

**Ema
Petaković
Ikica****KATEGORIZACIJA
SMJEŠTAJNIH OBJEKATA KAO
INDIKATOR PREDANOSTI
VODSTVA I UKLJUČENOSTI
ZAPOSLENIKA U
HOTELIJERSTVU****CATEGORIZATION OF
ACCOMMODATION FACILITIES
AS AN INDICATOR OF
LEADERSHIP COMMITMENT
AND EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT
IN THE HOTEL INDUSTRY**

SAŽETAK: Cilj ovog istraživanja bio je ispitati povezanost kategorizacije hotela s percepcijom predanosti vodstva i uključenosti zaposlenika u aktivnosti kontinuiranih poboljšanja u kontekstu hrvatskog hotelijerstva, s namjerom doprinosa unaprjeđenju kvalitete upravljanja u smještajnim objektima različitih kategorija. Empirijsko istraživanje provedeno je na uzorku srednjih i velikih hotelskih poduzeća u Republici Hrvatskoj, pri čemu su ispitana 244 menadžera uz uporabu Likertove skale od sedam stupnjeva. Obrada podataka uključivala je deskriptivne statističke metode i neparametrijsku analizu Kruskal-Wallis testom zbog utvrđenog odstupanja od normalne distribucije. Rezultati ukazuju na statistički značajne razlike u percepciji predanosti vodstva u odnosu na kategorizaciju hotela ($p < 0,05$), pri čemu se u hotelima više kategorije, osobito u onima s pet zvjezdica, vodstvo percipira kao više uključeno u svakodnevne aktivnosti kvalitete. Suprotno tomu, iako su hoteli viših kategorija ostvarili više prosječne rangove za uključenost zaposlenika, razlike nisu bile statistički značajne ($p > 0,05$). Dobiveni rezultati doprinose postojećoj literaturi te sugeriraju da kategorizacija hotela može biti indikator razine predanosti vodstva, no ne i odlučujući čimbenik u poticanju uključenosti zaposlenika.

KLJUČNE RIJEČI: kategorizacija, predanost vodstva, uključenost zaposlenika, kontinuirana poboljšanja, upravljanje kvalitetom

UVOD

U kontekstu sve dinamičnijeg i konkurentnijeg poslovnog okruženja upravljanje kvalitetom postaje

ABSTRACT: The aim of this study was to examine the relationship between hotel categorization and the perception of leadership commitment and employee involvement in continuous improvement activities within the context of the Croatian hotel industry, with the intention of contributing to the improvement of quality management in accommodation facilities of different categories. The empirical study was conducted on a sample of medium-sized and large hotel companies in the Republic of Croatia, involving 244 managers, using a seven-point Likert scale. Data processing included descriptive statistical methods and non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis analysis due to deviation from normal distribution. The results indicate statistically significant differences in the perception of leadership commitment in relation to hotel categorization ($p < 0.05$), showing that leadership is perceived as more involved in everyday quality activities in higher-category hotels, particularly in five-star hotels. Conversely, although higher-category hotels achieved higher average ranks for employee involvement, the differences were not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$). The results contribute to the existing literature and suggest that hotel categorization may serve as an indicator of leadership commitment, but not as a decisive factor in fostering employee involvement.

KEYWORDS: categorization; leadership commitment; employee involvement; continuous improvement; quality management

INTRODUCTION

In an increasingly dynamic and competitive business environment, quality management has become a key



This work is licensed under a CC BY-NC 4.0 license
© author(s)
Ovaj je rad licenciran pod licencom CC BY-NC 4.0
© autor(i)

Ema Petaković Ikica, PhD, University of Rijeka, Faculty of tourism and hospitality management **address:** Ika, Primorska 46, p.p. 97, 51410 Opatija, Croatia **e-mail:** ema.petakovic@fthm.hr

