THE ROLE OF MANAGERS' LEADERSHIP BEHAVIORS IN DEVELOPING EMPLOYEES' CUSTOMER-ORIENTED BEHAVIORS

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the relationships between managers' leadership behaviours and employees' customer orientations and to reveal the effect of the leadership behaviours exhibited by managers on employees' customer-oriented behaviours. A quantitative research methodology was employed to achieve this objective. The research utilised a relational research type and a field study design based on examining variables. Data were collected through a survey administered to 226 service employees at a hotel in Antalya using a convenience sampling method. For the analysis of the collected data, confirmatory factor analysis was conducted to assess the validity of the scales, reliability was tested using Cronbach's alpha, and correlation and regression analyses were performed to identify relationships between variables. The data analysis was carried out using SPSS 27.0 and AMOS software. According to the results obtained, significant positive relationships were identified between managers' leadership behaviours and employees' customer-oriented behaviours. Furthermore, the regression analysis results indicated that managers' leadership behaviours significantly and positively affect the development of employees' customer-oriented behaviours. Additionally, when examined in sub-dimensions, the results showed that leadership behaviours such as challenging the process, inspiring a shared vision, facilitating others' work, modelling the way, and encouraging the heart significantly and positively affect employees' customer-oriented behaviours.

Keywords: Leadership Behaviors, Customer-Oriented Behaviors, Work Life

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YÖNETİCİLERİN LİDERLİK DAVRANIŞLARININ ÇALIŞANLARIN MÜŞTERİ YÖNLÜ DAVRANIŞLAR GELİŞTİRMESİNDEKİ ROLÜ

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ÖZ

Bu araştırmada yöneticilerin liderlik davranışları ile çalışanların müşteri yönlülükleri arasındaki ilişkileri incelemek ve yöneticilerin sergiledikleri liderlik davranışlarının çalışanların müşteri yönlü davranışlar sergilemelerindeki etkisini ortaya koymak amaçlanmıştır. Bu amacı karşılamak için, nicel araştırma yöntemi esas alınmıştır. Araştırmada değişkenleri inceleme biçimine göre ilişkisel araştırma türünden ve alan araştırması deseninden yararlanılmıştır. Araştırma verileri anket aracılığı ile Antalya İlinde faaliyet gösteren bir oteldeki 226 hizmet çalışanından kolayda örnekleme yöntemine göre toplanmıştır. Toplanan verilerin analizi için öncelikle ölçeklerin geçerlilikleri kapsamında doğrulayıcı faktör analizi, güvenilirlik testi olarak Cronbach alfa, değişkenler arası ilişkileri tespit etmek için ise korelasyon ve regresyon analizleri yapılmıştır. Bu çerçevede verilerin analizi SPSS 27.0 ve AMOS yazılımları kullanılarak gerçekleştirilmiştir. Elde edilen sonuçlara göre, yöneticilerin liderlik davranışları ile çalışanların müşteri yönlü davranışları arasında genel anlamda pozitif yönlü anlamlı ilişkiler tespit edilmiştir. Regresyon analizi sonuçları incelendiğinde ise, yöneticilerin liderlik davranışlarının çalışanların müşteri yönlü davranışlar geliştirmesi üzerinde anlamlı ve pozitif bir etkiye sahip olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Ayrıca alt boyutlar açısından incelendiğinde de sürece meydan okuma, ortak bir vizyona yönelik ilham vermek, başkalarının işini kolaylaştırma, yol gösterme ve yüreklendirme liderlik davranışlarının da çalışanların müşteri yönlü davranışları üzerinde anlamlı ve pozitif etkilerinin olduğu yönde sonuçlara ulaşılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Liderlik Davranışları, Müşteri Yönlü Davranışlar, Çalışma Yaşamı

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1. INTRODUCTION

Leaders are critical for the success of organisations due to their strategic thinking and intellectual activities. In this context, leaders play an essential role in understanding the opportunities and threats that organisations face, conveying these insights to employees at managerial and departmental levels, and managing the process in a way that creates a competitive advantage (King, 1990: 51). Regardless of the industry in which they operate, customers are among the most valuable assets of businesses. Without customers, no business can sustain its existence, nor can it be expected to continue operations. Therefore, companies aiming for success must place customers at the center of their operations (Mandal, 2016: 770) and focus on establishing long-term relationships that foster mutual benefit and customer satisfaction (Saxe & Weitz, 1982: 343). These long-term relationships, whether with current or potential customers (Reinartz et al., 2005: 64), depending on the ability to understand customers and generate customer value accordingly (Conduit et al., 2014: 1322; Guenzi & Troilo, 2006: 974; Hult, 2011: 509; Narver & Slater, 1990: 21). Loyal customers represent a form of relationship capital for businesses (Mandal, 2016: 770), which allows them to enhance the perceived quality of the products or services they offer (Oliver, 1999: 33). At this point, the customer-oriented behaviors exhibited by managers and employees are essential for achieving these benefits. Customer orientation, as a strategy that reflects the response to changing customer needs and requirements, plays a critical role in enhancing organisational performance and achieving competitive advantage (Grinstein, 2008: 166; Zhang et al., 2018: 3). Thus, the success of organisations under competitive conditions largely depends on their ability to develop customer-oriented behaviours and employ staff who exhibit such behaviours (McGrath, 2009: 9; Uygun & Akın, 2017: 841).

