



## HOW DOES DEMOCRATIC LEADERSHIP EFFECT ORGANIZATIONAL TRUST IN HOSPITALITY BUSINESSES? THE MEDIATING ROLE OF ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION

KONAKLAMA İŞLETMELERİNDE DEMOKRATİK LİDERLİK ÖRGÜTSEL GÜVENİ NASIL ETKİLER? ÖRGÜTSEL İLETİŞİMİN ARACILIK ROLÜ

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### Abstract

The aim of the research is to determine the effect of democratic leadership perception on organizational trust and the mediating role of organizational communication in this relationship. In this context, a field study was conducted on the employees of three-, four-, and five-star hotels in Konya and Karaman provinces. A total of 394 questionnaires were collected by using the questionnaire technique and convenience sampling method. The data were analyzed using appropriate analysis programs. Consequently, it has been determined that there are strong positive relations among democratic leadership, organizational trust and organizational communication. As a result of the structural equation modeling, it was determined that democratic leadership perceived by employees has a positive effect on organizational trust and organizational communication. Besides, it has been determined that employees' perception of organizational communication has a positive effect on the formation of organizational trust. Also, the mediating effect was checked with the bootstrap test and it was concluded that the mediating effect of organizational communication is significant in the effect of democratic leadership on organizational trust. Finally, the conclusions were handled within the scope of theoretical and practical contributions and some suggestions were made for future researchers and the sector.

**Keywords:** Democratic Leadership, Organizational Trust, Organizational Communication, Hospitality Businesses.

### Öz

Yapılan araştırma ile demokratik liderlik algısının örgütsel güvene etkisinin ve bu ilişkide örgütsel iletişimin aracılık rolünün tespit edilmesi amaçlanmaktadır. Bu kapsamda Konya ve Karaman illerinde faaliyet gösteren üç, dört ve beş yıldızlı otel işletmesi işgörenleri üzerinde bir alan araştırması yapılmıştır. Anket tekniğinden ve kolayda örnekleme yönteminden faydalanılarak toplam 394 anket toplanmıştır. Toplanan veriler uygun analiz programları kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir. Analizler sonucunda demokratik liderlik, örgütsel güven ve örgütsel iletişim arasında pozitif yönlü güçlü ilişkilerin olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Yapılan yapısal eşitlik modellemesi sonucunda, işgörenlerin algıladıkları demokratik liderliğin örgütsel güven ve örgütsel iletişim üzerinde pozitif bir etkisinin olduğu saptanmıştır. Diğer taraftan işgörenlerin örgütsel iletişim algısının örgütsel güvenin oluşmasında pozitif bir etkide bulunduğu tespit edilmiştir. Nihai olarak bootstrap testi sonuçlarına göre aracı etkinin anlamlılığı kontrol edilmiş ve demokratik liderliğin örgütsel güvene etkisinde örgütsel iletişimin aracı etkisinin anlamlı olduğu sonucuna ulaşılmıştır. Sonuçlar ise teorik ve pratik katkılar dahilinde ele alınmış ve gelecek araştırmacılara ve sektöre yönelik birtakım önerilerde bulunulmuştur.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Demokratik Liderlik, Örgütsel Güven, Örgütsel İletişim, Konaklama İşletmeleri.

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## 1. Introduction

Recent economic, socio-cultural, environmental, and technological developments in the world cause some changes in tourism businesses as well as in all industries. Hospitality businesses, which are a significant part of tourism businesses, try to integrate with the changes by following the developments. At this point, attitudes and behaviors of employees towards the institution they work in are significant in hospitality businesses where labor is intense. To be more explicit, with the changing world, hospitality business employees may have different expectations from their businesses, managers and colleagues. It is thought that one of their most significant expectations is the feeling of trust in the business they work for. Although it is not easy to build a sense of trust, it may require effort and time to create it in such establishments (Korkmaz, 2017). In addition, employee trust in these businesses can be effected positively or negatively by many variables. One of the most significant factors is thought to be the managers' leadership style. However, different leadership styles cause different results on organizational trust (OT). It is known that democratic leadership (DL), which is discussed within the scope of the research, effects OT positively. The fact that hospitality business managers have adopted the DL style leads employees to positive behaviors and increases their confidence in the business (Çelik, 2016; Gündüz & Saraç, 2021). Therefore, the significance of leadership styles emerges in the trust of employees to the business, the manager and their colleagues in hospitality businesses where rapid changes are experienced. Since the significance of managers leadership styles in providing a sense of trust in hospitality businesses cannot be ignored, the DL style, which is thought to be appropriate for the current era, has been discussed in the scope of this study (Korkmaz, 2017).