ključno strateško pitanje za organizacije u različitim sektorima, uključujući i uslužne djelatnosti. Pitanje „hoće li se to isplatiti?“, koje često prati implementaciju sustava upravljanja kvalitetom, nije samo retoričko već zahtijeva i analitički pristup evaluaciji koristi koje proizlaze iz primjene ovih sustava (Psomas & Kafetzopoulos, 2014). Brojna istraživanja (Kumar et al., 2009; Fotopoulos & Psomas, 2009; Psomas & Fotopoulos, 2010; Das et al., 2011; Vrtodušić Hrgović et al., 2024) potvrđuju da primjena sustava upravljanja kvalitetom, osobito kada se provodi kontinuirano i sustavno, može rezultirati brojnim prednostima za organizaciju, uključujući veće zadovoljstvo kupaca i zaposlenika, poboljšanje kvalitete proizvoda i usluga, očuvanje prirodnog i društvenog okruženja te unaprjeđenje ukupne poslovne uspješnosti. Prema Mukhles (2021), hotelska industrija, a time i širi turistički sektor, teži k implementaciji sustava upravljanja kvalitetom, s ciljem postizanja konkurentnosti i poslovne izvrsnosti.

Uslužne djelatnosti, a osobito sektor hotelijerstva i turizma, suočeni su s nizom specifičnosti koje dodatno oblikuju pristupe upravljanju kvalitetom. Načela sustava kvalitete koja vrijede u proizvodnji moraju se prilagoditi obilježjima usluga kao što su nematerijalnost, prolaznost, neodvojivost od pružatelja usluga i varijabilnost (Kotler et al., 2010). Upravo te karakteristike otežavaju standardizaciju i sustavno upravljanje kvalitetom, ali istodobno ističu važnost interpersonalne dimenzije u procesu pružanja usluge (Kandampully et al., 2000). Kvaliteta u turizmu i ugostiteljstvu time postaje ne samo organizacijski imperativ već i temelj tržišnog pozicioniranja.

Upravo stoga organizacije iz uslužnog sektora, a posebno iz hotelijerstva, sve češće implementiraju međunarodno priznate standarde poput ISO 9001:2015. Taj standard osobitu pažnju posvećuje dvama ključnim načelima: vodstvu i uključenosti zaposlenika, naglašavajući važnost zajedničke vizije i svrhe unutar organizacije, uz paralelno osnaživanje i uključivanje svih sudionika u kreiranje vrijednosti (ISO 9000:2015). Vodstvo, kao strateški pokretač, i zaposlenici, kao neposredni nositelji interakcije s ko-

strategic issue across sectors, including services. The question “*Will it pay off?*” often arises when implementing quality management systems and it requires analytical evaluation of the benefits derived from such systems (Psomas & Kafetzopoulos, 2014). Numerous studies (Kumar et al., 2009; Fotopoulos & Psomas, 2009; Psomas & Fotopoulos, 2010; Das et al., 2011; Vrtodušić Hrgović et al., 2024) confirm that the application of quality management systems—particularly when implemented continuously and systematically—can result in various advantages, including higher customer and employee satisfaction, improved service and product quality, preservation of natural and social environments, and better overall business performance. According to Mukhles (2021), the hotel industry—and the tourism sector more broadly—strives to implement quality management systems to achieve competitiveness and business excellence. Service industries, especially hospitality and tourism, are faced with specific features that influence approaches to quality management. Quality management principles applicable to production must be adapted to service characteristics such as intangibility, transience, inseparability, and variability (Kotler et al., 2010). These characteristics complicate standardization and systematic quality management, while simultaneously emphasizing the interpersonal dimension of service delivery (Kandampully et al., 2000). Thus, quality becomes not only an organizational imperative, but also an essential element of market positioning, both in tourism and hospitality.

For this reason, organizations in the service sector—hospitality in particular—frequently implement internationally recognized standards such as ISO 9001:2015. This standard places particular emphasis on two core principles: leadership and employee involvement, highlighting the importance of a shared vision and purpose within the organization, along with empowering all participants in value creation (ISO 9000:2015). Leadership, as a strategic driver and employees, as primary actors in service delivery jointly influence the final service