Customer orientation also provides a proactive approach for businesses (Conduit et al., 2014: 1322) by meeting customer needs and delivering superior customer value (Hunt & Lambe, 2000: 25), enhancing perceived quality, customer loyalty, and satisfaction (Jaworski & Kohli, 1996: 129; Panigyrakis & Theodoridis, 2009: 605). Consequently, the level of customer orientation exhibited by employees is considered a significant lever for the success of service-oriented businesses (Sergeant & Frenkel, 2000: 18). Therefore, organisations must embrace the need for customer orientation across all levels, ensuring that both leaders and employees are aligned with this objective (McGrath, 2009: 30; McNamara, 1972: 51). In this context, strong employee-leader relationships can positively influence employees' ability to meet customer needs and requirements better. A high-quality leader-follower relationship fosters an environment where employees can create more customer value (Liden et al., 2008). Consequently, a robust relationship between leaders and employees contributes to the service process by promoting an attentive and caring approach that extends to customers (Çatı et al., 2017; Ryan et al., 2021: 52; Uygun & Akın, 2017: 836; Yeşiltaş et al., 2013: 333;). The examination of leaders' influence on employees' customer-oriented behaviours is also considered significant in the literature (Kubat, 2021: 65; Ribeiro et al., 2020: 2100). In this sense, customer-oriented behaviours play an essential role in the sustainable existence and success of organisations that stand out, especially with their human resources, alongside economic factors. Given that, a leader serves as the driving force in organisations where employees are united around a common goal, examining the roles of leader behaviors in shaping employees' customer-oriented actions represents a critical area of study. However, there is a lack of research in both domestic and international literature that simultaneously addresses the relationship between managerial leadership behaviours and employees' customer orientation. Therefore, the research problem is defined as "determining the role of managers' leadership behaviours in developing employees' customer-oriented behaviours." The study's objective is to investigate the relationship between managers' leadership behaviours and employees' customer orientation and to reveal the effect of these leadership behaviours on employees' customer-oriented behaviours.

2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Leadership and Leadership Behaviors

Over the past century, various opinions and definitions have been made regarding who a leader is, how they are defined, and what qualities a leader should possess. Although leadership is a universally accepted concept and action, it is difficult and complex to define clearly (Hunt & Fedynich, 2018: 21; Klingborg et al., 2006: 280; McCleskey, 2014: 117; Oruç, 2021: 9). There are different opinions on whether a person is a leader and what characteristics make them a leader. In this context, it is argued that although leaders may be naturally talented at leadership, they can also develop leadership qualities through experience (Hunt & Fedynich, 2018: 21). However, it is also noted that for a person to be considered a leader, they must be effective in guiding their subordinates toward achieving specified goals (Johns & Moser, 1989: 115). Therefore, the diversity in defining who a leader is or how they are defined has created a similar complexity in defining the concept of leadership. This perspective on the origin of leadership indicates that while leadership is often discussed, no consensus exists in its definition (King, 1990: 43). In this regard, Stogdill (1974) stated that there are almost as many definitions of leadership as individuals are attempting to define the concept (Stogdill, 1974: 259; Oruç, 2021: 9). Rost (1993) also noted that

leadership can be defined in various ways, offering different perspectives on leaders and leadership (McCleskey, 2014: 117). Definitions of leadership generally include the process of exerting a conscious influence over other people to direct, structure, and facilitate activities and relationships within a group or organisation (Katz & Kahn, 1966: 334; Tannenbaum et al., 1961: 24; Yukl, 2013: 18). Overall, leadership is defined as a process of mutual agreement and influence regarding what needs to be done and how, facilitating individual and collective efforts to achieve common goals (Rost, 1993: 99; Yukl, 2013: 23). In this sense, leadership behaviours encompass the ability to guide a group's activities toward a common purpose (Hemphill & Coons, 1957: 7); influence work activities in this direction (Rauch & Behling, 1984: 46); and direct employees to voluntarily and willingly contribute efforts toward this collective goal (Jacobs & Jaques, 1990: 281).

Especially in service businesses, which inherently embody innovation and dynamism, leadership and leadership behaviours are driving forces (Oruç, 2021; Öztürk, 2022: 61). Leadership, which focuses on generating change in organisational activities and service delivery (Kotter, 1990) and involves a multi-dimensional influence relationship with employees to achieve this change (Rost, 1991), aims to reach organisational goals by influencing employees based on their inherent characteristics, skills, and behaviours (Yukl, 2013: 18). It is stated that leaders possess the ability to influence and motivate service employees, who are essentially their followers, and enable them to contribute to an organisation's efficiency and success (House et al., 1999: 184). Some authors (Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Zaleznik, 1977) have mentioned that leaders are flexible and innovative, have a human-centred approach as well as economic outcomes, and hold a longer-term perspective on goals and strategies (Yukl, 2013: 22). Leaders who have insight into the organisation's structure, principles, and values and can interpret and transform these in line with the common purpose of the organisation and its employees (Kirkeby, 2008: 19) strategically guide the actions of employees toward achieving a goal with these qualities (Moller & Fast, 2020: 71). Exemplary leadership behaviours create a highly positive difference in employee commitment, motivation, job performance, and organisational success (Kouzes & Posner, 2023: 15).

