Employee Loyalty during Slowdown of Covid 19: Does Satisfaction and Trust Matter?

by I Wayan Edi Arsawan

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Abstract

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Purpose- This research aims to test employee loyalty in the hotel industry, particularly during the Covid-19 pandemic. This study examines and explains the relations in between leader support in building job satisfaction, trust, and employee loyalty. Also, this research aims to test and explain the role of satisfaction and trust as mediator variables.

Design/methodology/approach – This research used a quantitative design by distributing questionnaires to 206 employers of the 97 hotels in Bali, Indonesia, particularly during pandemic Covid 19. The research data were then analyzed using Wrap-PLS software.

Findings: The results revealed that leader support did not have a significant effect on loyalty. Satisfaction and trust act as double mediators in leaders' support and loyalty relationships.

Research limitations and Implications- Employees need leaders' support to remain loyal to their organization in a slowdown situation due to the Covid 19 pandemic and its various challenges.

Originality/ Value- Research on the effects of the Covid 19 pandemic on various sectors has been comprehensive. However, the research that invests in employee loyalty in the hospitality industry is still rare. This study analyzes the logalty of hotel employees, particularly when the tourism sector is experiencing a slowdown. This study also examines the role of trust and satisfaction as mediating relationships between leaders' support and loyalty, which have not been widely analyzed in previous studies.

Keywords- Leader support, Employee Satisfaction, Trust and Employee loyalty **Paper type** Research paper

1. Introduction

The hotel business supports the tourism industry and a country's economy. However, the Covid-19 pandemic had a tremendous effect on the tourism sector (John, 2020; Škare *et al.*, 2021). This condition proves that the tourism sector is fragile (Kaushal and Srivastava, 2021). It requires an appropriate response to ensure resilience and sustainability (Sobaih *et al.*, 2021). During a pandemic, efforts to maintain the hotel industry's resilience keep employee loyalty (Ding and Jiang, 2021) and determine the correct leadership pattern (Pillai *et al.*, 2021). Therefore, the hotel industry still supports a country's economy (Yao et al., 2019).

Along with developing the tourism business, the various empirical literature has examined various aspects that improve human resources competence to provide services that refer to international standards (Hewagama *et al.*, 2019). Nevertheless, the literature that discusses the hotel business problems has not tern carried out systematically and deeply. As a result, several problems emerged, such as the role of leadership and human resource management (Tsang and Hsu, 2011; Yao *et al.*, 2019), innovative work behavior (Arsawan *et al.*, 2018), disaster management framework (Hao *et al.*, 2020), as well as consumer behavior (Chen and Wang, 2019). Employees are internal consumers that feel the internal conditions of the company. Therefore, they are willing to be loyal to their organization (Book *et al.*, 2019). This fair needs to investigate that employee loyalty can reduce human resource turnover after the Covid 19 pandemic, particularly in the hospitality industry.

Based on this phenomenon, this study closes four research gaps. First, the hotel business is promising and has swift business growth (Bocken, 2017). The rapid growth of this business results in significant job opportunities for each employee. The employee is possible to move from one hotel to another. However, since the Covid-19 pandemic, the hotel industry has been hit hard and has been hit hardest (Davahli *et al.*, 2020). The pandemic situation forces companies to cut employee income, work part-time jobs, and temporarily turn off employees. As a result, many employees have tried other job alternatives to generate income. This condition makes the hotel industry experience the potential to lose potential employees. The pandemic is also a test of employee loyalty to the hotel where they work, particularly in city tourism. It cannot be denied that city tourism experience a bigger pandemic impact than tourism in rural areas. This stude to the causal relationship of employee loyalty in the hotel industry, considering that this industry is experiencing a slowdown due to the Covid 19 pandemic. This crisis requires various thoughts on how to pay attention to sustainable labor (John, 2020). Therefore, this study explores the level of employee trust and employee satisfaction with their loyalty to return to work in the post-pandemic hotel sector.

Second, the Covid-19 pandemic has caused the hotel industry to collapse. This situation presents extraordinary challenges for business leaders in decision-making (Dirani *et al.*, 2020), particularly regarding employee termination. In the human resource-based hotel industry, employees are the most valuable assets to achieve optimal performance (Kurian, 2018; Muduli, 2015). Losing potential employees is interpreted as a loss of knowledge (Ramlall, 2004). Leaders must provide emotional and interpersonal support, positive reinforcement, and intensive communication, particularly during the pandemic (Dirani *et al.*, 2020). Also, the research examines leaders' role in providing protection is still rare (Book et al., 2019: Flores-Zamora and García-Madariaga, 2017: Wang et al., 2017). There is no research linking leaders' role with trust and employee satisfaction in measuring employee loyalty (Yue *et al.*, 2019; Zeffane and Melhem, 2017). Thus, this study examines the role of leader support in creating employee satisfaction, etst loyee trust, and employee loyalty.

