organizational dissent has a negative meaning as an expression of disagreements or different ideas, it is an important organizational communication behavior (Yıldırım, 2020). In a similar way, Payne (2014) reported that organizational dissent can be a valuable and constructive form of communication in organizations and is influenced by various communication factors. That is to say, dissenting is an important research topic not only because of the positive effects it can have on the organization but also because of the importance of giving employees a voice (Bilginoğlu and Yozgat, 2020). Indeed, dissenting is a kind of message by the employees. If managers fail to understand and use dissenting employees correctly, it causes organizations to lose their chance to benefit from them. In contrast, a greater degree of freedom of speech should be set up by managers to allow wise decisions and respect the integrity of the human spirit, using their decisive influence in the workplace (Chen and Croucher, 2016). The expression of dissent can have favorable results for both the employees and the organizations. For example, Kassing and Armstrong (2002) determined that the employees expressing upward dissent are more satisfied with the organization and become more identified with the organization. In addition, it was figured out that these employees have a higher quality relationship with their managers or supervisors. Supporting Kassing, Croucher et al. (2017:2) underlined that upward dissent is mentioned when employees convey their dissent to the organization directly to their managers. Briefly, it is observed that employees who maintain quality relations with their managers, are in managerial positions and participate more in the decision-making process, have higher job satisfaction and organizational commitment, and have an organizational-based self-perception tend to be in upward dissent.

In this study, the theory of organizational dissent developed by Kassing (1997) was used, and three types of dissent were portrayed. These are explicitly articulated (upward) dissent, antagonistic dissent, and displaced dissent. These strategies indicate that employees express dissent directly, aggressively, and passively, respectively. Later, the antagonistic dissent was changed into lateral dissent in the following study by the researcher. In this new model, the forms of dissent are classified according to the choice of the listeners: The dissent expressed directly to the administration is the articulated upward dissent; the lateral dissent is uttered to other colleagues and the displaced dissent is articulated to people who are not directly connected with organizational management.

### **Organizational Creativity**

Creativity has been defined by several scientists by focusing on its different characteristics. For example, Nisula (2013) concluded that a collaborative effort is required for creativity as it is used for finding new ideas and new ways to work out questions. Unlike the former idea, Watt (2007) depicted creativity as "a function of

the creative outcomes of individuals and the working environment in the organization." However, Florida and Goodnight (2005) state that creativity is the most momentous asset of organizations. This supports the idea that every institution depends on the existence and performance of creative employees' organizational creativity. Similarly, Dorum and Vollen (2016) reported that creativity is considered one of the most prominent features of successful companies, especially in the high-tech industry. Lastly, Harrington (1990) outlined creativity as a process based on originality, adaptability, and application, which essentially involves realizing new ideas.

On the other hand, according to Patterson (2018), organizational creativity is primarily the creation of an environment in the organization where mistakes can be tolerated. Because a work environment that supports and rewards creative thinking is important for creativity. Besides, while Vetillart (2014) indicates that organizational creativity is an indicator of performance and should be perceived as a competitive advantage for organizations today, Monteiro and Sousa (2011) assert that organizational creativity is the management's adoption of continuous improvement processes to meet the expectations of customers. All in all, the dominant definition was performed by Woodman et al. (1993) as "it is the creation of a helpful, profitable, innovative idea, service, product or process by employees together in a social system."

Amabile (1996) proposed a componential model of creativity to include the confluence of multiple variables. In this study, creativity is evaluated from three distinct dimensions. They are individual, societal (group) and managerial (organizational) creativity. According to Hansen (2012), individual level creativity can constitute a basis for creating so that it encourages organizational creativity. Similarly, Hauksdóttir (2011) believes that the building block for organizational innovation is individual creativity. According to Khalili (2015), individuals are the basic root of any novel ideas. As for group creativity, it should be highlighted that in order for organizational creativity to emerge, an environment that involves creativity is required. The most consequential reason for this is that individuals can develop creative thoughts from being affected by their environment (Amabile et al., 2005). Hauksdóttir (2011) argues that the creative result can be highest when the group structure is organic and consists of individuals from different fields or functional backgrounds.