Leadership, which also plays an essential role in overcoming challenges employees may face or embracing innovations, is a process involving actions related to creating more effective employees (Souba, 2014: 80). In this context, especially in the service sector, which requires active involvement from both employees and leaders (Deshpande et al., 1993: 24; Zhang et al., 2018: 3), leadership behaviours have a significant effect with their inspiring qualities on the attainment of new products or services or the emergence of interaction in service delivery and are considered a key factor in the success of service businesses (Çatı et al., 2017; Kouzes & Posner, 2023: 9; Yeşiltaş et al., 2013: 333;). It is stated that leadership behaviours are decisive for the quality of services provided by employees and the success that the business will achieve (Deshpande et al., 1993: 25; Zhang et al., 2018: 2). Therefore, it is essential for organisations to operate and create a corporate culture and for leaders to motivate employees to achieve high performance (Öztürk, 2022: 61). Moreover, the ability of a service business to create sustainable competitive advantage is closely linked to how effectively it fulfills desired activities. Integrating service businesses with innovation and dynamism underscores the strategic role of leadership behaviours in this sector. In this context, the effect of leadership behaviours on both the organisation's activities and employees' behaviours toward these activities highlights the core theme of this study. Therefore, these elements provide valuable insights into understanding the significance of leadership behaviours.

2.2. Customer-Oriented Behavior

Customer orientation, described as the heart of marketing activities of contemporary organisations (Saad et al., 2015: 250; Uygun & Akın, 2017: 841), holds great importance for businesses in meeting customer desires and needs better than competitors and achieving organisational goals (Saad et al., 2015: 251). In this context, Narver & Slater (1990: 22), emphasising the value creation perspective of a customer-oriented approach, underline the importance of consistently creating superior value for customers, including current and future changes. Similarly, Kelley (1992: 27) stated that customer orientation, which establishes long-term relationships between customers and the business, is a process that creates benefits for both parties. Conceptualised by Deshpande et al. (1993: 27) as a set of beliefs that prioritise customer interests in line with the goals of business management and employees, customer orientation aims at long-term organisational profitability. Saxe & Weitz (1982: 343) expressed that the core of a customer-oriented approach is realised through employee activities, seeing customer orientation as a marketing capability used by employees when interacting with current and potential customers. From this perspective, customer orientation is defined as employees' tendency or inclination to meet customer needs (Brown et al., 2002: 111; Donavan et al., 2004: 129). Because customer-oriented behaviours are based on relationships that create long-term value (Liao, 2009: 20), it is appropriate to say that employees play a crucial role, especially in service businesses, in establishing these relationships. This is because in service businesses where the level of interaction between service providers and customers is high, employees have primary importance in implementing innovations related to service delivery (Kouzes & Posner, 2023: 9).

Due to the intangibility and heterogeneity inherent in the service sector, satisfying customers' needs is more critical than satisfying other sectors (Zhang et al., 2018: 4). Thus, adopting a customer-oriented approach in businesses is seen as a key aspect of service quality (McGrath, 2009: 11). It is stated that an organization that demonstrates customer-oriented behavior is more likely to provide exceptional service quality and create satisfied customers (Hartline et al., 2000: 35). Therefore, an organization that places customers at the center must be proactive in responding to customers' changing needs and desires at all times (Akın, 2017: 46). In the service sector, which requires proactivity from both employees and leaders, customer orientation is the process of transforming information obtained from the market or customers before and during the service into a strategy that meets customer needs (Deshpande et al., 1993: 24; Zhang et al., 2018: 3). Hence, whether at organizational or employee levels, customer orientation refers to focusing on customer needs (Donavan et al., 2004: 129; Narver & Slater, 1990: 24). Focusing on customer needs contributes to successful service and sales interactions that establish high customer satisfaction (Stewart, 2009: 47). Overall, the more the perceived boundaries between employees and customers dissolve, the more they believe they share a common identity, leading service employees to work toward enhancing customers' well-being (Korschun et al., 2014: 22). In other words, during the service process, employees become willing and eager to understand their customers better and adopt behaviors that strengthen customer relationships (Periatt et al., 2004). Service employees who view customers as part of the service process and actively engage in information exchange with them (Jaramillo et al., 2009) engage in behaviours aimed at increasing customer satisfaction by considering customers' concerns and demands as part of mutually beneficial solutions (Lussier & Hartmann, 2016: 5; Saxe & Weitz, 1982: 344). Thus, employees prioritising building good relationships with customers beyond merely meeting their needs and desires are motivated by seeing service and sales interactions as opportunities to satisfy customers and create positive experiences (Stewart, 2009: 47-48).

In this context, understanding how customer orientation becomes a tangible tool for creating competitive advantage and building long-term customer relationships is crucial for businesses. Moreover, it is essential to examine how the relationship established by employees with customers evolves from a superficial interaction into a process that satisfies customers and creates positive experiences.

1.1. Relationships among Variables, Research Model and Hypotheses

Leadership must be demonstrated through effective behaviours to lead and inspire an organisation. Therefore, specific skills and traits inherent in leaders have a significant effect on organisations (Hunt & Fedynich, 2018: 21). Consequently, leader behaviours in organisations are considered a crucial element of success, with actions that propel employees and the organisation beyond mediocrity (Kouzes & Posner, 2023: 4).