Third, there are different views regarding the concept of employee loyalty. In the traditional human resource view, employee loyalty has not been considered a crucial phenomenon (Farrukh *et al.*, 2019). This assumption causes employee loyalty to be seen as a simple model (Gaber and Fahim, 2018). On the other hand, marketing science reveals that loyalty includes aspects of individual expectations, attitudes, and behavior (Fernandes *et al.*, 2020). Therefore, companies need to pay attention to employee attitudes and expectations to increase their loyalty. This research is a benchmark for further research that discusses the determinants of employee loyalty in the hotel industry. This study exploses the leader support role in building trust to increase employee satisfaction and loyalty in a single model. Specifically, this study investigates the role of employee satisfaction and employee trust as mediating the effects of leader support and employee loyalty (expectations, attitudes, and behavior). Given that satisfaction is a strong predictor of increasing employee loyalty (Chang *et al.*, 2010). Also, trust is needed to positively influence openness to change (Yue *et al.*, 2019). It is hoped that the role of employee satisfaction and trust can increase leadership support for loyalty.

Theoretically, this study elaborates on the social exchange theory that employees will survive if they get something from the organization (Blau, 1964). Practically, this research provides an effective solution for the tourism industry to reengage current inactive employees. This condition will build employee loyalty because employees feel appreciated and part of the company. The other essential benefit is overcoming problems related 340 employee turnover before the Covid 19 Pandemic and addressing the various problems caused by the Covid 19 Pandemic.

The next section of this paper presents the literature review, including the formulation of research hypotheses. The gird section describes the research methodology and discussion. The last section contains conclusions and suggestions for future research.

2. Literature review and hypotheses development

Social Exchange Theory

Social exchange theory is described as a voluntary action that is motivated by a nitch between expectations and what they get (Blau, 1964). Social exchange theory has a central premise that exchanging social processes and material resources is the primary form of human exchange. This theory supports that individuals can develop their behavior based on future expectations and make them loyal to their organization (Rosenberg and Turner, 2017). Social exchange is a special consideration in confident leaders that promote interaction with subordinates (Lehmann-Willenbrock *et al.*, 2015). The leaders that provide needed support, consult on important decisions, provide more autonomy, and remove unnecessary bureaucratic obstacles will influence the behavior of subordinates (Kim and Beehr, 2018). Hsieh and Wang (2015) also explain that trust is the most strongly variable influencing integresonal attitudes and behavior. Trust is fundamental in cooperative relationships, and trust is the emotional glue that binds followers and leaders (Bennis and Nanus, 1985; Blau, 1964). Trust leads to positive results such as increased employee satisfaction (Dirks and Ferrin, 2002).

2.1 Leader Support

The conventional theory is a conceptual basis where leader behavior is related to perceptions and support that influence employee behavior (Amabile *et al.*, 2004). The conventional theory shows the leader's positive behavior can be a model in providing services, planning, and setting goals (Amabile *et al.*, 2004). The leader's support can also influence subordinates through skill development, project handling, and increasing intrinsic motivation (Smith-Jentsch *et al.*, 2005). In the last few decades, leadership support has played an essential role in improving organizational performance (Para-González *et al.*, 2018). The form of leadership support is to carry out the organization's maintenance, such as organizing resources effectively, explaining the factors that become expectations and work standards, compiling information, and solving problems (Cheung and Wong, 2011). Leaders' support should lead to efforts to build employee trust and loyalty through an interpersonal relationship approach. Leaders that support their subordinates through ethical behavior can encourage employees to make positive social exchanges (Wang, Yang, *et al.*, 2017).

2.2 Employee Satisfaction

Employee satisfaction is an essential factor in determining employee behavior (Chen and Wang, 2019). Satisfaction shown is highly dependent on organizational behavior (Chandra *et al.*, 2019), such as employee commitment (Lok and Crawford, 1999; Rustiarini *et al.*, 2021). Attitudes and cognition indicate employee satisfaction toward their work environment.