In addition to the DL style in hospitality businesses, another variable effecting OT is thought to be organizational communication (OC). Communication processes in hospitality businesses, the quality of communication, and the effects of communication on employees are reflected in the employees' trust in the business. Therefore, the feeling of trust is tried to be created through communication (Çulhaoğlu Uludağ, 2022). Communication skills of managers in hospitality businesses and a quality communication process with employees increase the level of trust of employees in the business (Hubbell & Chory-Assad, 2005; Sağır & Parlak, 2018; Tan & Lim, 2009). As a matter of fact, it is thought that the significance of effective communication in the formation of OT is undeniable in today's world where hospitality businesses are becoming more complex day by day. Besides, a democratic leader is expected to have good communication skills. Democratic leaders respect employees and their ideas, and are based on meeting on a common ground with their participation. Employees' participation in decisions and practices increases the success rate on the one hand, and on the other hand reveals the significance of effective communication in this process. Therefore, contrary to a strict management and limited communication, it is thought that a participatory management and a versatile communication approach will increase the sense of trust in hospitality businesses (Allafchi, 2017; Page & Ferguson, 2011; Yılmaz, 2013).

It is seen that employees of the hospitality businesses want to have confidence in their colleagues and managers, especially in the business they work for. Hospitality businesses' right decisions, obeying laws, meeting personal rights fairly, supporting employees in all matters, caring about their suggestions and thoughts can effect the level of trust within itself. In addition, it is believed that the knowledge, skill, honesty, altruism, helpfulness, and reliability of the employees and managers in the hospitality business will effect the sense of trust positively (Çalışkan, 2021). Besides, managers are expected to respect the values of employees, ensure their participation in decisions and management, care about their suggestions, take account of their needs, make them feel comfortable, develop team spirit and

allow everyone controlling themselves, in other words to be a democratic leader (Terzi, 2015). In addition, it is very significant for managers to inform employees about every issue, care about their opinions and suggestions, to share and consult problems related to the business, and give feedback. Beside this, the quality of communication between managers and employees and their ability to talk about non-business matters show the level of internal communication (Postmes et al., 2001). Based on this information, studies on DL and OT (Çelik, 2016), DL and OC (Allafchi, 2017; Page & Ferguson, 2011), OC and OT (Çulhaoğlu Uludağ, 2022; Guzzo et al., 2021; Lee & Li, 2021; Pološki Vokić et al., 2021; Qin & Man, 2022; Sağır & Parlak, 2018) have been researched in the literature. Although studies directly addressing the DL and OT variables are quite limited, studies on different leadership types and OT have been encountered (Asim et al., 2022; Dahleez & Aboramadan, 2022; Hamza et al., 2022; Ismail et al., 2022; Joshi & Diekman, 2022). Similarly, studies on DL and OC are also very limited. However, different types of leadership and OC are discussed together (Al Basyir et al., 2020; Cheng & Hahm, 2019; Lee, 2022; Maçães & Román-Portas, 2022; Naji et al., 2022).

Studies and information obtained indicate that the DL, OT and OC variables are directly or indirectly related and interact with each other, and are significant for employees of hospitality businesses. In this regard, the research was conducted on the question “*Does OC have a mediating role in the effect of DL on OT?*” Therefore, the main purpose of this study is to determine the mediator role of OC in the effect of DL on OT. In addition, determining the effect of DL on OT and OC, and determining the effect of OC on OT are among the sub-purposes of this study. In line with the determined purposes, a model was proposed and the model was tested based on the contemporary approach. The fact that there was no model proposal found in hospitality businesses dealing with the relevant variables and that the structural equation modeling (SEM) has been mainly tested with the classical approach has necessitated such a search. Therefore, it is thought that this research on hospitality business employees will contribute to the tourism and business literature theoretically and methodologically, and will benefit the hospitality business employees in practice. In this regard, first of all, the relationships between the variables were revealed and hypotheses were developed. Then, information about the method was given and research findings were obtained using statistical programs. Finally, a general evaluation was made by taking into account the theoretical and practical contributions and some suggestions were presented.

## **2. Conceptual Framework and Hypotheses**

### **2.1. Democratic Leadership and Organizational Trust**

DL is expressed as “*a modern style of leadership that explains the tendency of the leader to share management authority with other members of the group*” (Eren, 2014: 461). On the basis of DL, the theory X and Y, developed by Douglas McGregor, is lying. In the theory that focuses on the leader’s behavior, DL falls into the Y category. In accordance with this, democratic leaders consult their subordinates on organizational issues, exchange ideas and encourage them to participate in decisions (Robbins, 2002). In the DL approach, which has an understanding that makes the employees feel comfortable in the working environment and develops their skills (Bhatti et al., 2012), leaders trust subordinates in all matters (Koçel, 2020). Employees working with democratic leaders show a high level of motivation, creativity, and satisfaction; they work with great enthusiasm and energy regardless of the presence or absence of the leader, and closer connections with the leader are observed in terms of productivity (Yukl, 1999).