Customer-oriented behaviours are shaped by an individual's personality, goals, motivations, and environmental factors. At the individual level, these behaviours depend on employee characteristics. In contrast, on an environmental level, the nature of work, situational effects within the organisation, and managerial competencies also play a significant role (Donavan et al., 2004: 129). Thus, employees need favorable working conditions (Conduit et al., 2014: 1322; Nataraj, 2010: 45), an organizational climate that promotes customer orientation (Kelley, 1992), and leaders who can lead positive changes (Kouzes & Posner, 2023: 23). Leaders' enthusiasm and energy create a satisfying work environment that meets employees' positive expectations (Kouzes & Posner, 2023: 23). In this sense, leaders play an essential role in influencing employees' attitudes and behaviors, shaping their performance accordingly (Ryan Kirkland et al., 2021: 50). Since leaders can affect their followers' working conditions, job resources, and quality of life at the workplace, examining the effect of leaders on employees' customer-oriented behaviors is considered significant in the literature (Ribeiro et al., 2020: 2100). In this context, a review of the literature on leadership behaviors and customer orientation reveals that studies investigating the relationship between various leadership types and employees' customer orientation (Garba et al., 2018; Ribeiro et al., 2020; Ryan Kirkland et al., 2021; Zhang et al., 2018;) emphasize the importance of leadership behaviors in developing employees' customer-oriented behaviors. Furthermore, studies focused on organisations and customer orientation have examined the relationships between customer-oriented behaviours and service quality (Hartline et al., 2020; Lussier & Hartmann, 2016; Saxe & Weitz, 1982); customer satisfaction (Hartline et al., 2020; Hennig-Thurau, 2004); customer loyalty (Gong et al., 2020); customer commitment (Hennig-Thurau, 2004); job performance (Deshpande et al., 1993); interaction with customers (Korschun et al., 2014); and sales performance (Lussier &Hartmann, 2016). However, no study in the local literature examines the relationship between leadership behaviours and customer-oriented behaviours. Considering that leaders exhibit behaviours that encourage customer-oriented behaviours or create a conducive climate for them (Shoham et al., 2005: 448), it is believed that managers' leadership behaviours may influence employees' customer-oriented behaviours. In light of this information, this study aims to examine the relationship between managers' leadership behaviours and employees' customer orientation and to reveal the effect of managers' leadership behaviours on employees' customer-oriented behaviours. In line with this aim, the research hypotheses based on the study's topic, purpose, and literature are presented below:

H₁: There is a significant relationship between managers' leadership behaviours and employees' customer-oriented behaviours.

H₁ₐ: There is a significant relationship between managers' challenging-the-process leadership behaviours and employees' customer-oriented behaviours.

H₁ᵦ: There is a significant relationship between managers' inspiring a shared vision leadership behaviours and employees' customer-oriented behaviours.

H₁c: There is a significant relationship between managers' enabling others to act leadership behaviours and employees' customer-oriented behaviours.

H₁d: There is a significant relationship between managers' modeling the way leadership behaviors and employees' customer-oriented behaviors.

H₁e: There is a significant relationship between managers' encouraging the heart leadership behaviours and employees' customer-oriented behaviours.

H₂: Managers' leadership behaviours affect employees' customer-oriented behaviours.

H₂ₐ: Managers' challenging-the-process leadership behaviours affect employees' customer-oriented behaviours.

H₂ᵦ: Managers' inspiring shared vision leadership behaviours affect employees' customer-oriented behaviours.

H₂c: Managers' facilitating others' work leadership behaviours affect employees' customer-oriented behaviours.

H₂d: Managers' modelling the way leadership behaviours affect employees' customer-oriented behaviours.

H₂e: Managers' encouraging the heart leadership behaviours affect employees' customer-oriented behaviours.

To achieve the research objective, the research model developed to answer the hypotheses is presented in Figure 1.
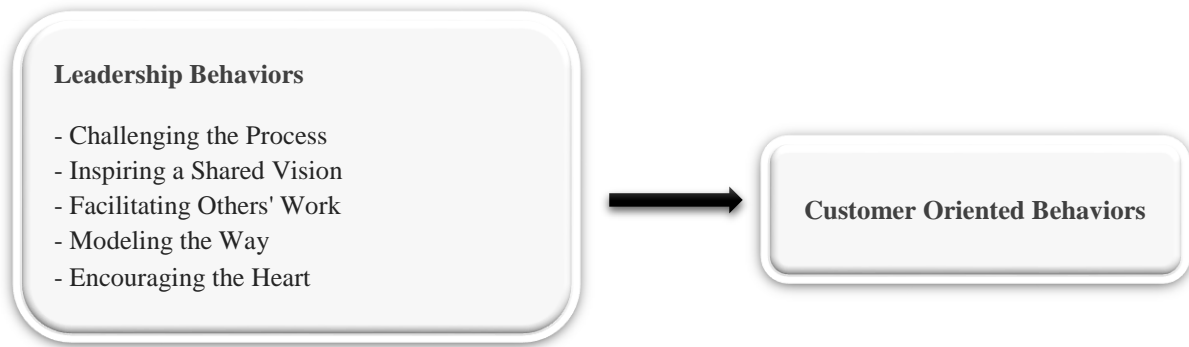

Figure 1. Research Model

The research model investigates the relationship between managers' leadership behaviours and employees' customer-oriented behaviours. In the proposed model, leadership behaviours are treated as the independent variable, and customer-oriented behaviours are treated as the dependent variable.

3. METHOD
A quantitative research methodology was employed to meet the research objective, utilising a "relational research" type and a "field study" design.