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Employ satisfaction is defined as an emotional state that arises from employees' assessments (Al-Sada *et al.*, 2017; Chang *et al.*, 2010), one of which related to employee feelings about work (Hassan *et al.*, 2013). Employee satisfaction is a consequence of events and an indicator of personal and organizational well-being (Cho and Park, 2011). Employee satisfaction levels are always associated with their attitudes towards work, compensation, and employers (Ko and Choi, 2019). This condition will determine whether to move to another workplace (Liu *et al.*, 2020) or reduce the desire to change jobs (Tuten and Neidermeyer, 2004). Employee satisfaction is also determined by their ability to adjust to organizational culture. This attitude emphasizes employee satisfaction with a profession that involves cognitive are emotional. The most crucial thing in employee satisfaction is awareness, and it can be a strong predictor of employee turnover (Wolter *et al.*, 2019).

2.3 Employee Trust

Trust is defined as a psychological condition that is vulnerable to other parties' actions based on the expectations of positive behavior and others' intentions (Asencio, 2016; Melewar *et al.*, 2016; Men *et al.*, 2020). The trust concept is associated with each individual's attribution to their behavior's intentions and motives (Zeffane and Melhem, 2017). Furthermore, trust is stated as an essential aspect in building long-term relationships. Yue et al. (2019) define employee trust as a level of trust based on integrity, linkage, and competence so that they are willing to open up to other parties. Sharkie (2009²⁵) ates that a trust is a co-collaborative approach shown by employees in their organization. Trust is an essociated factor in increasing the efficiency and quality of cooperation between employees (Hsie7) and Wang, 2015; Nurkholis *et al.*, 2020). Employee trust has been demonstrated through trust in management, trust in supervisors, and co-workers' trust (Cho and Park, 2011). Trust in management arises from organizations' perceptions of success and positive results (Ababneh, 2020). Trust in a supervisor a perception of trust in the supervisor. Its effect is based on supervisor characteristics, such as integrity, accountability, transparency, openness, predictability, and consistency (Xiong *et al.*, 2016).

2.4 Employee Loyalty

Loyalty is described as a situation of processional relationships and hierarchy shown through employees and their superiors (Ineson *et al.*, 2013). Employee loyalty is defined as the intention and dedication to always be with the organization and be willing to develop its business. It can be said as an employee's voluntary commitment and participation to the organization and assumes himself as an inseparable part of the organization (Bhat and Darzi, 2018). Thus, loyalty is more action-oriented because it relates to employee behavior (Eskildsen and Nüssler, 2000). This behavior includes the extent to which employees are committed and responsible for the work performed (Rustiarini *et al.*, 1219). Involvement and relationships between employees also support employees' desire to be more loyal to the organization (Book *et al.*, 2019). Therefore, employee loyalty is the first step to improve company capabilities (Martos-Partal and Labeaga, 2019).

2.5 Hypotheses Development

Leader support, employee satisfaction, employee trust, and employee loyalty

This type of leadership is proven to increase employee satisfaction. Eşitti and Kasap (2020) stated that employee job satisfaction is primarily determined by exchanging ideas between leaders and subordinates. Liu, Bellibaş, and Gümüş (2020) also prove that instructional and distribution leadership has been shown to increase employee job satisfaction, both directly and indirectly. Also, transformational leadership as seen as a sound strategy for creating job satisfaction in the work environment (Boamah *et al.*, 2018; Mufti *et al.*, 2020; Podsakoff *et al.*, 1996).

Leadership not only affects employee satisfaction but also increases employee trust (Kelloway *et al.*, 2012). Supervisors' consistency in exercising control, either through words or actions, is related to employee trust (Wang and Hsieh, 2013). As stated by the previous

result (Xiong *et al.*, 2016), authentic leadership can increase supervisors' and employees' trust. 36

The effects of leadership and employee loyalty have been widely studied in various scientific contexts, such as socio-cultural, political, and managerial. Based on a manageria context, employee loyalty is seen as a form of employee loyalty to the organization (Book et al., 2019). Leadership has a positive effect on increasing employee loyalty (Wang, Lu, *et al.*, 2017). Wu and Wang (2012) stated that leadership with charisma shows a contribution to increasing employee loyalty. When a leader expresses an opinion related to satisfaction, that opinion also determines employee loyalty (Flores-Zamora and García-Madariaga, 2017). For example, members of political parties' loyalty are highly dependent on how committed the leaders are to their ideology (Asmussen and Ramey (2018). Thus, manager behavior positively impacts loyal employee behavior (Ineson *et al.*, 2013). Based on some of the research results, formulate the following hypothesis:

H1: Leader support has a positive effect on employee satisfaction.

H2: Leader support has a positive effect on employee trust.

H3: Leader support has a positive effect on employee loyalty.