risnicima, zajedno utječu na konačnu kvalitetu isporučene usluge (ISO 9000:2015, 24. 7. 2025.). Sličan pristup susrećemo i u modelima poslovne izvrsnosti, kao što su Malcolm Baldrige, EFQM i Demingova nagrada, koji također prepoznaju predanost vodstva i aktivnu uključenost zaposlenika kao temeljne stupove organizacijskog napretka. Istraživanja se, poput onog koje provodi Sozuer (2011) u hotelima s četirima zvjezdicama u Istanbulu, koriste Europskim modelom izvrsnosti u upravljanju (EFQM) kao alatom za samoprocjenu. Autor naglašava važnost predanosti vodstva i uključenosti zaposlenika, a poseban se naglasak stavlja na obrazovanje zaposlenika kao ključnog elementa u tom procesu unaprjeđenja. Prethodna istraživanja pokazuju da kategorizacija hotela utječe na način na koji se oblikuju menadžerske prakse, predanost zaposlenika i strategije usmjerene prema gostima. Primjerice, u hotelima više kategorije, poput hotela s pet zvjezdica, naglasak se stavlja na inovacije, strateško planiranje i odabir odgovarajućeg stila vodstva, što omogućava snažniju povezanost između TQM praksi i pokazatelja uspješnosti (Al-Sabi et al., 2017; Sunil et al., 2021; Wanjiku & Kungu, 2022). Nadalje, u hotelima više kategorije lojalnost se gostiju razvija putem kompleksne percepcije vrijednosti boravka, dok se u hotelima niže kategorije lojalnost temelji prvenstveno na neposrednom iskustvu kvalitete usluge (Keshavarz et al., 2019). U tom smislu, uključenost zaposlenika i njihova usklađenost s očekivanjima gostiju postaju ključni elementi u ostvarivanju diferenciranih obrazaca kvalitete i zadovoljstva, pri čemu uključeno i predano vodstvo značajno doprinosi razvoju sustava upravljanja kvalitetom i jačanju posvećenosti zaposlenika (Portela Maquieira et al., 2020; Ishizaka et al., 2019).

Na temelju prethodnih uvida, cilj je ovog istraživanja ispitati postoje li statistički značajne razlike u razini percipirane predanosti vodstva i uključenosti zaposlenika u aktivnosti kontinuiranih poboljšanja u donosu na kategorizaciju hotelskih smještajnih objekata. Poseban fokus stavljen je na hotelske objekte različitih broja zvjezdica da bi se istražilo utječe li razina kategorizacije na intenzitet implementacije ovih temeljnih načela kvalitete u praksi.

quality (ISO 9000:2015, 24 July 2025). Likewise, excellence models such as Malcolm Baldrige, EFQM, and the Deming Prize also recognize leadership commitment and employee involvement as fundamental pillars of organizational progress. Studies, such as the one conducted by Sozuer (2011) in four-star hotels in Istanbul, use the European Excellence Model (EFQM) as a self-assessment tool. The author emphasizes the importance of leadership commitment and employee involvement, with particular emphasis on employee education as a key element in this improvement process. Previous research shows that hotel categorization influences managerial practices, employee commitment, and strategies focused on guests. In higher-category hotels, such as five-star hotels, emphasis is placed on innovation, strategic planning, and leadership style selection, enabling stronger links between TQM practices and performance indicators (Al-Sabi et al., 2017; Sunil et al., 2021; Wanjiku & Kungu, 2022). Guest loyalty in higher-category hotels is shaped by a complex perception of value, whereas in lower-category hotels, it relies primarily on direct service quality (Keshavarz et al., 2019). In this context, employee involvement and alignment with guest expectations become key factors in accomplishing differentiated quality and satisfaction patterns, and involved and committed leadership significantly contributes to the development of quality management systems and increased employee commitment (Portela Maquieira et al., 2020; Ishizaka et al., 2019).

Based on previous insights, the goal of this study was to examine whether statistically significant differences exist in perceived leadership commitment and employee involvement in continuous improvement activities relative to hotel categorization. Special focus is placed on hotel facilities of different star ratings to investigate whether the level of categorization affects the intensity of implementation of these fundamental quality principles in practice.

The paper consists of an introduction, two theoretical chapters that address leadership commitment

Rad se sastoji se od uvoda, dvaju teorijskih poglavlja koja obrađuju predanost vodstva i uključenost zaposlenika u sustav upravljanja kvalitetom, zatim metodološkog okvira, prikaza rezultata istraživanja te završne diskusije i zaključaka.