### **Organizational Dissent and Democratic Leadership**

According to Tain-Fungwu et al. (2006), leadership styles employed by leaders in organizations are invaluable for organizations. Hence, investigating the effects of democratic leadership can contribute seriously to the stakeholders in the tourism industry and hospitality sector since the human factor stands out. Alexakis (2011) underlines that especially leaders in the tourism and hospitality sector should be aware of these expert opinions produced by their subordinates over time. It can be very useful for the tourism and hospitality industry make use of such assets of employees like expertise, skills, and knowledge. When the subject is examined at the national level, it is understood that the researchers in our country do not show much interest in the subject of democratic leadership, although it has such a serious impact on organizations. In addition to that, it is recognized that democratic leadership studies carried out abroad are mostly conducted with the concepts of employee performance (Bhatti et al., 2012; Elbaz and Haddoud (2017)), job satisfaction, or organizational commitment (Manners, 2008; Al-Ababneh, 2013), leadership styles (Clark et al. (2009) and ethical decision making (Minnett et al. (2009)).

Shahinpoor and Matt (2007) argue that organizational dissent is a key feature of transparent, efficient, productive, robust, and successful organizations. On the other hand, the expression of dissent is also believed to be important for organizational strategic decisions, and the lack of expression of this will create problems for the organization in various forms. Organizational silence, which is one of the problems that will arise, is the most common and known method (Hamid & Othman, 2015). To highlight to what extent organizational dissent significant is, Bilginoğlu and Yozgat (2020) express that in order for organizations to have more successful decision-making processes, they should be aware of the value of feedback from their employees, value different ideas and dissenting employee voices, and create organizational climates where dissent becomes a part of organizational norms. Also, Handova (2017) declares that by listening to the discontent of employees, business owners take the first step towards stopping the spread of unrest. At that point, it needs to be reported that organizational dissent can play a constructive role in all these processes (Garner, 2013). For example, employees working in the organization may express their dissenting opinions, especially when they find that the current policy used in the hotel business is flawed or dysfunctional because they intend to fix a problem they perceive. That is why the expression of dissent is also eminent for strategic organizational decisions, and not expressing it can lead to problems in various forms.

Clark et al. (2009) stated that democratic leadership can be particularly suited to the hotel industry because the hotel employees positioned on the front line understand customer needs more than managers, as they communicate directly with guests. Therefore, management aims to gain benefits by enabling them to share decision-making. In democratic leadership, the hotel employees function to serve as the liaison officers between the guests and management. According to Deery and Jago (2001), employees working for leaders who are more open to communication and adopt a democratic leadership style are less resistant to change. Therefore, the top managers of the hotel should train their managers to change their management style to be more open to consultation/communication. Besides, Ogbeide (2005) emphasizes that the hospitality industry includes service and furthers that it has a labor-intensive nature. Additionally, since the effectiveness of a leader can affect the perceived value of the stakeholders, customer satisfaction, and employee happiness, it is emphasized that leadership should not be overlooked (Kolesnikova, 2012). For these reasons, adopting an effective and correct leadership style within the organization is critical to the success of a hospitality business. For that reason, based on the above discussions and related studies by the authors, the following hypothesis has been suggested:

**H<sub>1</sub>:** Democratic leadership has a significant impact on organizational dissent.

### **Organizational Creativity and Democratic Leadership**

Çavuşoğlu (2007) puts forward that democratic leadership and creativity are linked closely. The author claims that a democratic, participatory, and collaborative leadership style increases creativity and innovation. In addition, participation in decision-making enables employees to feel a sense of belonging in line with the decision made. Giving feedback and appreciating employees for their work may increase individual creativity and therefore organizational creativity (Çavuşoğlu, 2007). On the other side, according to State and Iorgulescu (2014), today the accommodation industry is viewed as a more complex industry as it begins to focus on creating customer experiences. In the hotel industry, concrete forms of corporate creative results include product innovations, continuous improvement, and improved customer service. To achieve all this, accommodation organizations need employees with specific skills in this regard, and the lack of these skills is considered to be the biggest obstacle to innovation in the industry. In addition, dependence on human capital is exceptionally weighty in the accommodation sector, where competitiveness is mainly reliant on human resources.