2.6 Employee satisfaction, employee trust, and employee loyalty

Studies on satisfaction are primarily associated with consumer behavior (Matzler and Renzl, 2006). However, employee satisfaction and loyalty have been verified as essential variables for maintaining continuity, life, and organizational success (Chang *et al.*, 2010; Keshavarz and Jamshidi, 2018). Eskildsen and Nüssler (2000) explain that satisfaction and loyalty can provide leverage to increase performance. Employee satisfaction is also a predictor of loyalty (Chao and Cheng, 2019; Hung *et al.*, 2019). Increased employee satisfaction will increase employee loyalty (Boonlertvanich, 2019; Jun *et al.*, 2006). However, employee satisfaction is highly dependent on the compensation given, which in turn has an impact on employee loyalty (Hassan *et al.*, 2013).

Employee trust has a vital role in increasing employee satisfaction and performance (Ababneh, 2020). Although trust and satisfaction cannot increase the direct relationship between managers and performance, trust positively impacts satisfaction (Roberts and David, 2020). Previous empirical evidence (Cho and Park, 2011; Song *et al.*, 2019) revealed a substantial relationship between employee trust and satisfaction (Ko and Choi, 2019; Meng and Berger, 2019). Like the effect of trust on satisfaction, employee trust also positively affects increasing employee loyalty to the organization (Melián-Alzola and Martín-Santana, 2020). Researchers reveal that brand trust increases brand loyalty (Kalhor *et al.*, 2019). This phenomenon emphasizes that the development of the concept of internal marketing must involve employees as consumers. Therefore, e 30 loyee trust in the organization can increase loyalty behavior (Boonlertvanich, 2019; Hung *et al.*, 2019). Thus, the following hypothesis can be formulated as follows:

H4: Employee satisfaction has a positive effect on employee loyalty.

H5: Employee trust has a positive effect on employee satisfaction.

H6: Employee trust has a positive effect on employee loyalty.

157 The role of employee trust and employee satisfaction as a mediator

Employee satisfaction is a critical factor in increasing employee loyalty. Long-term relationships between management and employees can increase employee satisfaction and loyalty (Chang *et al.*, 2010; Erawan, 2020). Leaders increase employee loyalty by paying attention to employee psychological satisfaction (Ding and Jiang, 2021). The leadership that understanding this psychological process can use trust to build employee loyalty behavior (Matzler and Renzl, 2006). Psychological factors formed from trust and commitment need attention in mediating employees' expectations (Ababneh, 2020; Cho and Park, 2011). This condition is evidenced by Roberts and David (2020) that satisfaction and trust can improve the relationship between phubbing bosses and performance. In this case, trust becomes a mediator to increase organizational productivity (Ko and Choi, 2019). In marketing research, customer trust and satisfaction significantly affect their loyalty to the organization. Thus, consumers will be interested in sustainably using a product (Boonlertvanich, 2019; Jeaheng *et al.*, 2020; Melián-Alzola and Martín-Santana, 2020). Based on this description, the following hypothesis is formulated:

H7: Employee satisfaction as a mediator for the effect of leader support on employee loyalty. H8: Employee trust acts as a mediator for the effect of leader support on employee loyalty.

Figure 1 presenting the relationship between leader support, employee satisfaction, employee trust, and loyalty in the hospitality industry.

Insert Figure 1

3. Material and Methods

3.1 Sampling method

This study's population was hotel employees spread across nine districts/cities in Bali, Indonesia. This study uses a question are as a data collection tool. The questionnaire was distributed to hotel employees who have at least one year of work experience and are currently being discharged due to the Covid 19 pandemic. The researchers did not specifically classify the respondents, given the situation during the pandemic. However, in general, the targets for filling out the questionnaire were employees who are dismissed. The authors use these employees as research respondents to determine the dedication and integrity of employees towards the company. Also, to obtain information regarding the desire of hotel industry employees to return to work in this sector. It is undeniable that the conditions of the Covid 19 pandemic, which lasted for a long time. Thus, people who work in the tourism sector look for alternative jobs in other sectors.

The questionnaire was created using google form and distributed using snowball sampling. Researchers use this method because they have difficulty identifying employees who are not actively working in the hotel sector. Finally, the researcher uses several key informants to deliver the researcher to the respondents to be studied. Thus, the presence of these key informants pavides data access and helps researchers find other key informants (Burgess, 1982). This study used a questionnaire with a Likert scale of 1-7, namely 1 = strongly disagree until 7 = strongly agree. The number of hotel employees who filled out the questionnaire was 211 people who worked at 97 hotels in Bali. There is five respondent not filled out questionnaires. Therefore, the appropriate questionnaire to use was 206 questionnaires.