3.1. Population, Sample, and Data Collection Process

The study population consisted of service employees working in 15 five-star accommodation establishments located in Kemer, Antalya. This research aimed to reach the entire population. However, due to some employees declining to participate, high work intensity, and the inability to reach employees on leave during the process, 250 participants were surveyed, with 226 usable questionnaires included in the analysis. The demographic characteristics of the participants from whom data were collected are presented in Table 1.

Table 1.
Frequency and Percentage Distributions of Demographic Characteristics of Participants

N=226	Characteristics	F	%	N=226	Characteristics	F	%
Gender	Male	129	57,1	**Duration of Employment at Current**	Less than 1 year	84	37,2
	Female	97	42,9		1-5 years	66	29,2
Marital Status	Married	119	52,7		6-10 years	51	22,6
	Single	107	47,3		11 +	25	11,1
Age	18-23 years	52	23,0	**Education**	Primary Education	54	23,9
	24-29 years	64	28,3		High School	75	33,2
	30-35 years	33	14,6		Associate Degree	41	18,1
	36-41 years	42	18,6		Bachelor's Degree	52	23,0
	42 +	32	15,5		Graduate Degree	4	1,8

3.2. Data Analysis

The research data were analysed using SPSS 27 and AMOS statistical software. Initially, preliminary analyses were conducted to prepare the data for analysis. In this context, it was assessed whether the scale items used in the study met the normality assumption by examining skewness and kurtosis values. To test whether the distribution of the research data followed a normal distribution, skewness and kurtosis values, among the recommended methods in the relevant literature, were calculated (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2012: 618). Among the different approaches, Tabachnick & Fidell (2012) stated that the skewness and kurtosis values of a normally distributed dataset should fall between -3 and +3. Considering the dimensions of each variable, it was observed that the skewness and kurtosis values for the leadership behaviour scale ranged from -.716 to 1.100 and from -.416 to -.690 for the customer-oriented behaviour scale. Accordingly, since the skewness and kurtosis values of the scales were within acceptable limits, it was concluded that the research data exhibited a normal distribution, and analysis proceeded. Subsequently, the validity and reliability of the leadership behaviours and customer-oriented behaviours scales used in this study were tested. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was conducted using the AMOS program to assess the construct validity of the scales used in this research. Following this, Cronbach's Alpha coefficients of the scales were calculated to test their reliability. Finally, to obtain answers to the research hypotheses, Correlation and Regression Analyses were performed.

3.3. Data Collection Instrument, Validity, and Reliability

The data for this quantitative research, conducted based on the quantitative research method, were collected using a questionnaire developed from scales tested for validity and reliability for specific purposes, utilising convenience sampling. The first section of the questionnaire prepared for research contained a personal information form with questions about the participants' demographic characteristics. The second section presents the leadership behaviours scale, and the third presents the customer-oriented behaviour scale. Additionally, two field experts were consulted to finalise the questionnaire. Detailed information about the scales is given below.

Leadership Behaviors Scale

The Leadership Behaviors Scale was developed by Posner and Kouzes (1988), and its Turkish adaptation was conducted by Yavuz (2009). Based on employees' perceptions of their managers' five leadership practices, this scale consists of five dimensions: challenging the process, inspiring a shared vision, facilitating others' work, guiding, and encouraging, comprising 30 statements. Each statement was scored on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 to 5.

Customer-Oriented Behavior Scale

Stewart (2009) developed the Customer-Oriented Behaviour Scale, with its Turkish adaptation carried out by Uygun et al. (2013). This study used the revised version by Uygun and Akın (2017). This scale comprises five dimensions: showing special interest and making customers feel special, understanding customers' needs, willingness to provide necessary services, desire to build personal relationships, and readiness to deliver services, totalling 20 statements. Each statement was scored on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 to 5.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was conducted using the AMOS software package to test the validity of the scales used. CFA was employed to verify the accuracy of a previously established structure (Karagöz, 2019: 123). Numerous fit indices are utilised to assess whether the proposed model is compatible. Although there is no limitation regarding the values to be examined, common indices for model fit in the literature include χ^2/df, GFI (Goodness of Fit Index), CFI (Comparative Fit Index), and RMSEA (Root Mean Square Error of Approximation) (Karagöz, 2019: 133; Meydan & Şeşen, 2015: 37). In this study, the fit indices examined for CFA included χ^2/df

(Chi-Square Fit Test), NFI (Normed Fit Index), IFI (Incremental Fit Index), GFI (Goodness of Fit Index), CFI (Comparative Fit Index), and RMSEA (Root Mean Square Error of Approximation). All scales exhibited good and acceptable fit quality values (Karagöz, 2019; Meydan & Şeşen, 2015). The fit quality values resulting from the CFA applied in the research are presented in Table 2.