PREDANOST VODSTVA

Predanost vodstva ključno je načelo u kontekstu kontinuiranog poboljšanja te u praksama upravljanja kvalitetom. Uspjeh svake organizacije ovisi o učinkovitosti njezinih zaposlenika, a koja nije određena samo njihovim vještinama i iskustvom već i odnosom s nadređenima. Ključnu ulogu u oblikovanju takvog okruženja ima vodstvo koje postavlja vrijednosti organizacije očekivanja te ih integrira u svakodnevne poslovne procese. Dobri lideri nadahnjuju i motiviraju svoje timove te uspostavljaju organizacijski poredak koji je dosljedan, predvidiv i upravljiv (Kiran, 2017). Prema standardu ISO 9000, vodstvo se definira kao „osoba ili skupina ljudi koji vode i nadziru organizaciju na najvišoj razini” (ISO 9000:2015, str. 30) čija je odgovornost usmjeravanje zaposlenika primjenom alata kontinuiranog poboljšanja, koordinacije aktivnosti, učinkovitog upravljanja resursima te pružanja potrebne edukacije za razvoj i rast organizacije (Paipa-Galeano et al., 2020, str. 198). Upravo ta predanost vodstva temelj je uspješnog poslovanja i ključni faktor u postizanju održivih rezultata. Kao što ističe Kiran (2017), vodstvo je važno na svim razinama organizacije. Na najvišoj razini ključno je za oblikovanje planova i politika. Na srednjoj i nižim razinama potrebno je za tumačenje i provedbu planova i programa koje donosi vrhovno vodstvo.

Istraživanje Portela Maquieira i sur. (2020) potvrđuje da transformacijsko vodstvo značajno doprinosi razvoju sustava upravljanja kvalitetom, pri čemu hoteli unutar lanaca imaju vodstvo koje je više predano i imaju višu razinu uključivanja zaposlenika u procese, dok neovisni hoteli te oni orijentirani na odmorišni proizvod pokazuju slabiju stratešku usmjerenost. Chathoth i Olsen (2002) ističu da vodstvo, promatrano na mikrorazini i makrorazini,

and employee involvement in the quality management system, then a methodological framework, a presentation of the research results, and a final discussion and conclusions.

LEADERSHIP COMMITMENT

Leadership commitment is a key principle in the context of continuous improvement and quality management practices. The success of any organization depends on the effectiveness of its employees, which is not determined solely by their skills and experience but also by their relationship with their superiors. Leadership plays a crucial role in shaping such an environment by establishing organizational values and expectations and integrating them into daily business processes. Good leaders inspire and motivate their teams and create an organizational order that is consistent, predictable, and manageable (Kiran, 2017). According to the ISO 9000 standard, leadership is defined as “a person or group of people who direct and control an organization at the highest level” (ISO 9000:2015, p. 30), responsible for guiding employees through the application of continuous improvement tools, coordinating activities, managing resources effectively, and providing necessary training for the development and growth of the organization (Paipa-Galeano et al., 2020, p. 198). This leadership commitment represents the foundation of successful business operations and a key factor in achieving sustainable results. As Kiran (2017) states, leadership is important at all levels of the organization. At the highest level, it is essential for shaping plans and policies, while at middle and lower levels it is required for interpreting and implementing the plans and programs introduced by top management.

The research conducted by Portela Maquieira et al. (2020) confirms that transformational leadership significantly contributes to the development of quality management systems, whereby hotels belonging to hotel chains demonstrate greater leadership commitment and higher employee involvement compared to independent hotels or hotels oriented toward leisure tourism. Chathoth and Olsen

ima direktan utjecaj na izgradnju kulture kvalitete i dugoročne izvrsnosti, posebno na tržištima u razvoju. Lideri koji su sposobni integrirati viziju, standarde i motivaciju zaposlenika doprinose operativnoj učinkovitosti i stvaranju diferenciranog iskustva za gosta. S druge strane, Whitelaw (2013) naglašava da vodstvo u hotelijerstvu nije homogeno jer različite razine menadžmenta zahtijevaju različite stilove vodstva, ovisno o vrsti zadatka i organizacijskom cilju. Njegova studija pokazuje da višerazinski pristup vodstvu, u kojem su stilovi prilagođeni izazovima koje susreću operativni, srednji i viši menadžeri, ima pozitivan učinak na efikasnost organizacije. Ova prilagodljivost, odnosno situacijsko vodstvo, od presudne je važnosti za održavanje visokih standarda usluge i za razvoj zaposlenika, što su osnovni elementi organizacijske izvrsnosti.