3.2 Measurement

This study uses the variable leader support, employee satisfaction, employee trust, and loyalt 21 The interpretation of the score for respondents' perceptions of the research questions is presented in Table 1 and Table 2.

Insert Table 1

Insert Table 2

Data collection using a questionnaire was carried out in two stages. The first stage, namely collecting data from 30 respondents to test the instrument through validity and reliability testing. The research instrument is declared valid if it has a product-moment correlation coefficient (r) higher than 0.3 (r> 0.3). Also, the instrument meets the criteria of reliability if it has a Cronbach Alpha value greater than 0.6 (CA> 0.6) (Hair *et al.*, 2016). In the second stage, researchers distributed questionnaires according to the needs or target samples. Furthermore, the data were analyzed using Wrap-PLS.

4. Research Result 4.1 Respondent Demographic Information Based on the data collected, the respondents' demographic information presenting in Table 3.

Insert Table 3

4.2 Outer and inner model measurement

The testing phase of testing was carried out to determine the results of the validity and reliability tests. The criteria for testing the validity and reliability of the model are Convergent Validity (see Table 4), exciminant Validity (see Table 5), as well as Composite Reliability, and Cronbach Alpha (see Table 6). The results of the validity and reliability tests for the variable leader support (X), employee satisfaction (Y1), employee trust (Y2), and employee loyalty (Y3) are presented in Tables 4, 5, and 6.

Insert Table 4

Based on Table 4, all statement items have an outer loading value greater than 0.6 (outer loading> 0.60). It can conclude that all statement items have met the requirements of convergent validity. The validity test is continued by evaluating discriminant validity by looking at the correlation value between variables compared to the average extracted root (AVE). The AVE value also shows that this study's variables meet the convergent criteria (cut off> 0.50).

Insert Table 5

Table 5 shows that the AVE value of all constructs is more significant than 0.50 (> 0.50), which indicates that this research model has met the discriminant criteria. This finding confirms the results of the validity of convergent validity. The test is done by checking the AVE root's value (diagonal), which has a higher value than the correlation between latent variables. Therefore, the model fulfills the specified discriminant validity. Furthermore, the reliability test was carried out by looking at the composite reliability and Cronbach Alpha, presented in Table 6.

Insert Table 6

Table 6 explains that all research constructs have met the criteria for composite reliability with a minimum value of 0.7 (CR> 0.7) and a Cronbach Alpha value greater than 0.6 (CA> 0.6). The Variance Inflation Factors' value is smaller than 3.3 (VIFs <3.3), indicating that the model is free from multicollinearity. Also, the Q2 coefficient value of the dependent value is 0.695, indicating that this research model has a significant Goodness of Fit value (Hair *et al.*, 2016). Testing the validity and reliability of the constructs shows that all variables used in the model are valid and reliable.

4.3 Hypotheses Testing

The following hypothesis testing was carried out using SEM-PLS analysis. Hypothesis testing confirms the path coefficient and p-value, shown in Figure 2 and Table 7.

Insert Figure 2

Insert Table 7

Based on Figure 2 and Table 7, this study obtains the information that leader support significantly affects employee satisfaction with the value of path coefficients of 0.406441d p-value <0.001 (H1 supported). The results of the resparch prove that the support of leaders can increase the level of employee satisfaction. The results of hypothesis 2 testing also show that the support leader has a significant effect on employee trust with path coefficients of

0.612 and p-value <0.001 (H2 sepported). However, the results of testing hypothesis 3 indicate that leader support has no significant effect on employee loyalty with a path coefficients value of 0.091 and p-value 0.093 (H3 not supported).

Other results found that employee satisfaction significantly affected employee loyalty with a path coefficient value of 0.472 and p-value <0.001 (H4 supported). Likewise, the results of the hypothesis 5 test revealed that employee trust significantly increases employee satisfaction. The path coefficients indicate these results value 0.447 and p-value <0.001 (H5 supported). Statistical analysis for hypothesis six reveals that employee trust significantly increased employee loyalty, as indicated by the path coefficients value of 0.499 and <0.001 (H6 supported). This study also conducted statistical tests on the role of employee satisfaction and employee trust, which are presented in Table 8.

Insert Table 8

Based on the results in Table 8, the mediation test conducted using the Sobel Test. The result shows that the employee satisfaction variable is proven to mediate leader support on employee satisfaction. The results of this test are indicated by the Sobel test statistic value of 4.9411> 1.96. Thus, these statistical results support Hypothesis 7. Likewise, the results of other mediation tests also show that employee trust is proven to mediate the effect of leader support on employee loyalty with a statistical Sobel test value of 6.2985> 1.96. Therefore, these results support Hypothesis 8.