Table 2.
Goodness of Fit Values for Scales

	x^2/df	NFI	IFI	CFI	GFI	RMSEA
Good Fit	$X^2/df \leq 3$	NFI ≥ 0,95	IFI ≥ ,95	CFI ≥ 0,97	GFI ≥ 0,90	RMSEA≤ ,05
Acceptable Fit	$X^2/df \leq 4-5$	0,94-0,90	0,94-0,90	CFI ≥ 0,95	0,89-0,85	0,06-0,08
Leadership Behaviors Scale	1,81	0,90	0,94	0,95	0,85	0,06
Customer-Oriented Behavior Scale	1,41	0,95	0,98	0,98	0,91	0,04

Following the Confirmatory Factor Analysis, a reliability analysis was conducted for both the overall scales and their dimensions. The reliability of the scales was tested by calculating the Cronbach's Alpha (α) coefficients. In the relevant literature, an Alpha value of 0,70 or higher is generally considered sufficient for scale reliability (Nunnally, 1978). In this regard, the reliability analysis results for the scales used in this research are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. *Reliability Analysis Results for Scales*

Scales	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha Value
Leadership Behaviors Scale	30	0,859
Challenging the process	6	0,934
Inspiring a shared vision	6	0,914
Facilitating others' work	6	0,886
Modelling the way	6	0,933
Encouraging the heart	6	0,950
Customer-Oriented Behavior Scale	20	0,932
Showing special attention to the customers and making them feel special	4	0,945
Desire and ability to understand customer needs	4	0,956
Desire to provide required service	4	0,952
Desire to develop a personal relationship	4	0,927
Readiness to provide service	4	0,965

As a result of the analysis, Cronbach's Alpha values of 0,859 for the leadership behaviours scale and 0,932 for the customer-oriented behaviour scale were obtained. Therefore, Cronbach's Alpha values of 0,70 and above indicate that the overall scales and dimensions are sufficiently reliable.

4. FINDINGS
A Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to test the relationship between variables. Regardless of the sign, correlation coefficients can be interpreted as 0,10-. 0,29 indicates a small effect, 0,30-0,49 a medium effect, and 0,50-1.00 a large ct (Green et al., 2000: 236; Green & Salkind, 2014: 233). The analysis revealed a positive and strong correlation between leadership behaviours and employees' customer-oriented behaviours ($r=0,551$; $p<0,01$). When examining the relationship between the dimensions of leadership behaviours and customer-oriented behaviours, the following medium positive correlations were identified: challenging the process ($r=0,300$; $p<0,01$), inspiring a shared vision (r=0,336; p< 0,01), facilitating others' work ($r=0,312$; $p<0,01$), and modelling the way ($r=0,301$; $p<0,01$). In contrast, the dimension of encouraging the heart showed a low positive correlation with customer-oriented behaviours ($r=0,225$; $p< 0,01$). Based on these results, hypotheses **H₁** (There is a significant relationship between managers' leadership behaviours and employees' customer-oriented behaviours) and its sub-hypotheses **H₁ₐ** (There is a substantial relationship between managers' challenging the process leadership behaviours and employees' customer-oriented behaviours), **H₁ᵦ** (There is a significant relationship between managers' inspiring shared vision leadership behaviours and employees' customer-oriented behaviours), **H₁c** (Managers' facilitating others' work leadership behaviours affect employees' customer-oriented behaviours), **H₁d** (There is a significant relationship between managers' modelling the way leadership behaviours and employees' customer-oriented behaviours), and **H₁e** (There is a substantial relationship between managers' encouraging the

heart leadership behaviours and employees' customer-oriented behaviours) were accepted. The corresponding values are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Values Regarding Correlation Analysis

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Leadership Behaviors	Pearson Correlation	1						
	Sig. (2-tailed)							
	N	226						
Challenging the process	Pearson Correlation	0,458**	1					
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,000						
	N	226	226					
Inspiring a shared vision	Pearson Correlation	0,514**	0,486**	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,000	0,000					
	N	226	226	226				
Facilitating others' work	Pearson Correlation	0,464**	0,036	0,291**	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,000	0,589	0,000				
	N	226	226	226	226			
Modeling the way	Pearson Correlation	0,574**	-0,145*	-0,115	0,130	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,000	0,030	0,084	0,051			
	N	226	226	226	226	226		
Encouraging the heart	Pearson Correlation	0,574**	-0,122	-0,139*	-0,010	0,494**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,000	0,067	0,037	0,876	0,000		
	N	226	226	226	226	226	226	
Customer Oriented Behaviors	Pearson Correlation	0,551**	0,300**	0,336**	0,312**	0,301**	0,225**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,001	
	N	226	226	226	226	226	226	226

** Correlation is significant at the 0,01 level (2-tailed).
* Correlation is significant at the 0,05 level (2-tailed).

Correlation and regression analyses were conducted to determine the degree of effect of the relationships identified among the variables in the model. The effect of leadership behaviours on customer-oriented behaviours was found to be significant (R^2=0,304; F=97,790; p=0,000). According to this model, leadership behaviours explain 30,4% of the variance in the dependent variable of customer-oriented behaviours. It was determined that managers' leadership behaviours significantly and positively affect employees' development of customer-oriented behaviours (β =0,844; p=0,000). This indicates that a one-unit increase in leadership behaviours leads to an increase of 0,844 units in employees' customer-oriented behaviours. Therefore, managers' more effective leadership has the potential to enhance employees' customer-oriented behaviours. Consequently, the hypothesis H_2 (Managers' leadership behaviours influence employees' customer-oriented behaviours) is supported. The results obtained indicate that leadership behaviours are an essential factor contributing to employees' customer satisfaction. The regression analysis results regarding the effects of managers' leadership behaviours on employees' customer-oriented behaviours are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Simple Linear Regression Analysis Results

Variables	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients		
	β	Std. Error	β	t	Sig.
Constant	0,833	0,280	-	2,972	0,003
Leadership Behaviors	0,844	0,085	0,551	9,889	≤0,001

Dependent Variable: Customer-Oriented Behaviors; Independent Variable: Leadership Behaviors
R^2: 0,304; D-W: 1,110; Tolerance: 1,00; VIF: 1,000; F: 97,790