In McGregor's Y theory, it is stated that employees see work as a source of success and satisfaction, have creative ability and desire to take responsibility within the organization. In line with this understanding, it seems relatively easier to establish a relationship of trust between the employees and the managers (Asunakutlu, 2001). The sense of trust in organizations emerges as a significant issue in terms of increasing employee responsibility, creating social capital and strengthening communication among employees (Thomas et al., 2009). Trust, in the broadest sense, is perceived as "*a concept based on honesty and integrity*" (Koç & Yazıcıoğlu, 2011: 47). Besides, OT is expressed as "*the network of relationships and behaviors consisting of member' trust in the manager and the organization in relationships and interactions*" (Tschannen-Moran, 2001: 315). The concept of OT is based on Luhmann's trust model (Luhmann, 2000). The Luhmann model evaluates basic relationships in the organization in the interpersonal and individual-organizational context. Accordingly, trust in colleagues and the manager represents employees' trust in individual relations, and the OT dimension enables to distinguish the trust attitude towards the organization as a whole (Eğriboyun, 2013).

Direct and indirect researches on DL and OT prove the relationship between variables (Çelik, 2016; Oran, 2019; Uslu & Oklay, 2015). The use of DL style by managers in a business shows that it will increase employees' level of trust in their managers and organizations (Çelik, 2016). Thus, it is thought that DL has a significant effect on trust in the organization (Oran, 2019; Uslu & Oklay, 2015). Besides, researches on different types of leadership and OT are encountered. Studies point to a relationship between leadership and trust (Asim et al., 2022; Dahleez & Aboramadan, 2022; Hamza et al., 2022; Ismail et al., 2022; Joshi & Diekman, 2022). Based on this information; it was decided to develop the following H1 hypothesis.

**H1:** DL has a positive effect on OT.

## **2.2. Democratic Leadership and Organizational Communication**

OC is defined as "*the exchange of information and ideas within the organization*" in its most general definition (Kalla, 2005: 304). OC, which creates a positive atmosphere for all employees in the organization if developed (Kalla, 2005), includes all kinds of tools, materials, methods, techniques, and systems used to provide any type of verbal, nonverbal or written data, information, understanding, perception, and approach between different employees and departments of the organization (Koçel, 2020). There are various theories explaining OC. One of them is the information flow or process theory. The information flow/process theory perceives the organization as a machine and explains the direction of the communication flow and the organizational structure including communication roles, channel, and message elements. Another theory is the perception/attitude theory. The perception/attitude theory explains employees' attitudes towards the organization. In accordance with this, employees' mental and emotional perceptions about the organization effect their behavior within it (Goldhaber et al., 1978). Nevertheless, the regulation of one's style and content of speech during communication is known as the theory of communicative adaptation. This theory handles interpersonal social distance adjustments and communication problems (Giles & Ogay, 2007).

Based on the relationship between leadership and communication, Allafchi (2017) revealed in a study that DL style effects communication positively. Again, Page and Ferguson (2011) proved that businesses can improve all aspects of communication when a transition to a DL style is made in businesses. Besides, studies on different types of leadership and OC also indicate that there are direct or indirect relationships between variables (Al Basyir et al.,

2020; Cheng & Hahm, 2019; Lee, 2022; Mações & Román-Portas, 2022; Naji et al., 2022). In this regard, it was decided to develop the H2 hypothesis below.

**H2:** DL has a positive effect on OC.

### **2.3. Organizational Communication and Organizational Trust**

According to Luhmann (2000), trust is an essential part of communication. In other words, trust is the critical element of the communicative dimension. Therefore, the essence of social systems is shaped by communication and one of the most effective ways to ensure this communication is through trust (Eğriboyun, 2013). Trust is the basis of interpersonal relations and communication. For this reason, the effect of communication and trust between employees in the continuity of businesses is great (Tan & Lim, 2009). In addition, a study revealed that the OT factor is fed from OC (Çulhaoğlu Uludağ, 2022). Similarly, Hubbell and Chory-Assad (2005) stated that communication style, content, and quantity effect their perceptions of reliable behavior. In other words, trust is necessary for good communication and there is a positive relationship between OC and OT (Pološki Vokić et al., 2021). As a matter of fact, it is possible to say that there is a relationship between the variables, and that OC effects OT (Lee & Li, 2021). In the light of this information, it was deemed appropriate to develop the following H3 hypothesis.