5. Discussion

The first hypothesis result proves that the support of leaders can increase the level of employee satisfaction. Employee satisfaction is an essential factor in determining employee behavior (Chen and Wang, 2019). Satisfaction shown is highly dependent on organizational behavior (Chandra et al., 2019), such as employee commitment (Lok and Crawford, 1999; Rustiarini et al., 2021). Attituding and cognition indicate employee satisfaction toward their work environment. Employse satisfaction is defined as an emotional state that arises from employees' assessments (Al-Sada et al., 2017; Chang et al., 2010), one of which is related to employee feelings about work (Hassan et al., 2013). This condition will determine whether to move to another workplace (Liu et al., 2020) or reduce the desire to change jobs (Tuten and Neidermeyer, 2004). One of the factors that determine employee satisfaction is leadership support. This type of leadership is proven to increase employee satisfaction. Employee job satisfaction is primarily determined by exchanging ideas between leaders and subordinates (Esitti and Kasap, 2020). Liu, Bellibas, and Gümüs (2020) prove that instructional and distribution leadership has been shown to increase employee job satisfaction, both directly and indirectly. Also, transformational leadership 29 seen as a sound strategy for creating job satisfaction in the work environment (Boamah et al., 2018; Mufti et al., 2020; Podsakoff et al., 1996). 28 nese results confirm previous research (Boamah et al., 2018; Eşitti and Kasap, 2020; Liu et al., 2020; Mufti et al., 2020; Podsakoff et al., 1996). [16]

The second hypothesis also shows that the support leader has a significant effect on employee trust. Trust is defined as a psychological condition that is vulnerable to other parties' actions basan on the expectations of positive behavior and others' intentions (Asencio, 2016; Melewar *et al.*, 2016; Men *et al.*, 2020). The concept of trust is associated with each individual's attribution to the intentions and motives underlying their behavior (Zeffane and Melhem, 2017). Furthermore, trust is stated as an essential a pect in building long-term relationships. Employee trust has been demonstrated through trust in managemee, trust in supervisors, and co-workers' trust (Cho and Park, 2011). Tr 20 in a supervisor is a perception of trust in the supervisor. Its effect is based on supervisor characteristics, such as integrity, accountability, transparency, openness, predictability, and consistency (Xiong *et al.*, 2016). Supervisors' consistency in exercising control, either through words or actions, is related to employee trust (Wang and Hsieh, 2013). In the hospitality industry, the form of support from leaders is shown in the development programs, regulations, and systems that apply to hotels. Thus, employees tend to feel satisfied and trust the organization. As stated by the previous result (Xiong *et al.*, 2016), leadership can increase supervisors' and employees' trust. The study results reinforce previous studies' results (Kelloway *et al.*, 2012; Wang and Hsieh, 2013; Xiong *et al.*, 2016).

Contrary to the two previous results, the third hypothesis state that leader support has no significant effect on employee loyalty. The study results contradict the study results by Wang, Lu, and Liu (2017) that employee loyalty refers to behavior to engage in organizational interests. Theoretically, the increase in employee loyalty is primarily determined by a leader's support (Asmussen and Ramey, 2018; Book et al., 2019; Flores-Zamora and García-Madariaga, 2017; Ineson et al., 2013; Wu and Wang, 2012). However, the study results show that leader support cannot increase the effect of employee loyalty. This result may be due to various factors. First, leaders are not ready for a pandemic that has suddenly occurred and for a long time. Pandemic is a test for business leaders to fight to save organizations and jobs. Leaders' unpreparedness in overcoming pandemic situations has prevented leaders from minimizing the negative impact of the pandemic on organizations and employees. As a result, leaders make decisions that are seen as detrimental to employees, such as layoffs. Second, there is a possibility that the leader does not have crisis management competence, especially related to human resource management (Dirani et al., 2020). In a pandemic situation, leaders should provide emotional and interpersonal support, psychological empowerment, positive reinforcement, and maintain employee interactions (Dirani et al., 2020). Leaders also need to communicate the general condition of the hospitality business, including the company's current position, so that employees can understand the company's decisions and adapt to the pandemic situation. Intensive communication is an integral part of crisis management which aims to maintain employee trust in the company. Unpreparedness and lack of management competence, of course, have negative consequences for employees. Employees feel that the leadership is not trying to keep them as intangible assets of the company. This condition allows employees to find other job alternatives outside the hotel industry. As a result, leader support is unable to increase employee loyalty. The uncertainty of a pandemic situation affects employees in providing perceptions of leader support resulting in differences in the findings of previous studies. The failure to reveal the phenomenon makes testing the loyalty model amid a pandemic very difficult because many situations need to be considered and studied further.