Nazarian i sur. (2024) dodatno proširuju razumijevanje vodstva u hotelijerstvu uvođenjem kulturološke dimenzije. Njihovo istraživanje pokazuje da utjecaj etičkog i autentičnog vodstva na organizacijske varijable (poput glasa zaposlenika, povjerenja i predanosti) varira ovisno o nacionalnoj kulturi. U zemljama s niskom udaljenošću moći, poput Njemačke i Nizozemske, etičko vodstvo snažno potiče izražavanje mišljenja zaposlenika, dok u hijerarhijski usmjerenim kulturama (Katar, Turska) takav učinak nije vidljiv. Autentično vodstvo ima širi utjecaj, ali i dalje ovisi o kulturnim očekivanjima i interpretacijama ponašanja vodstva. Prema Lazibat (2009) participativni stil vodstva pogodan je za organizacije usmjerene na kvalitetu s naglaskom na osnaživanje zaposlenika (dati zaposlenicima mogućnost donošenja odluka i davanja prijedloga, prikupljanje i prihvaćanje prijedloga zaposlenika, nagrađivanje zaposlenika). Aktivnosti koje bi uključeno i participativno vodstvo trebalo poduzimati u organizacijama usmjerenima na kvalitetu i kontinuirano poboljšanje (Sustavi upravljanja kvalitetom – Temeljna načela i terminološki rječnik, HRN EN ISO 9000:2015, peto izdanje, svibanj 2017):

(2002) emphasize that leadership—considered at both micro and macro levels—has a direct impact on building a culture of quality and long-term excellence, particularly in developing markets. Leaders who can integrate vision, standards, and employee motivation contribute to operational efficiency and to creating a differentiated guest experience. Conversely, Whitelaw (2013) emphasizes that leadership within the hospitality industry is not homogeneous, as different levels of management require different leadership styles depending on the type of task and organizational objectives. His study shows that a multilayered leadership approach, in which leadership styles are adapted to the challenges faced by operational, middle, and senior management, has a positive impact on organizational effectiveness. This adaptability, or situational leadership, is crucial for maintaining high service standards and developing employees, which are fundamental elements of organizational excellence.

Nazarian et al. (2024) further expand the understanding of leadership in hospitality by introducing a cultural dimension. Their research shows that the impact of ethical and authentic leadership on organizational variables (such as employee voice, trust, and commitment) varies depending on national culture. In countries with low power distance, such as Germany and the Netherlands, ethical leadership strongly encourages employees to express their opinions, whereas in more hierarchical cultures (Qatar, Turkey) this effect is not evident. Authentic leadership has a broader influence, but it still depends on cultural expectations and interpretations of leadership behavior. According to Lazibat (2009), a participative leadership style is suitable for organizations oriented toward quality, with an emphasis on empowering employees (allowing them to make decisions and submit suggestions, collecting and accepting employee proposals, rewarding employees). Activities that engaged and participative leadership should undertake in organizations focused on quality and continuous improvement include (Quality Management Systems – Fundamental Principles and Terminology, HRN EN ISO 9000:2015, fifth edition, May 2017):

- cijelu organizaciju upoznati s misijom, vizijom, strategijom, politikom i procesima
- stvoriti i održavati zajedničke vrijednosti na svim razinama organizacije
- poticati na opredijeljenost za kvalitetu u cijeloj organizaciji
- zaposlenicima osigurati resurse, izobrazbu i ovlasti koje su im potrebne da mogu odgovorno postupati
- nadahnuti, poticati i priznavati doprinos zaposlenika.
- introduce the mission, vision, strategy, policy, and processes to the entire organization
- create and maintain shared values at all organizational levels
- encourage a commitment to quality throughout the organization
- ensure that employees have the resources, training, and authority needed to act responsibly
- inspire, encourage, and recognize employee contributions.

Van Aartsengel i Kurtogl (2013, str. 36) ističu da vodstvo nije samo nužno za usmjeravanje organizacije u smjeru implementacije kontinuiranog poboljšanja već i za osiguravanje ključnih resursa potrebnih za ostvarenje potencijala i poboljšanja. Upravljanje kvalitetom, pa tako i primjena kontinuiranih poboljšanja, zahtjeva napore od cjelokupne organizacije, a posebno vodstva koje svojom uključenosti potiče i zaposlenike. Holtskog (2013) naglašava angažirano vodstvo i razumijevanje ciljeva kao ključne faktore uspjeha kontinuiranih poboljšanja koji imaju izravan učinak na predanost i uključenost zaposlenika. Jimoh i sur. (2019) također ističu predanost vodstva te napominju važnost usklađenosti s ISO standardom. Gonzalez i Martinis (2016) naglašavaju predanost vodstva i sustav nagrađivanja kao temeljne čimbenike koji potiču zaposlenike da sudjeluju u praksama kontinuiranog poboljšanja te naglašavaju važnost kulture kvalitete i edukacije zaposlenika o alatima kvalitete.