Similar to Monteiro and Sousa (2011), Temizkan et al. (2014) emphasize the need to focus especially on skilled labor in the tourism and hospitality industry. Tourism services are based on human interactions and interpersonal exchanges involving feelings and experiences where standardization is impossible. Moreover, Dorum and Vollen (2016) tell that essentially, innovation can be found in any organization or industry if it is understood as a process rather than a result. Only by developing and maintaining a creative workforce, the organization can overcome complex problems and overcome situations that cannot be resolved through investments in this regard. Therefore, based on the discussion above, the following hypothesis has been suggested.

**H<sub>2</sub>:** Democratic leadership has a significant impact on organizational creativity.

### **Methodology**

#### **Sample and Procedure**

The data were achieved through a questionnaire between 05 August 2018 and 05 December 2018. The research population is the employees in five-star hotels in Antalya and Izmir with the Tourism Operation License issued by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. According to the Ministry of Culture and Tourism (2019) data, as of 2019, there are 788 tourism facilities with the Tourism Operation License in Antalya and these facilities have a capacity of 209,919 rooms. On the other hand, according to the same data, there are 213 tourism facilities with the Tourism Operation License in İzmir province as of 2019 and these facilities have 39,997 room capacity. According to the Ministry of Tourism's "Labor Force Survey in the Hospitality and Tourism Industry" (1989) data, the number of personnel per room based on the overall average including starred hotels and other facilities in Turkey was calculated as 0.70 and the number of personnel per bed was calculated to be 0.35. When the number of staff is calculated according to the number of rooms in Antalya (209,919 x 0.70), a total of 146.943 employees was found. Likewise, when the number of staff is calculated according to the number of rooms in İzmir, (39,997 x 0.70), a total of 27,997 employees is reached. According to QuestionPro (2021), sampling is a time-convenient and cost-effective method, and therefore, it constitutes the basis of any research

design. Besides the large number of units that make up the universe of the research and cost limitation, sampling was utilized. Using the stratified sampling method, five-star hotel establishments operating in Antalya and Izmir are divided into two layers as five-star resort hotels operating for leisure, recreation, and sea tourism, and five-star city hotels operating for business and congress tourism. Gazeloğlu and Erkılıç (2021, p.31) underline that the stratified sampling method is used when the characteristics of the units that make up the universe are heterogeneous regarding the research subject. In the stratified sampling method, the universe containing different features is divided into homogeneous layers (subgroups). The proportions of each of the substrates that make up the sample in the universe are determined. Later, the sample size is determined as "n", and the sample for each stratum is selected according to the representation ratio of the sub-layers in the universe, using the simple random sampling method (Ural and Kılıç, 2006, p.40). A total of 785 valid questionnaires were deemed worthy of evaluation, including 396 questionnaires from İzmir and 389 questionnaires from Antalya and then they were analyzed.

### **Data Collection**

The questionnaire includes four parts. The first part covers demographic characteristics and some other individual characteristics of the hotel employees (department, working time in the sector). In the second part, the scale used in the study named "The Impact of Autocratic and Democratic Leadership Style on Job Satisfaction" by Bhatti et al. (2012), which consists of 11 expressions, including both 7 democratic and 4 autocratic expressions, was employed. This scale was translated into Turkish and then the necessary procedure was performed such as getting ideas of 2 language experts, followed by back translation and the final expressions were achieved. The third is the organizational dissent scale developed by Kassing (1998) in the study named "Development and Validation of the Organizational Dissent Scale". This scale was translated to Turkish for the thesis study titled "Relationship Between Workplace Democracy and Organizational Dissent Behavior" by Aksel in 2013. This 20-item scale measures upward (9 expressions), lateral (5 expressions) and displaced dissent (6 expressions) behavior. The last employed scale was developed by Balay (2010) in his study and titled "Organizational Creativity Perceptions of Faculty Members". In the total of the measurement tool, there are 38 expressions regarding the levels of organizational creativity perception in terms of individual creativity (first 16 expressions), group creativity (11 expressions) and societal creativity (last 11 expressions). Each item constituting these scales mentioned above has been subjected to a five-point Likert-type rating. In addition, since the study was carried out in 2018, it does not require an ethics committee report.