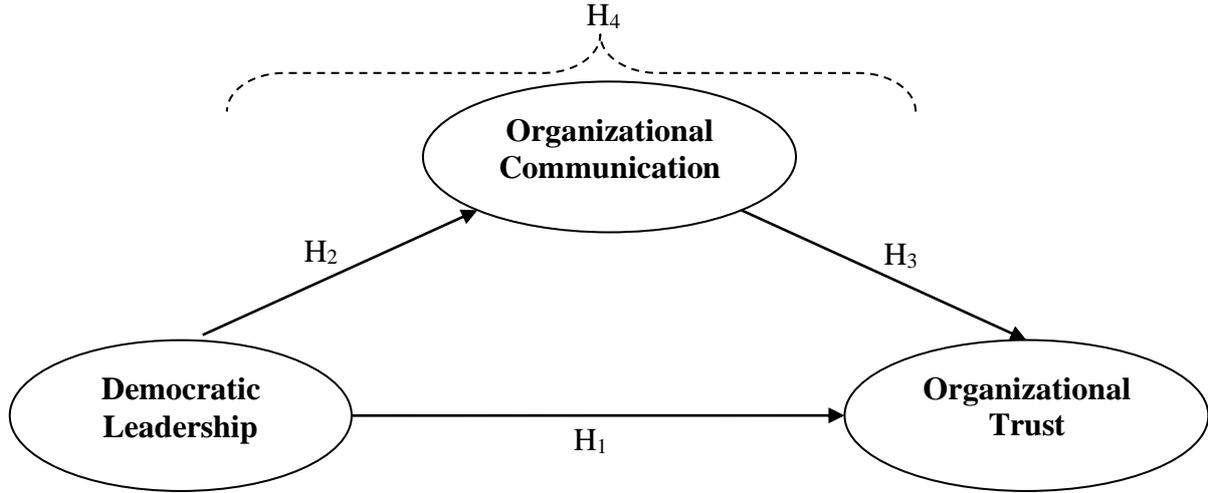
**H3:** OC has a positive effect on OT.

### **2.4. The Mediating Role of Organizational Communication**

OC is becoming more and more significant in the developing technology and globalizing world order day by day. The development of information technologies and the structure of internet networks that eliminate the borders of countries have enabled the redefinition of communication. This change experienced in the field of communication makes itself felt theoretically as well. OC researchers have preferred to conduct research on variables such as organizational democracy and OT since the 1980s (Allen et al., 1993; Rezaei et al., 2012). In this regard, it is remarkable that Rezaei et al. (2012) have found a significant relationship between leadership, OT and OC in a study.

When this information in the literature is evaluated, it is seen that the variables of DL, OT and OC are studied with each other. It is thought that this study, in which the three variables in question are investigated together, will contribute to the expansion and enrichment of the subject in relational context. Therefore, in this study, it is assumed that examining the relationship between DL and OT, as well as examining the mediating effect of OC on this relationship, will be useful in terms of literature and method. In this regard, the following H4 hypothesis has been developed.

**H4:** OC has a mediating role in the effect of DL on OT.



**Figure 1.** *Recommended Research Model*

In the study, which is about DL, OT and OC in hospitality businesses, the research model shown in Figure 1 was created based on the literature to test the mediating role of OC in the effect of DL on OT. In this regard, four research hypotheses have been developed for the analysis of the recommended research model.

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1. Sample and Procedure

A field study was conducted to test the hypotheses developed for the purpose of the research. In this regard, the population of the research consists of employees of three-star, four-star, and five-star hospitality businesses operating in Konya and Karaman provinces. The reason for selecting these as the sample is that both provinces have touristic development potential. In accordance with the information obtained from the website of Konya Provincial Directorate of Culture and Tourism, 16 three-star, 8 four-star and 8 five-star hotels are operating in Konya (Konya İl Kültür ve Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2021). In accordance with the information obtained from the website of Karaman Provincial Directorate of Culture and Tourism, there are 3 three-star and 2 four-star hotels in Karaman province (Karaman İl Kültür ve Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2022). For the implementation of the questionnaires, an ethics committee approval, dated 24.10.2022 and decision numbered 06-2022/125, was obtained from the “Karamanoğlu Mehmet Bey University Scientific Research Publication Ethics Committee”. After obtaining the ethics committee permission, the questionnaires were collected online and face-to-face between 01.11.2022 and 28.11.2022 using the convenience sampling method. In the research, a total of 394 questionnaires suitable for analysis were obtained. Since the number of collected questionnaires was higher than the critical value of 384 (Altunışık et al., 2012), it was concluded that the sample was adequate.

When the demographic distribution of the hotel business employees participating in the research are examined; it is seen that 265 (67.3%) of the employees are male, 129 (32.7%) are female, 173 (43.9%) are married, and 221 (56.1%) are single. In terms of age distribution, 147 (37.3%) of the respondents are between the ages of 26-35 and 124 (31.5%) are between the ages of 18-25. Additionally, it has been stated that the majority of the participants in the research graduated from high school (42%) and university (30.7%). In accordance with the department distribution, 158 (40.1%) of the participants are working in the food and beverage

departments, 115 (29.2%) in the front office departments, 84 (21.3%) in housekeeping, and 37 (9.4%) in other units (human resources, technical service, security, etc.).

### **3.2. Measures**

In the research, the questionnaire technique was used to collect data. In order to measure the DL perceptions of the employees, the DL scale consisting of 8 items developed by Terzi (2015) was used. To measure employees' OT perceptions, the OT scale developed by Çalışkan (2021), with 17 items was used. Lastly, to measure OC perceptions, the scale used in the study of Postmes et al. (2001), consisting of 15 items was utilized. All scales were implemented in the 5-point Likert format.