Prethodna istraživanja potvrđuju da je vodstvo ključan čimbenik u ostvarivanju konkurentne prednosti hotela više kategorije. Wanjiku i Kungu (2022) naglašavaju da u hotelima s pet zvjezdica veća predanost vodstva rezultira povećanjem zadovoljstva gostiju te ostvarivanjem viših prihoda, čime se potvrđuje važnost strateškog usmjeravanja menadžmenta. Sunil i sur. (2021) provode istraživanje u visoko kategoriziranim hotelima te ističu da implementacija praksi upravljanja potpunom kvalitetom – TQM (engl. Total Quality Management) zahtijeva planski pristup i dosljednost vodstva u inovacijama i menadžmentu, pri čemu

Van Aartsengel and Kurtogl (2013, p. 36) emphasize that leadership is not only necessary to guide the organization toward the implementation of continuous improvement but also to ensure key resources required for achieving improvement potential. Quality management, and thus the implementation of continuous improvement, requires effort from the entire organization, and from leadership in particular, whose involvement motivates employees. Holtskog (2013) highlights engaged leadership and clarity of goals as key success factors of continuous improvement that have a direct impact on employee commitment and involvement. Jimoh et al. (2019) also stress leadership commitment and the importance of alignment with ISO standards. Gonzalez and Martinis (2016) highlight leadership commitment and reward systems as essential factors encouraging employees to participate in continuous improvement practices and emphasize the importance of quality culture and employee training in quality tools.

Previous studies confirm that leadership is a key factor in achieving competitive advantage in higher-category hotels. Wanjiku and Kungu (2022) emphasize that in five-star hotels, stronger leadership commitment results in greater guest satisfaction and higher revenue, confirming the importance of strategic managerial focus. Sunil et al. (2021) conducted research in highly categorized hotels and found that implementing Total Quality Management (TQM) practices requires a planned approach and consistency of leadership in innovation

upravo izbor odgovarajućeg stila vodstva određuje razinu uspješnosti provedbe. Ishizaka i sur. (2019) pokazuju da se u hotelima s pet zvjezdica menadžeri u velikoj mjeri prilagođavaju očekivanjima gostiju, što upućuje na visok stupanj predanosti vodstva zadovoljavanju potreba kupaca.

UKLJUČENOST ZAPOSLENIKA

Uključenost zaposlenika predstavlja temelj uspjeha svake organizacije jer se motivirani zaposlenici osjećaju dijelom organizacije ako im se pruža mogućnost aktivnog sudjelovanja u poslovnim procesima. Motivacija zaposlenika jača njihovu emocionalnu povezanost s poslom i potiče njihovu angažiranost (Kiran, 2017). Ključni element u tom procesu jest stvaranje prostora za otvorenu razmjenu informacija u kojem zaposlenici mogu davati prijedloge, preuzimati odgovornosti poput postavljanja ciljeva, donošenja odluka i rješavanja problema, često putem međufunkcionalnih timova. Takav pristup doprinosi razvoju organizacije i osnažuje zaposlenike (Bakotić & Rogošić, 2017). Upravljanje kvalitetom snažno se oslanja na uključivanje svih zaposlenika u donošenje odluka i projekte poboljšanja jer je osoba na radnom mjestu najkompetentnija za prepoznavanje područja za unaprjeđenje (Kiran, 2017).

Istraživanja pokazuju da je uključenost zaposlenika povezana s pozitivnim rezultatima u implementaciji sustava upravljanja kvalitetom. Zadovoljni su zaposlenici lojalniji, skloniji suradnji i motiviraniji za kontinuirano poboljšanje poslovnih procesa i pružanje kvalitetne usluge (Sadikoglu & Zehir, 2010; Al-Refaie, 2015; Hirzel et al., 2017). Prema Hirzeli et al. (2017), otvorena komunikacija i podrška zaposlenicima ključni su za uspješnu primjenu procesa poboljšanja, što naglašava važnost njihove uključenosti u organizacijske procese. S druge strane, brojni izazovi mogu otežati uključivanje zaposlenika u kontinuirano poboljšanje. Marin-Garcia i sur. (2008) navode da otpor prema promjenama i nedostatak motivacije, kako menadžmenta, tako i zaposlenika, predstavljaju

and management, with leadership style being a key determinant of implementation success. Ishizaka et al. (2019) show that in five-star hotels, managers significantly adapt to guest expectations, indicating a high level of leadership commitment to meeting customer needs.

EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT

Employee involvement is a fundamental driver of organizational success, as motivated employees feel they are part of the organization when they are given opportunities to actively participate in business processes. Employee motivation strengthens their emotional attachment to work and increases their engagement (Kiran, 2017). A key element of this process is creating an environment of open communication in which employees can propose improvements, take on responsibilities such as goal-setting, decision-making, and problem-solving, often through cross-functional teams. Such an approach contributes to organizational development and empowers employees (Bakotić & Rogošić, 2017). Quality management relies heavily on the involvement of all employees in decision-making and improvement projects, as those closest to the work process are best positioned to identify opportunities for improvement (Kiran, 2017).

Research shows that employee involvement is associated with positive outcomes in the implementation of quality management systems. Satisfied employees are more loyal, more cooperative, and more motivated to continuously improve processes and deliver quality service (Sadikoglu & Zehir, 2010; Al-Refaie, 2015; Hirzel et al., 2017). According to Hirzel et al. (2017), open communication and managerial support are essential for successful improvement processes, highlighting the importance of employee involvement in organizational activities. On the other hand, many challenges can hinder employee participation in continuous improvement. Marin-Garcia et al. (2008) identify resistance to change and lack of motivation from both management and employees

značajne prepreke. Slične prepreke ističu Alukal i Manos (2006) koji upozoravaju na utjecaj stilova upravljanja, dok Oropesa i sur. (2016) ukazuju na nedostatak znanja o filozofiji kontinuiranog poboljšanja. Prajogo i Sohal (2004) te Sanchez-Ruiz i sur. (2022) dodatno navode probleme poput nedostatka resursa, vremena i strateške usklađenosti. U specifičnom kontekstu turizma i ugostiteljstva Farrington i sur. (2018) prepoznaju prepreke kao što su neučinkovito upravljanje inicijativama, neadekvatno prepoznavanje korisničkih zahtjeva i nedostatak zajedničke vizije. S druge strane, Berger (1997) te Bessant i sur. (1994) nude smjernice za uspostavu ravnoteže između fleksibilnosti i standardizacije te okvir za evaluaciju aktivnosti poboljšanja.

Mitreva i sur. (2018) proveli su studiju slučaja na luksuznom hotelu s pet zvjezdica, certificiranom prema ISO 9001, koji aktivno primjenjuje kontinuirano poboljšanje. U njihovu se istraživanju naglašava da su zaposlenici koji se kontinuirano razvijaju i educiraju ključni čimbenik uspjeha u provođenju i unaprjeđenju poslovnih procesa. Ovaj primjer dobre prakse potvrđuje važnost sustavne samoprocjene i razvoja unutar organizacije. Samoprocjena, prema Caffyn (1999), predstavlja važan alat za identifikaciju područja za razvoj, dok Ahmed i sur. (1999) naglašavaju da su organizacijska kultura i uključenost zaposlenika presudni za uspjeh kontinuiranog poboljšanja. U hotelima s pet zvjezdica ravnoteža između poslovnog i privatnog života pozitivno korelira sa zadovoljstvom zaposlenika, osobito kod srednjeg i nižeg menadžmenta (Al-Omari et al., 2020). Nadalje, u hotelima s četirima zvjezdicama naglašava se važnost osnaživanja zaposlenika, stavova menadžera i sustava treninga, pri čemu upravo osnaživanje ima najveći utjecaj na radnu učinkovitost, dok organizacijska kultura i struktura djeluju posredno (Alfandi, 2020). Bessant i Caffyn (1999) ističu potrebu za integracijom kontinuiranog poboljšanja u strategiju organizacije aktivnim uključivanjem zaposlenika u odlučivanje i provedbu promjena. Posebno je značajno istraživanje provedeno u hotelima s pet zvjezdica koje se usmjerilo na implementaciju potpunog upravljanja