### **Data Analyses**

In the study, the frequency and percentage distributions for each statement and the arithmetic mean and standard deviation values for each statement were calculated. Cronbach's Alpha coefficients were calculated to test the reliability of democratic leadership perception level of the employees, organizational dissent behavior, and organizational creativity behavior scales. The reliability coefficient of the democratic leadership scale was determined as 0.900. The reliability coefficient for organizational dissent behavior scale is measured to be 0.755. In addition, the reliability coefficient of organizational creativity behavior was calculated as 0.928. Also, structural equation modeling was utilized to identify the relationship between democratic leadership, organizational dissent and sub-dimensions and organizational creativity and sub-dimensions. Briefly, structural equation modeling was carried out to reveal cause and effect relationships and to determine the degree of mutual influence between variables. In addition to SPSS, LISREL package program was used to analyze the structural equation modeling.

### **Findings**

In Table 1, statistical data regarding the demographic characteristics of the employees are presented. Of the 785 people participating in the study, 406 are women and females form 51.7% of the group. According to the marital status of participants, 83.8% of the participants are married (f = 658). It is considered that the undergraduates constitute the majority of the participants with 495 (63.1%) and graduate-level 31 (3.9%). On the other side, when the age groups are examined, the participants aged 25 and under are 554 (70.6%), the participants between the age of 26-30 are 100 (12.7%), and the participants aged 41 and over were 31 (3.9%). Furthermore, 371 participants (47.3%) work in the food and beverage department, while 36 (4.6%) participants work in "other" departments. Participants were asked whether they received tourism training or not, and it was identified that 76.2% of the participants received tourism training (f = 598), but 23.8% did not (f = 187). The percentage and frequency distribution of the participants regarding their years of experience in the tourism sector display that 34% of the participants (f = 267) have been working for less than one year, whereas 10.6% (f = 83) have been working in the tourism sector for ten years or more. According to the ownership status of

the hotels, it was detected that 380 (48.4%) of the participants work in the national chain, 114 (14.5%) in the foreign chain, and 291 (37.1%) in the independent hotels. When the information on the type of hotels was examined, it was determined that 389 (49.6%) of the participants worked in resort hotels and 396 (50.4%) worked in city hotels.

**Table 1. Findings Regarding the Individual Characteristics of the Participants (n=785)**

Variables	Group	f	%	
Gender	Female	406	51,7	
	Male	369	48,3	
	Total	785	100,0	
Marital status	Married	658	83,8	
	Single	127	16,2	
	Total	785	100,0	
Educational Status	Primary education	41	5,2	
	Secondary / High School	123	15,7	
	Associate Degree	95	12,1	
	Undergraduate	495	63,1	
	Postgraduate	31	3,9	
Age	Total	785	100,0	
	Less than 25	554	70,6	
Department	Between 26-30	100	12,7	
	Between 31-35	57	7,3	
	Between 36-40	43	5,5	
	41 and more	31	3,9	
	Total	785	100,0	
	Front Office	99	12,6	
	Public relations	52	6,6	
	Housekeeping	66	8,4	
	Human Resources	47	6,0	
	Food and Beverage	371	47,3	
	Technical service	38	4,8	
Received Tourism Education	Purchasing / Accounting	76	9,7	
	Others	36	4,6	
	Total	785	100,0	
	Yes	598	76,2	
	No	187	23,8	
	Total	785	100,0	
	Experience in the Tourism Sector	Less than 1 year	267	34,0
		Between 1-3 years	219	27,9
Between 4-6 years		140	17,8	
Between 7-9 years		76	9,7	
10 years and more		83	10,6	
Ownership Status of Hotels	Total	785	100,0	
	National Chain Hotel	380	48,4	
	Foreign Chain Hotel	114	14,5	
	Independent Hotel	291	37,1	
Hotel Type	Total	785	100,0	
	Resort Hotel	389	49,6	
	City Hotel	396	50,4	
Total	785	100,0		

To ascertain the validity of the targeted structural equation modeling factor analysis was exercised on the data. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value is the sample fit measure obtained for each item (Yurdugül, 2019), and a high KMO value means that each variable in the scale can be perfectly predicted by other variables (Kaya, 2013). In this study, KMO (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin) value was calculated as approximately 0.93. That is, it says that factor analysis is applicable. The rate of total variable explanation was found to be almost 70%.