### **3.3. Data Analysis Procedure**

There are two approaches to the analysis of mediating effect: "The traditional approach (Baron and Kenny's causality approach)" and "the contemporary approach." Although the traditional approach is widely used, negative criticisms have recently begun to be made. Some of the criticisms brought to the traditional approach of Baron and Kenny are that three different hypotheses should be supported in order to decide on the mediator effect, that the full and partial mediator statements are controversial, and that the Sobel test is strict and unreliable (Gürbüz, 2019; Hayes, 2017). In this regard, it was decided to handle the research with a contemporary approach. Direct and indirect effects between variables were tested through two models. Whether the indirect effect of organizational communication is significant or not was decided according to the results of the bootstrap test. The fact that the confidence interval values do not contain zero (0) as a result of this test indicates that the indirect effect is significant (Gürbüz, 2019).

The analyzes of the SEM based on the theoretical structure were tested with the goodness-of-fit values of the model. In this regard, "the Chi-square/Degrees of Freedom ( $\chi^2/df$ ) value below 5; the Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), Incremental Fit Index (IFI), Comparative Fit Index (CFI) values above 0.90; the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) and the Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) values below 0.80" indicate acceptable fit (Gürbüz, 2019; İlhan & Çetin, 2014; Meydan & Şeşen, 2015). These values were taken into consideration within the scope of the research.

Data analysis of the research was performed using SPSS and AMOS statistical analysis programs. Before starting the analysis, the normality assumption of the data was examined. In this regard, it was stated that the skewness values of items were between -1.084/-411 and the kurtosis values were between -585/1.131. Hence, the distribution of the data between -2 and +2 meets the assumption of normality (George & Mallery, 2010). Besides, exploratory factor analysis (EFA), confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), convergent and discriminant validity and reliability analysis (Cronbach alpha) were performed for the validity and reliability of the research. For the relationships between variables, correlation analysis results were included and SEM was used to test the research hypotheses. Direct and indirect effects were tested in the analyzes performed on two SEM. Finally, bootstrap analysis was performed to test the significance of the mediating effect of OC.

## **4. Results**

To determine the construct validity of the DL, OT, and OC variables, EFA was carried out. In accordance with the results given in Table 1, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test shows that the sample of DL (KMO=.872), OT (KMO=.932) and OC (KMO=.951) variables

is sufficient for factor analysis. The Bartlett test, which is a test for the relationships between the items, was significant for all scales.

**Table 1.** *EFA Results for Scales*

Factors	Eigenvalues	Explained Variance %	Bartlett Test	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Test
DL	3.574	71.485	.000	.872
OT	7.371	56.699	.000	.932
OC	7.710	64.247	.000	.945

As a result of EFA, a single factor structure was obtained for the DL scale and the factor loads were found to vary between .77 and .89. The total explained variance is 71.485%. A single factor structure was also obtained for the OT scale and factor loads varied between .63 and .83. The total explained variance is 56.699% for OT. A single factor structure was obtained for the OC scale, as in the other scales, and factor loads ranged from .71 to .85. The total explained variance is 64,247%. In addition, three items from the DL scale, four items from the OT scale, and three items from the OC scale were excluded from the analysis because they had a factor load lower than .50 critical value (Hair et al., 2013). Thus, a measurement model was created for the structures obtained as a result and CFA was performed (Table 2).

**Table 2.** *Results of the Measurement Model*

Factors	Items	Factor-Loading	CR	AVE
DL	DL1	.82	.90	.65
	DL2	.87		
	DL3	.82		
	DL4	.69		
	DL5	.81		
OT	OT3	.54	.93	.52
	OT6	.53		
	OT7	.59		
	OT8	.74		
	OT9	.78		
	OT10	.82		
	OT11	.78		
	OT12	.85		
	OT13	.83		
	OT14	.74		
	OT15	.70		
OC	OT16	.73	.95	.61
	OT17	.65		
	OC1	.75		
	OC2	.80		
	OC3	.82		
	OC4	.79		
	OC5	.75		
	OC6	.68		
OC7	.82			
	OC8	.79		

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**Table 2.** (Continue)

	OC9	.82
	OC10	.83
	OC11	.83
	OC12	.67

As a result of CFA using the maximum likelihood method, it was determined that the goodness of fit values of the data are at an acceptable level ( $\chi^2/df=3.086$ ,  $IFI=.912$ ,  $TLI=.901$ ,  $CFI=.912$ ,  $RMSEA=.073$ ,  $SRMR=.052$ ). Therefore, it is possible to say that the factor structures suggested in the measurement model are supported by the data. It is also seen that factor loads are higher than the critical value of .50 (Hair et al., 2013). It is recommended that all CR values for the convergent validity of scales should be greater than the AVE values, and the AVE value should be greater than .50 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). As a matter of fact, in accordance with the values in Table 2, it is possible to say that all CR values are greater than AVE values, thus providing convergent validity. In order to talk about the discriminant validity of the scales, the square root of the AVE must be greater than the correlation between the factors (Gürbüz, 2019). When the results obtained in accordance with Table 3 are examined, it is seen that the square roots of the AVE values (.804; .722; .779) are greater than the correlation between the factors. In this case, it is possible to say that discriminant validity is provided. In addition, as a result of the reliability analysis of the scales, it is seen in Table 3 that the Cronbach's Alpha level (DL=.90, OT=.94 and OC=.95) is higher than the critical value of .70 (Pallant, 2017).