The fourth hypothesis found that employee satisfaction significantly affected employee loyalty. Employee loyalty is defined as the intention and dedication to always be with the organization and be willing to develop its business. It can be said as an employee's voluntary commitment and participation to the organization and assumes himself as an inseparable part of the organization. Loyalty is more action-oriented because it relates to employee behavior (Eskildsen and Nüssler, 2000). Employee satisfaction is a predictor of loyalty (Chao and Cheng, 2019; Hung *et al.*, 2019). Employee satisfaction will increase employee loyalty (Boonlertvanich, 2019; Jun *et al.*, 2006). This behavior includes the extent to which employees are committed and responsible for the work performed. Involvement and relationships between employees also support employees' desire to be more loyal to the organization (Book 1 al., 2019). The study results support previous evidence (Boonlertvanich, 2019; Chang *et al.*, 2010; Eskildsen and Nüssler, 2000; Hassan *et al.*, 2013; Hung *et al.*, 2019).

Statistical analysis for hypotheres 5 reveals that employee trust significantly increases employee satisfaction. Employers satisfaction is defined as an emotional state that arises from employees' assessments (Al-Sada *et al.*, 2017; Chang *et al.*, 2010), one of which is related to employee feelings about work (Hassan *et al.*, 2013). Employee satisfaction levels are associated with attitudes towards work, compensation, and employers (Ko and Choi, 2019). Their trust dramatically influences the level of employee satisfaction in the organization. Thus, employee trust has a vital role in increasing employee satisfaction (Ababneh, 2020). The study results confirm the findings (Boonlertvanich, 2019; Hung *et al.*, 2019; Kalhor *et al.*, 2020; Melián-Alzola and Martín-Santana, 2020) that employees trust affect employee satisfaction.

The results of the hypothesis 6 test revealed that employee trust significantly increased employee loyalty. Employee loyalty is not only influenced by employee satisfaction but also influenced by an employee trust. Like the effect of trust on satisfaction, employee trust also positively affects increasing employee loyalty to the organization (Melián-Alzola and Martín-Santana, 2020). Researchers reveal that brand trust increases brand loyalty (Kalhor *et al.*, 2020). The result indicates that trust can increase customer loyalty (Paparoidamis *et al.*,

2019). This phenomenon also emphasizes that the development of the concept of internal marketing must involve employees as consumers. Therefore, employee trust in the organization can increase loyalty behavior (Boonlertvanich, 2019; Hung *et al.*, 2019). The results support previous empirical evidence that employee trust affects employee loyalty (Ababneh, 2020; Cho and Park, 2011; Song *et al.*, 2019).

The seventh hypothesis is formulated that employee satisfaction is a mediator for leader support on employee loyalty. The mediation test conducted using the Sobel Test shows that employee satisfaction acts as a mediating valuable (fully mediation) of the relationship between leader support and temployee loyalty (Chang *et al.*, 2010; Matzler and Renzl, 2006). This resits indicates that employee satisfaction is a critical factor in increasing employee loyalty. Long-term relationships between management and employees can increase employee satisfaction and loyalty (Chang *et al.*, 2010). Leaders can increase employee loyalty by paying attention to employee psychological satisfaction (Ding and Jiang, 2021). Thus, employee satisfaction can mediate the leadership support and employee loyalty relationship.

The last state hypothesis that employee trust acts as a mediator for leader support on employee loyalty. The statistical result shows that employee trust has been shown to play a role as complete mediation in increasing the effect of leader support on employee loyalty (Ababneh, 2020; Cho and Park, 2011; Ko and Choi, 2019; Roberts and David, 2020). These results indicate that leader support does not directly increase employee loyalty. However, this study proved that employee satisfaction and employee trust variables could increase leader support on employee loyalty.

6. Conclusion, Implication, and Limitation

6.1 Conclusion

One of the efforts that organizations can make in dealing with the slowdown due to the Covid 19 pandemic is to increase innovation and sustainability (Arsawan *et al.*, 2021); preparing a sustainability strategy (Cavaleri and Shabana, 2018), increasing the role of leadership (Meng and Berger, 2019). This effort was made to increase employee trust (Xiong *et al.*, 2016) and job satisfaction (Meng and Berger, 2019) so that they become more creative and have high performance (Hsieh and Wang, 2015). A leader plays a role in maintaining the organizational environment to remain stable and conducive (Cheung and Wong, 2011) and increase innovative work behavior (Arsawan *et al.*, 2020). Through this support, employees are expected to have employee satisfaction to become more enthusiastic at work. Also, the support of a leader can keep employees' trust in the organization (Cho and Park, 2011) and increase satisfaction and maintain their loyalty (Podsakoff *et al.*, 1996; Sharkie, 2009). Thus, leader-ship support can help organizations to improve performance through maintaining the internal environment and organizational culture and climate (Jain *et al.*, 2015; Nguyen *et al.*, 2019).