Table 6 displays the results of the multiple regression analysis concerning the effects of the leadership behaviours exhibited by managers on employees' customer-oriented behaviours. The model accounts for 30,1% of the variance in the dependent variable of customer-oriented behaviours. This indicates a significant effect of leadership behaviours (including their sub-dimensions) on customer orientation (R^2: 0,301; F: 20,418; $p \leq 0,001$). Upon

examination of the results, it was found that the leadership behaviours of challenging the process (β =0,187; p≤0,001), inspiring a shared vision (β =0,184; p=0,002), facilitating others' work (β=.214; p≤.001), modelling the way (β =0,192; p≤0,001), and encouraging the heart (β=0,104; p=0,012) have significant and positive effects on employees' customer-oriented behaviours. In other words, a one-unit increase in the behaviour of challenging the process leads to an increase of 0,187 units in employees' customer-oriented behaviours; a one-unit increase in the behaviour of inspiring a shared vision results in an increase of 0,184 units; a one-unit increase in the behaviour of facilitating others' work corresponds to an increase of 0,214 units; a one-unit increase in the behaviour of modelling the way increases 0,192 units; and finally, a one-unit increase in the behaviour of encouraging the heart leads to an increase of 0,104 units in customer-oriented behaviours. Therefore, the leadership behaviours of challenging the process, inspiring a shared vision, facilitating others' work, modelling the way, and encouraging the heart positively influence employees' customer-oriented behaviours. Notably, sub-dimensions such as "facilitating others' work" and "modelling the way" appear to have the highest effect. These findings suggest that managers need to enhance their leadership styles, which can potentially increase employees' customer orientation. The corresponding values for the conducted regression analysis are presented in Table 6.

Table 6. Multiple Regression Analysis Results

Variables	Unstandardised β	Std. Error	Standardised β	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
Constant	0,686	0,291	2,354	2,972	0,019		
Challenging the process	0,187	0,050	0,241	3,730	≤0,001	0,746	1,341
Inspiring a shared vision	0,184	0,060	0,209	3,086	0,02	0,680	1,471
Facilitating other's work	0,214	0,060	0,212	3,551	≤0,001	0,874	1,144
Modeling the way	0,192	0,051	0,248	3,795	≤0,001	0,727	1,375
Encouraging the heart	0,104	0,041	0,163	0,524	0,012	0,746	1,340

Dependent Variable: Customer-Oriented Behaviors; Independent Variable: Inspiring a shared vision, Facilitating other's work, Modelling the way, Encouraging the heart
R: 563ª; Adjusted R^2: 0,301; D-W: 1,042; F: 20,418

According to these results, the hypotheses **H₂ₐ** (Managers' challenging the process leadership behaviours influence employees' customer-oriented behaviours), **H₂ᵦ** (Managers' inspiring a shared vision leadership behaviours influence employees' customer-oriented behaviours), **H₂c** (Managers' facilitating others' work leadership behaviours influence employees' customer-oriented behaviours), **H₂d** (Managers' modelling the way leadership behaviours influence employees' customer-oriented behaviours), and **H₂e** (Managers' encouraging the heart leadership behaviours influence employees' customer-oriented behaviours) were accepted.

5. RESULTS AND CONCLUSION

It should not be overlooked that leaders play a significant role in delivering customer-focused services and achieving organisational success, especially in service businesses. Therefore, leaders need to invest in learning the behaviours that will enable them to become the best leaders possible due to these active characteristics. In this way, they can significantly influence both their employees and, through them, their customers, thereby affecting the organisation as a whole (Kouzes & Posner, 2023: 17). In this context, the leadership behaviours exhibited by managers in public or private sector firms operating in various sectors such as education, healthcare, tourism, and manufacturing provide a broad understanding of their effects on employees' development of successful behaviours (Rost, 1993: 94). In this regard, leadership behaviours play a crucial role in encouraging and motivating employees to engage with customers and in establishing a proactive service-oriented culture (Zhang et al., 2018: 12). These behaviours contribute to customer-oriented actions as motivating actions exhibited around their values and those of their followers (Burns, 1979: 381).

Thus, the behaviours of leaders, which serve as a source of motivation for achieving organisational goals and directing employees toward these goals, are considered a primary influencing factor in managing this process. The current research results revealed a highly positive relationship between leadership behaviours and employees' customer-oriented behaviours. When examining the relationship between the dimensions of leadership behaviours and customer-oriented behaviours, medium-sized positive relationships were found between the dimensions of

challenging the process, inspiring a shared vision, facilitating others' work, and guiding, while a low positive relationship was observed between the encouraging the heart dimension and customer-oriented behaviours.