**Table 3.** Correlation, Mean, Standard Deviation and Reliability

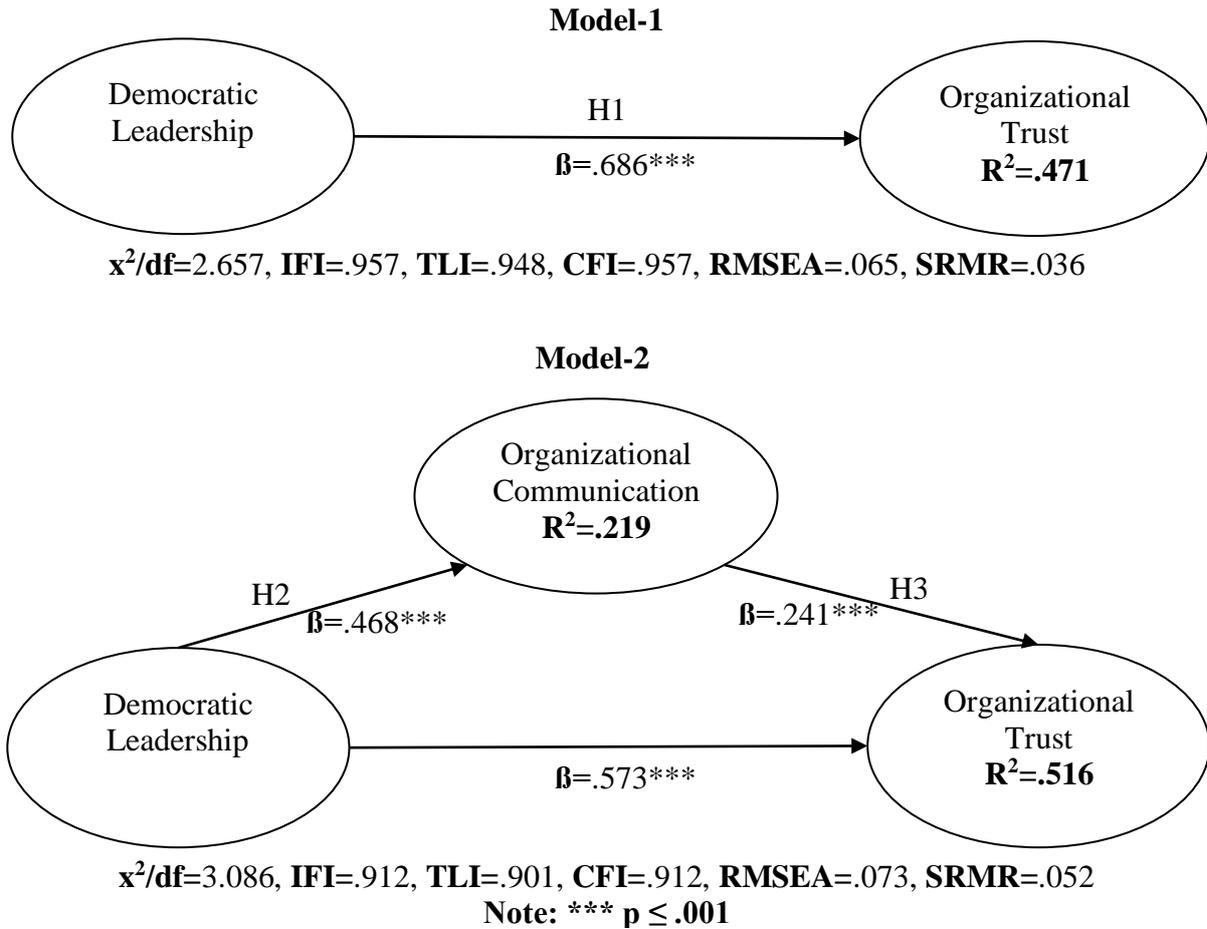
Variables	DL	OT	OC	Mean	Standard Deviation	Cronbach's Alpha
DL	<b>.804*</b>			3.60	.83	.90
OT	.686	<b>.722*</b>		3.75	.72	.94
OC	.468	.510	<b>.779*</b>	3.44	.80	.95

**\*Square root of AVE**

Within the scope of the research, the relations between the variables were examined and the related results are given in Table 3. The results of the correlation analysis show that there is a positive relationship between DL and OT ( $r=.686$ ), and between DL and OC ( $r=.468$ ). In addition, a significant positive correlation at the level of .510 was found between OC and OT. In addition, it has been stated that the DL, OT, and OC levels of the employees are relatively high.