6.2 Implication

662.1 Theoretical implications

This study aims to examine and explain the role of leader support on employee satisfaction, trust, and loyalty. There are several contributions to the literature. First, leader support does not directly impact employee loyalty. Leader support only affects when mediated by employee satisfaction and employee trust. Meanwhile, employee satisfaction and employee trust can directly increase employee loyalty. This fact provides a theoretical lens from a different social exchange theory perspective (Blau, 1964). These results indicate that employees have their perspectives on the organization. The finding means that employee loyalty is not determined by manager support because they think that social exchange can justify employee behavior regarding the desire to change jobs.

Second, the analysis results for indirect effects show that employee satisfaction and employee trust are proven to mediate the effects of leader support on employee loyalty. Specifically, employee satisfaction acts as a fully mediating variable in the relationship between leader support and employee loyalty. These results can interpret to build loyalty and leaders must make employees feel satisfied with the work they do in the organization (Chang *et al.*, 2010; Matzler and Renzl, 2006). Third, employee trust has also been shown to play a role as a full mediator of the relationship between leader support and employee loyalty. This condition reflects that leaders play an essential role in increasing employee confidence in the organization's sustainability. Thus, this trust can create employee loyalty (Ababneh, 2020; Cho and Park, 2011; Ko and Choi, 2019; Roberts and David, 2020).

6.2.2 Managerial implications

This study provides four managerial implications. First, in conditions of uncertainty and crisis, leaders' role is vital in dealing with change and directing the organization towards the recovery process (Charalampos *et al.*, 2021). Therefore, leaders must have knowledge and competencies related to crisis management, particularly in human resource management. The Covid-19 pandemic that lasted for a long time reduced employee loyalty. This condition potentially caused the hotel industry will to lose their potential employees. Leaders need to provide assistance, consultation, and communicate effectively to employees in adapting to pandemic conditions (Dirani *et al.*, 2020). Thus, leadership support can increase employees' organizational commitment, such as emotional feelings, identification, and regard the organization as part of their life.

Second, the results imply a view that the employee turnover rate is correlated with employee loyalty. As a result, employees feel that employee loyalty is not influenced by leadership support. Before pandemic situations, this condition does not significantly affect the performance of the hotel industry. However, employees will feel it differently when they are in an unexpected situation, such as the Covid 19 pandemic. During a pandemic, where most employees are dismissed or experience layoffs, employees certainly desire to return to work in the hospitality industry. This situation becomes a momentum for top dreamers to show their support to employees. One effort that can do is to call them back to work. This condition is aimed at actualizing leadership support for employees and fostering employee loyalty to the organization.

Thus, this study contributes to organizational leaders being more skilled in managing human resources, such as maintaining employee loyalty. The results contribute to other tourism business managers, particularly in city tourism. It cannot be denied that city tourism experience a bigger pandemic impact than tourism in rural areas. The support of leaders that have been provided through policies needs to be communicated through inter-personal approaches to increase employee loyalty. Also, an excellent human resource management policy can reduce the turnover rate of employees that has been happening in the hotel industry.

6.2 Research limitations

This study has limitations. First, the testing of this research model is related to the Covid 19 pandemic. In this case, this study's results are likely to have different results than when tourism conditions before the pandemic. Thus, further research can test the conceptual framework during the transition or recovery period. Second, the role of managers in this study is to increase employee trust and satisfaction to make employees loyal to the organization. The research model can be developed by adding variables resulting from employee loyalty behavior, such as employee performance, innovative behavior, or organizational performance. Also, researchers can consider the use of moderating variables such as organizational culture, communication, and psychological contracts. Third, considering that this research uses a self-assessment report approach carried out by employees when working from home, changes in a work environment and economic problems may affect respondents' psychological condition when filling out the questionnaire. Fourth, specifically in this paper, the criteria for respondents and objects have not been precisely determined. Therefore, that there may be biased results that have not been explained in this study. Future research suggests making comparisons of employee behavior during a pandemic and after a pandemic to obtain comprehensive research results.

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