The regression analysis results indicated that managers' leadership behaviours significantly and positively affect employees' customer-oriented behaviours. It was also found that the dimensions of leadership behaviours—challenging the process, inspiring a shared vision, facilitating others' work, guiding and encouraging the heart—significantly and positively affect employees' customer-oriented behaviours. Numerous important studies in the relevant literature (Boles et al., 2001; Jaramillo et al., 2009; Schwepker & Ingram, 2016; Schwepker, 2003) similarly demonstrate that employees' perceptions of their leaders can influence their customer-oriented behaviors and that employees receiving support from their leaders establish a connection between leadership behaviors and customer orientation (Ryan Kirkland et al., 2021: 49). In this sense, it has also been stated that employees who are satisfied with leadership behaviors are more likely to exhibit customer-oriented behaviors (Qin et al., 2014: 974; Garba et al., 2018: 2). Furthermore, since the quality of service offered in businesses is determined by employees who interact directly with customers and the leaders who influence these employees (Deshpande et al., 1993: 25; Zhang et al., 2018: 2), it has been noted that enhancing employees' customer orientation is likely related to leadership behaviors (Ribeiro et al., 2020: 2100). Consequently, these studies support the findings of the current research that managers' leadership behaviors positively influence employees' customer orientation. Additionally, some research conducted on the role of leadership in promoting customer-oriented behaviours (Sellgren et al., 2007; Wirtz et al., 2008) has shown that implementing specific management strategies that support the adoption of a customer-oriented culture improves superior service quality (Deshpande et al., 1993: 25; Boukis et al., 2015: 394; Zhang et al., 2018: 2). In this sense, leadership behaviours play a significant role in motivating employees to provide excellent customer service (Ribeiro et al., 2020: 2102), as well as in developing and presenting unique and new services (Kouzes & Posner, 2023: 9). Similarly, the conducted research has yielded results indicating that managers' leadership behaviours positively influence employees' ability to establish interactive relationships with customers and provide special attention by understanding their needs. Therefore, the findings of this research are considered significant in highlighting the role and effect level of managers' leadership behaviours in fostering customer-oriented behaviours among employees in service businesses. However, like any research, this study has various limitations and constraints. Firstly, as the research was conducted in a single accommodation business in one province, the generalizability of the findings to other provinces and assessments of different service businesses in various sectors is considerably limited. Future research conducted in different provinces or sectors could provide diversity in uncovering the relationships among the relevant variables. In this sense, focusing on businesses operating in the retail, finance, health, education and food and beverage sectors, where close contact with customers and service quality are important, such as accommodation services, will enrich the research results. Moreover, studies conducted with larger samples may be beneficial in terms of the generalizability and interpretability of research results. At the same time, conducting new research, depending on the various types of leaders in the literature, may provide important clues in terms of specifying the roles of leader behaviours in customer orientation. Finally, including different variables that will play a mediating or moderating role in the relationship between leader behaviours and employees' customer orientation may guide researchers in terms of reaching more general results. Additionally, leadership is a skill that relies not only on cognition but also significantly on the emotional insight and understanding of leaders and employees (Moller & Fast, 2020: 71). Therefore, understanding how leadership behaviours are interpreted and perceived is crucial for employees' customer-oriented behaviours. Thus, future studies should be supported by qualitative research that offers an in-depth examination of individual experiences regarding these perceptions, which could yield valuable insights for obtaining beneficial results.

ÇALIŞMANIN ETİK İZNİ
Yapılan bu çalışmada "Yükseköğretim Kurumları Bilimsel Araştırma ve Yayın Etiği Yönergesi" kapsamında uyulması belirtilen tüm kurallara uyulmuştur. Yönergenin ikinci bölümü olan "Bilimsel Araştırma ve Yayın Etiğine Aykırı Eylemler" başlığı altında belirtilen eylemlerden hiçbiri gerçekleştirilmemiştir.

Etik Kurul İzin Bilgileri

İnsan katılımcıların yer aldığı çalışmalarda gerçekleştirilen tüm prosedürler, kurumsal ve/veya ulusal araştırma komitesinin etik standartlarına ve 1964 Helsinki Bildirgesi'ne ve daha sonraki değişikliklerine veya karşılaştırılabilir etik standartlara uygundur. Bu çalışma için İstanbul Beykent Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu'ndan 13.10.2023 tarih ve 49846591- - 427 karar numarası ile Etik Kurul Onayı alınmıştır.

ARAŞTIRMACILARIN KATKI ORANI
Her bir yazarın katkı oranı eşit düzeydedir. 1. Yazarın araştırmaya katkı oranı %50, 2. Yazarın araştırmaya katkı oranı %50'dir.

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ÇALIŞMANIN ETİK İZNİ

Yapılan bu çalışmada "Yükseköğretim Kurumları Bilimsel Araştırma ve Yayın Etiği Yönergesi" kapsamında uyulması belirtilen tüm kurallara uyulmuştur. Yönergenin ikinci bölümü olan "Bilimsel Araştırma ve Yayın Etiğine Aykırı Eylemler" başlığı altında belirtilen eylemlerden hiçbiri gerçekleştirilmemiştir.

ETİK KURUL İZIN BILGILERI

İnsan katılımcıların yer aldığı çalışmalarda gerçekleştirilen tüm prosedürler, kurumsal ve/veya ulusal araştırma komitesinin etik standartlarına ve 1964 Helsinki Bildirgesi'ne ve daha sonraki değişikliklerine veya karşılaştırılabilir etik standartlara uygundur. Bu çalışma için İstanbul Beykent Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu'ndan 13.10.2023 tarih ve 49846591- - 427 karar numarası ile Etik Kurul Onayı alınmıştır.

ARAŞTIRMACILARIN KATKI ORANI

Her bir yazarın katkı oranı eşit düzeydedir. 1. Yazarın araştırmaya katkı oranı %50, 2. Yazarın araştırmaya katkı oranı %50'dir.

ÇATIŞMA BEYANI

Araştırmada herhangi bir kişi ya da kurum ile finansal ya da kişisel yönden bağlantı bulunmamaktadır. Araştırmada herhangi bir çıkar çatışması bulunmamaktadır.