In the study, in which a contemporary approach is adopted and SEM is used, the mediating role of OC in the effect of DL on OT, perceived by hospitality business employees has been examined. In this regard, the effect of DL on OT (H1) was tested in the first model. The effect of DL on OC (H2), the effect of OC on OT (H3), and the mediating role of OC (H4) were tested in the second model. Both models are given in Figure 2.

The goodness of fit values of the first model created for the direct effect ( $\chi^2/df=2.657$ ,  $IFI=.957$ ,  $TLI=.948$ ,  $CFI=.957$ ,  $RMSEA=.065$ ,  $SRMR=.036$ ) show that the proposed model is compatible with the data. The direct effect was checked after data compliance was achieved. In this regard, it has been determined that DL has a significant positive effect on OT at the level of .686 ( $p<.001$ ). It was also found that DL explains 47.1% of OT (Figure 2). H1 was accepted within the scope of these results.



**Figure 2.** Models Established for Testing the Mediation Effect

The goodness of fit values of the second model created for indirect effects ( $\chi^2/df=3.086$ ,  $IFI=.912$ ,  $TLI=.901$ ,  $CFI=.912$ ,  $RMSEA=.073$ ,  $SRMR=.052$ ) show that the proposed model is compatible with the data. After the data compatibility was achieved, the significance of the relations between the variables, and the Beta coefficients were examined. In this regard, it was determined that DL has a significant positive effect at the level of .468 ( $p<.001$ ) on OC and explains 21.9% of OC (Figure 2). Therefore, the H2 hypothesis was accepted. Besides, it was determined that OC has a significant positive effect on OT at the level of .241 ( $p<.001$ ). In addition, it was determined that DL and OC explain 51.6% of OT (Figure 2). H3 was accepted within the scope of these results. Besides, with the inclusion of OC as a mediator variable in the model, the effect of DL on OT still seems significant ( $\beta=.573***$ ;  $p<.001$ ).

**Table 4.** Bootstrapping Confidence Intervals for Indirect Effects

Dependent Variable	Total-Effects	Direct-Effects	Indirect-Effects	Bootstrapping	
				Lower Bounds	Upper Bounds
OT	.686	.573	.113	.067	.167

The bootstrap analysis was performed with 95% confidence interval and 5000 resampling options for the mediating effect of OC (Table 4). The mediating effect of OC was considered to be significant since the confidence interval value did not contain zero ( $\beta=.113$ ;  $CI=95\%$ ; [Lower Bounds=.067-Upper Bounds=.167]). In this case, the H4 hypothesis for the mediating effect was accepted. In other words, it has been determined that OC has a

mediating effect on the effect of DL on OT. In general, all hypotheses developed in the research were accepted.

## **5. Conclusion, Discussion, and Suggestions**

The tourism industry consists of many sectors and it is possible to say that a large part of it consists of the hospitality sector. Besides, the hospitality sector has many positive and negative features within, such as the dynamic structure and the seasonality feature, which uppers/lowers the trust of employees in the organization. The trust factor is a very significant factor to avoid negative situations that may occur in hospitality businesses since it is thought that the adopted management approach within the organization will effect employees' perceived trust levels. In this study, three-, four-, and five-star hotels in Konya and Karaman provinces were selected to test the DL style and OC, which are thought to effect OT. The structure of hospitality businesses has been effective in the selection of such a subject. At this point, considering that leadership styles and communication skills of managers are significant for a good management, it was deemed appropriate to study the DL, OC and OT issues on hospitality businesses within the scope of the research.

In the research, it has been concluded that the hotel employees perceive their managers comparatively as a democratic leader; trust their managers and colleagues, and think that a good communication process takes place within the organization. Besides, significant relationships have been identified between DL, OT and OC. The relatively high perceptions of DL, OT and OC of the employees and the significant relationships between the variables made it necessary to propose a model that includes the relevant variables. In this regard, it has been determined that DL has a positive effect on OT. Therefore, as employees' perceptions of DL increase, their level of trust in the organization also increases. In addition, the significance of DL in the formation of OT is also revealed. These results and the results of some studies in the literature support each other (Çelik, 2016; Gündüz & Saraç, 2021; Oran, 2019; Uslu & Oklay, 2015). In the research, it was stated that DL also has a positive effect on OC. In other words, the high DL perception of the employees causes the OC level to be high. The result obtained reveals the effect of DL in a quality communication process. Thus, democratic leaders are expected to be effective in communication. It is possible to say that comparable results come to the fore and similar inference can be made in the studies conducted by Allafchi (2017), Page and Ferguson (2011), and Yılmaz (2013). Another result obtained in the research is that OC has a positive effect on OT. In other words, as the level of OC increases, employees' trust in the organization also increases. Similarly, Çulhaoğlu Uludağ (2022) states that the feeling of trust is created through communication. Studies conducted by Hubbell and Chory-Assad (2005), Lee and Li (2021), Pološki Vokić et al. (2021), Sağır and Parlak (2018), Tan and Lim (2009) also support this result and emphasize the effect of OC on OT. As a matter of fact, it is possible to say that DL styles and communication skills of managers highly effect the trust levels of the employees in hotel businesses. In addition, there is an indirect effect of OC on the effect of DL on OT. In this regard, it is revealed that all hypotheses developed were accepted.