The variance explanation rate for each factor, eigenvalues, factor loadings of the questions within the factors and Cronbach's Alpha ( $\alpha$ ) values of each factor are given in Table 2 and as can be seen in the table they either have medium reliability or high reliability. As for the reliability, Kılıç (2016) reports that if the result is  $0.41 < \alpha < 0.60$ , the scale has low reliability, while if the result is  $0.61 < \alpha < 0.80$ , the scale has medium reliability. However, if the result is  $0.81 < \alpha < 1.00$ , it indicates high reliability. In addition, in Table 2, the relationships between the factors and variables in the scales of democratic leadership, organizational dissent, and organizational creativity in the scales used in the research are shown.

According to Table 2, L represents the Democratic Leadership dimension, and "L2, L3, L5, L6" represents the variables of the democratic leadership dimension. Of 11 expressions, only 7 expressions were related to democratic leadership. Thus, of 7 expressions of democratic leadership, 4 expressions were used to ensure construct validity, so the relevant items were excluded from the analysis according to the results of the analysis.

This table also shows the results of the explanatory factor analysis of organizational dissent and its sub-dimensions. Additionally, "LOM3, LOM6, LOM12" represent the variables of the lateral dissent dimension, "DOM10, DOM16, DOM20" represent the displaced dissent variables, "UPM11, UPM13, UPM17" represent the upward dissent variables. To achieve construct validity, the other items were removed from the analysis according to the results of the analysis.

Finally, the individual dimension, the managerial dimension, and the social dimension of the organizational creativity scale can be found in this table. "IN7, IN8, IN9, IN10, IN13, IN14, IN15, IN16" represent the variables of the individual dimension. "MA20, MA21, MA22, MA23, MA24, MA25, MA26, MA27" represent the variables of the organizational dimension and "SO30, SO31, SO32, SO33, SO34, SO35, SO36, SO37, SO38" represent the variables of the societal dimension.

**Table 2. Explanatory Factor Analysis Results for All Factors**

Factors	Factor Loadings	Eigenvalues	Total Variance (%)	Cronbach Alpha
<b>Democratic Leadership</b>	Expressions	2,390	6,288	0,872
L2	About any matter/decision, suggestions of the employees are also considered.	0,774		
L3	Whenever a big decision has to be made, employees always vote.	0,802		
L5	Whenever you make a mistake, your leader politely tell you and advise you not to do it again.	0,759		
L6	For a major decision to pass in the department/organization, it has the approval of the employees.	0,802		
<b>Upward Dissent</b>	Expressions	1,237	3,247	0,791
UPM11	I forward my criticism of organizational changes that I think are not working out to my supervisor or one of the management team.	0,779		
UPM13	When I question decisions made in the	0,739		



UPM17	workplace, I discuss this with my supervisor or other managers. I can verbalize the issues that I do not agree with to the management.	0,695			
<b>Lateral Dissent</b>	Expressions		1,093	2,876	0,606
LOM3	I criticize the inefficiency in my workplace in front of other employees.	0,768			
LOM6	I get involved when other employees make complaints about the workplace.	0,824			
LOM12	I bring out my feelings about practices in the workplace to other employees.	0,494			
<b>Displaced Dissent</b>	Expressions		1,765	4,646	0,686
DOM10	I discuss my concerns about decisions made with my family and friends outside of work in the workplace.	0,782			
DOM16	I talk to people outside of work about my work concerns.	0,730			
DOM20	I talk to my family and friends about business decisions that I do not feel comfortable discussing.	0,751			
<b>Individual Creativity</b>	Expressions		3,693	9,718	0,866
IN7	I act entrepreneurially, caring about trying / applying new things.	0,770			
IN8	Every time I strive to use new knowledge and skills.	0,772			
IN9	I constantly look for ways to improve myself by learning.	0,804			
IN10	I strive to go beyond existing limits to achieve new goals.	0,787			
IN13	I strive to perform above expectations.	0,785			
B14	I strive to be in a multi-directional movement and dynamism.	0,796			
IN15	I abandon routine patterns of behavior to develop different solutions to problems.	0,729			
IN16	I try to create original thoughts and work by going beyond the ordinary.	0,761			

<b>Managerial Creativity</b>		Expressions	6,966	18,332	0,929
MA20	When management finds extraordinary inventions or practices of employees, they immediately reward them.	0,754			
MA21	Management prepares a suitable environment for employees to think and act freely.	0,786			
MA22	Management encourages employees not to be afraid of making mistakes and to take risks.	0,819			
MA23	Management regards and evaluates the mistakes made and mistakes as learning tools.	0,818			
MA24	My managers adopt democratic leadership that encourages different thinking and acting.	0,734			
MA25	There is a management team that takes pride in its outstanding staff who succeed.	0,784			
MA26	Managers respect different people's different ways of thinking.	0,832			
MA27	Management continuously provides training services to improve the knowledge and skills of employees.	0,766			
<b>Societal Creativity</b>		Expressions	9,227	24,282	0,965
SO30	My colleagues often display an attitude open to criticism.	0,885			
SO31	My colleagues strive to develop different alternatives in problem-solving.	0,907			
SO32	My colleagues try to balance different expectations in providing effective service.	0,915			
SO33	My colleagues question existing policies and procedures as needed for change.	0,837			
SO34	My colleagues easily share their views with those of different beliefs and opinions.	0,867			

SO35	My colleagues tend to think flexibly rather than prejudice.	0,891
SO36	My colleagues highlight a culture that emphasizes respect for differences.	0,900
SO37	My colleagues always leave the door open to learning from mistakes.	0,890
SO38	My colleagues act by understanding the importance of different knowledge and skills.	0,858

When the effects of the variables forming the democratic leadership perceptions are explored, it is noted in Table 2 that L2 "About any matter/decision, suggestions of the employees are also considered." variable has a positive effect on leadership behavior by 0.83 for each unit increment and L3 "Whenever a big decision has to be made, employees always vote." variable has a positive effect on leadership behavior by 0.79. Moreover, L6 "For a major decision to pass in the department/organization, it has the approval of the employees." variable has a positive effect on leadership behavior by 0.82 with one unit increase.

It is marked in Table 3 that the fit indexes of the model are in good harmony. Additionally, corrections were actualized according to the modifications deemed appropriate via the program.

**Table 3. Values of Fitting Criteria for the Established Model**

Criteria	Good Fit	Acceptable Fit	Model
GFI	$0.95 \leq GFI \leq 1$	$0.90 \leq GFI \leq 0.95$	0.90
AGFI	$0.90 \leq AGFI \leq 1$	$0.85 \leq AGFI \leq 0.90$	0.88
CFI	$0.97 \leq CFI \leq 1$	$0.95 \leq CFI \leq 0.97$	0.98
NNFI	$0.97 \leq NNFI \leq 1$	$0.95 \leq NNFI \leq 0.97$	0.97
NFI	$0.95 \leq NFI \leq 1$	$0.90 < NFI \leq 0.95$	0.96
RMSEA	$0 < RMSEA < 0.05$	$0.05 \leq RMSEA \leq 0.10$	0.04

Source: Şimşek (2007).

Table 4 exhibits a significant relationship between the democratic leadership perceptions of the employees, organizational dissent, and organizational creativity behavior. According to Gülmez and Huseynlı (2019), the correlation coefficient takes values between 0 and +(-) 1. If this coefficient approaches +1, it is determined that there is a strong direct relationship between the variables, and if it approaches -1, there is a strong inverse relationship between the variables. In this context, a moderate positive relationship was found between the democratic leadership perceptions of the employees and their organizational dissent behavior. In addition, a positive correlation of 0.551 (a 55% correlation) was obtained between the employees' democratic leadership perception and organizational creativity behaviors. In other words, a moderate positive relationship was obtained between the democratic leadership perceptions of the employees and their organizational creativity behaviors. Finally, a correlation at the level of 0.469 (a 46% correlation) was determined between the organizational dissent and organizational creativity behaviors of the employees. In short, a moderately positive relationship has been observed. All in all, it can be stated that a positive change in any of the factors of democratic leadership, organizational dissent, and organizational creativity affects other behaviors positively.