### **5.1. Theoretical Implications**

It is thought that this research, which measures the DL, OT and OC perceptions of the employees in hospitality businesses, makes some contributions to both the literature and the method. Leadership is a significant issue that should be handled in terms of all businesses, and many types of leadership are encountered in the literature. As a result of the researches, it has been determined that different types of leadership are investigated with OT and OC (Al Basyir et al., 2020; Asim et al., 2022; Cheng & Hahm, 2019; Dahleez & Aboramadan, 2022;

Hamza et al., 2022; Ismail et al., 2022; Joshi & Diekman, 2022; Lee, 2022; Maçães & Román-Portas, 2022; Naji et al., 2022). However, it is seen that the DL style discussed in this research has been studied in limited numbers with OT and OC (Allafchi, 2017; Çelik, 2016; Page & Ferguson, 2011). There is no study dealing with relevant variables in hospitality businesses. Besides, in this research on hospitality businesses, it is thought that it is a significant contribution to the literature to consider Konya and Karaman provinces instead of coastal provinces, and to reveal the opinions of the employees working in hospitality businesses in these provinces about the relevant variables. It is seen that the research also contributes to the method besides the literature. The fact that the model proposal presented in this research is not included in other studies reveals the original aspect. In addition, the use of SEM in the research and testing the proposed model with a contemporary approach instead of the classical approach reveals a different aspect of the research.

## **5.2. Practical Implications**

Besides theoretical and methodological contributions, it is thought that the research also provides some contributions to managers and employees of hospitality businesses. Leadership styles and communication skills of hospitality business managers are effective in the level of employees' trust in the organization they work for. Therefore, managers are expected to ensure the participation of employees in decisions and to care about their opinions and suggestions. The existence of such a relationship between managers and employees is directly related to the communication process, because it is significant for a good manager to establish a quality communication with the employees as well as being democratic. It is thought that a manager with these features will provide benefits to the hospitality business where he works. In addition, hospitality business managers will demonstrate an effective management thanks to their features. In this regard, a good manager should make plans for the future in the business where he works and should include the employees in the plans he has made and ensure that they are aware of every stage. Additively, managers should make an effort to work in the right departments in line with their knowledge and skills by establishing close relationships with employees. As a matter of fact, employees need motivation and guidance. At this point, leadership skills and communication skills of department managers play a significant role in their relations with employees. Besides, a hospitality business consists of many departments, including the front office, food and beverage, housekeeping, etc. and it is expected that there will be coordination between the departments. In the effective realization of all these, the significance of the leadership styles of the managers and intra-OC emerges. Hence, the fact that managers are a democratic leader and establish good relations with employees will ensure not only the level of trust of employees in the organization, but also the realization of effective management. Thus, it is thought that there will be an increase in efficiency and productivity in hospitality businesses, as in every business. As a matter of fact, employees' trust in the organization will enable them to exhibit positive organizational behaviors. It is seen that the research has very significant results in terms of hospitality sector, managers and employees.

## **5.3. Limitations and Future Research**

The research was limited to the variables of DL, OT and OC. In addition, the research on hospitality businesses and the selection of three-, four-, and five-star hotels in Konya and Karaman provinces as a sample constitute another limitation of the research. In line with the limitations of the study, some suggestions were made to researchers and sector employees. First of all, it is suggested that the DL variable should be handled and discussed with different variables in hospitality businesses. Besides, it is necessary to take into account the individual outputs of the DL as well as the organizational outputs. In addition, it is considered

appropriate to apply the subject in hospitality businesses in more developed destinations in terms of tourism. It is possible to carry out a similar study in travel businesses as well as hospitality businesses. Since it is thought that the research has sectoral contributions, hospitality business managers should consider digital leadership, transformational leadership, visionary leadership, servant leadership, etc. in addition to DL. It is suggested that they should be knowledgeable about leadership styles and integrate them because changes are experienced in the tourism industry every day and all tourism employees need to keep up with these changes. For this reason, it is extremely significant for the employees in managerial positions in tourism businesses to keep up with the current era and technology, to make predictions for the future, to think about the interests of the employees due to the labor-intensive nature of tourism, and to guide the employees in accordance with the conditions. In fact, it is proposed that employees in managerial positions in the sector receive training on leadership and communication and encourage similar trainings to be provided in hospitality businesses.

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