**Table 4. Correlation Coefficients Regarding Democratic Leadership, Organizational Dissent and Organizational Creativity Behaviors**

		Leadership	Dissent	Creativity
Leadership	Pearson Correlation	1	0,393**	0,551**
Dissent	Pearson Correlation	0,393**	1	0,469**
Creativity	Pearson Correlation	0,551**	0,469**	1

When the variables of the lateral dissent dimension are examined, it is noticed that LOM6 “I get involved when other employees make complaints about the workplace.” variable has a positive effect of 0.43 with one unit increase and LOM12 “I bring out my feelings about practices in the workplace to other employees.” variable has a positive effect by 0.90 for each unit increment. On the other hand, as the variables of the displaced dissent dimension are probed, it is detected that DOM10 “I discuss my concerns about decisions made with my family and friends outside of work in the workplace.” variable has a positive effect on displaced dissent dimension by 0.72 with one unit increase. Additionally, when the upward dissent variables are studied, it is observed that UPM11 “I forward my criticism of organizational changes that I think are not working out to my supervisor or one of the management team.” variable has a positive effect on upward dissent by 0.72 for each unit increment and UPM13 “When I question decisions made in the workplace, I discuss this with my supervisor or other managers.” variable has a positive effect on upward dissent by 0.82 for each unit increment.

As for the individual creativity dimension of the organizational creativity scale, with one unit increase IN8 “Every time I strive to use new knowledge and skills.” variable has a positive effect by 0.76 and IN9 “I constantly look for ways to improve myself by learning.” variable shows a positive effect by 0.81 on individual creativity dimension. Similarly, when the effect of organizational creativity dimension variables is investigated, it is spotted that MA20 “When management finds extraordinary inventions or practices of employees, they immediately reward them.” variable has a positive effect of 0.73 and MA21 “Management prepares a suitable environment for employees to think and act freely.” variable has a positive effect by 0.81 for each unit increment. Consequently, when the effect of societal creativity dimension variables is inspected, it is perceived that SO35 “My colleagues tend to think flexibly rather than prejudice.” variable has a positive effect by 0.90 with one unit increase and SO36 “My colleagues highlight a culture that emphasizes respect for differences.” variable has a positive effect by 0.92 for each unit increment.

Structural equation modeling was made use of so as to assess the relationship between democratic leadership and the sub-dimensions of organizational dissent and organizational creativity. In short, a model has been developed to reveal the cause-effect relationships of structural equation modeling and to convey the degree of mutual influence between variables. The structural equation model involving democratic leadership, organizational dissent, and creativity behaviors has been shown in Figure 1. It has been positioned at the end of study.

According to the Structural Equation Modeling analysis results shown in Figure 1, a significant relationship was achieved between the democratic leadership perception of the employees and their organizational dissent behavior, including the sub-dimensions such as upward dimension (0,10), lateral dimension (-0,05) and displaced dimension (0,31). That is to say, “H<sub>1</sub>: Democratic leadership has a significant impact on organizational dissent.” was accepted. According to Figure 1, it is seen that compared to the other sub-dimensions employees in hotels use the upward dissent strategy more (UPM11; 0,72., UPM13; 0,82, UPM17; 0,70). Leaders in hotel businesses must understand how individuals working in different parts of the organization express their dissent. In other words, the employees chose to communicate the emerging problems directly to their supervisors, whom they consider to have influence, power, and ability to solve them within the organization. On the other side, an inverse relationship was determined between the lateral dissent dimension of organizational dissent and democratic leadership (-0,05) according to the structural equation model. This relationship between supervisors and employees in the organization explained the opposite low-quality relationships mentioned. Likewise, Joost van loon (2013) asserts that when subordinates perceive that they have low-quality relationships with their managers, they significantly dissent laterally more than subordinates who perceived high-quality relationships with their managers. In this scope, both studies share common aspects.

The results of this study reveal that a significant relationship was found between the democratic leadership perception of the employees and the upward dissent dimension of organizational dissent. In other words, employees picked the way of communicating the emerging problems directly to their supervisors, whom they consider having influence, power, and ability to work out. Kassing (2009) highlights that there is evidence that upward dissent is the ideal strategy for both organizations and employees. In this sense, the results of this study support Kassing (2009)’s study results.

Bhatti et al. (2012) studied to explore the impact of autocratic and democratic leadership types on job satisfaction and identified that leadership styles affect job satisfaction constructively. Employees enjoy working in an accessible work environment where they can share their opinions and change their minds without

fear. Employees fearlessly desire to tell their leaders if anything is wrong. Considered in this context, the results of this study Bhatti et al. (2012) 's study support the results of this study. According to the results of this study, employees want to be more involved in the processes within the organization. They expect the approval of the employees in making the foremost decisions for the organization. These outputs are similar to those of Deery and Jago (2001).

At the same time, a meaningful relationship was detected between the democratic leadership perception of employees and their organizational creativity behaviors, including the sub-dimensions such as individual creativity (0,15), managerial creativity (0,47), and societal creativity (0,05). Moreover, it might be concluded that managerial creativity behaviors of the employees surpass the other two sub-dimensions. Then again, a critical relationship was uncovered between the democratic leadership perception of the employees and the individual creativity dimension of the organizational creativity scale. However, this relationship is relatively low (0.15). Woodman et al., (1993) explain that the organization's adaptation to the rapidly changing world around the organization can be achieved by the individual creative contribution of the organization's leadership and creative employees. In this perspective, the results of this study, including the democratic leadership perception and the individual creativity dimension of the organizational creativity scale, have similarities with the results of Woodman et al. (1993). Thus, “H<sub>2</sub>: Democratic leadership has a significant impact on organizational creativity.” was accepted.

## **Conclusion**

This study intends to explore the effect of employees' democratic leadership perceptions on organizational dissent and creativity with the help of a survey, including the employees working in five-star hotels in Antalya and Izmir. In the study, democratic leadership, organizational dissent, and creativity along with the sub-dimensions were analyzed by structural equation modeling and the results were indicated. The study hopes to come up with some constructive suggestions for the concerning parties.

Hotel managers should take care to encourage each member in the business to voice their ideas. Because better thoughts and creative plans can be offered via democratic leadership to the difficulties that arise within the organization. At the same time, innovation is encouraged and as a result, creative and reasonable solutions to strategic and complex problems are found. In addition, hotel managers can achieve higher productivity among group members by practicing a democratic leadership style. High productivity provides beneficial gains for businesses and employees.

Democratic leadership style promotes a creative organizational environment. Therefore, hotel managers should create a democratic organizational environment. This environment will serve for the emergence of creative ideas among the team members in the organization that will encourage innovation and initiative and serves the goals and interests of the organization. Similarly, in hotel businesses that apply a democratic leadership style, creativity and productivity are encouraged in the organization, and thus projects based on innovative thinking can increase in the organization.

Hotel managers should establish a workplace policy by which the employees may understand that they will not be penalized for expressing dissent. Because the mentioned internal policy may serve for an outstanding advantage in the long-term performance of the organization and in the survival of an organization. In addition, employees' expressing their dissent should be considered as a duty of commitment to the employee's organization's goals, policies, and processes.

The most important way to achieve creative success in an organization or bring creativity in the organization to the desired point is to make the necessary investments in individual freedom within the organization. Because organizational creativity is a situation that can be achieved through individual creativity.

Hotel business managers should know that there will be no innovation and creativity in an organization where no dissent exists. If different opinions are not allowed to be voiced or explicitly encouraged, the organization may fail to learn from its environment. In addition to that, employees' job satisfaction can be high in hotel businesses that allow the expression of dissent. This state may help reduce labor burnout and can mean reduced labor loss in turn.

Hotel managers should create a tolerable climate within the organization to ensure the implementation of organizational creativity. In an organization using a democratic management style and open to different thoughts and interpretations, creativity will have less difficulty coming to the fore. Furthermore, a policy should be determined and implemented on issues such as retaining creative and talented people.

Future researchers can also analyze the subject with different mediator variables. For example, employers' perceptions of democratic leadership and autocratic leadership can be compared in the context of tourism and hospitality businesses. In addition, it is thought that the relationship between the aforementioned factors may be examined in different regions and destinations and other types of accommodation businesses (for example, 3-4 star hotels, etc.), and thus, they may help contribute to the literature and practitioners.

This research study has some limitations. The study was limited to only 5-star hotels in Antalya and Izmir, and managers were excluded, and it was applied only to employees. Also, no other similar studies examining the relationship between democratic leadership, organizational dissent, and organizational creativity were found in the literature review, so it was not possible to make comparisons with other study results in terms of all factors.

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**Figure 1. Structural Equation Model for Democratic Leadership, Organizational Dissent and Creativity Behaviors**