as major barriers. Similar barriers are identified by Alukal and Manos (2006), who emphasize the impact of management styles, while Oropesa et al. (2016) point to the lack of understanding of continuous improvement philosophies. Prajogo and Sohal (2004) and Sanchez-Ruiz et al. (2022) further note problems such as lack of resources, time constraints, and weak strategic alignment. In the specific context of hospitality and tourism, Farrington et al. (2018) identify barriers including ineffective management of initiatives, insufficient understanding of customer requirements, and lack of shared vision. Berger (1997) and Bessant et al. (1994) propose frameworks for balancing flexibility and standardization, as well as for evaluating improvement activities.

Mitreva et al. (2018) conducted a case study of a luxury five-star hotel certified under ISO 9001 that actively applies continuous improvement. Their research emphasizes that continuously developing and well-trained employees are key to implementing and improving business processes. This example of a good practice confirms the importance of systematic self-assessment and organizational development. Self-assessment, according to Caffyn (1999), is an important tool for identifying development areas, while Ahmed et al. (1999) emphasize that organizational culture and employee involvement are crucial for successful continuous improvement. In five-star hotels, work-life balance positively correlates with employee satisfaction, especially among middle and lower management (Al-Omari et al., 2020). Furthermore, in four-star hotels, employee empowerment, managerial attitudes, and training systems are highlighted, with empowerment having the strongest impact on work performance, while organizational culture and structure have an indirect effect (Alfandi, 2020). Bessant and Caffyn (1999) stress the need to integrate continuous improvement into organizational strategy through active employee involvement in decision-making and change implementation. Particularly noteworthy is a study conducted in five-star hotels,

kvalitetom, potvrđujući da TQM povećava sposobnost zaposlenika u rješavanju problema i zadovoljavanju gostiju, čime se izravno doprinosi kvaliteti usluge (Al-Sabi et al., 2017). Ovi rezultati ukazuju na to da različiti aspekti upravljanja zaposlenicima imaju ključnu ulogu u unaprjeđenju zadovoljstva i učinkovitosti zaposlenika, a time i konkurentnosti hotela različitih kategorija.

METODOLOGIJA

U okviru ovog rada provedeno je empirijsko istraživanje s ciljem produblivanja teorijskih i praktičnih spoznaja o predanosti vodstva i uključenosti zaposlenika, uzimajući u obzir kategorizaciju smještajnih objekata u hotelijerstvu. Na temelju navedenog postavljene su sljedeće hipoteze:

H1: Postoji statistički značajna razlika u razini predanosti vodstva s obzirom na kategorizaciju smještajnog objekta.

H2: Postoji statistički značajna razlika u razini uključenosti zaposlenika s obzirom na kategorizaciju smještajnog objekta.

Istraživanje je obuhvatilo srednja i velika hotelska poduzeća u Republici Hrvatskoj, klasificirana prema NKD I551, a što uključuje 82 hotelska poduzeća, od čega je 16 velikih i 66 srednjih poduzeća prema podacima za 2023. Za prikupljanje podataka korišten je strukturirani mjerni instrument namijenjen analizi stavova menadžera. Uzorak se može opisati kao kvotni i prosudbeni uzorak jer obuhvaća vrlo mali i specifičan skup populacije. Istraživanje se provodilo od prosinca 2023. do veljače 2024. te je utemeljeno na 244 prikupljena upitnika.

Upitnik korišten u istraživanju oblikovan je kao sveobuhvatan mjerni instrument na hrvatskom jeziku, konstruiran na temelju ranije razvijenih i empirijski provjerenih instrumenata i ljestvica. Njegova detaljna struktura i sadržaj pojašnjeni su u nastavku.

Konstrukti predanosti vodstva i uključenosti zaposlenika operacionalizirani su primjenom validi-

which confirms that TQM enhances employee problem-solving abilities and guest satisfaction, directly contributing to service quality (Al-Sabi et al., 2017). These results indicate that different aspects of employee management play a key role in improving employee satisfaction and efficiency, and consequently the competitiveness of hotels of different categories.

METHODOLOGY

In this paper, an empirical study was conducted with the aim of deepening theoretical and practical insights into leadership commitment and employee involvement, taking into consideration the categorization of accommodation facilities within the hotel industry. Based on this objective, the following hypotheses were formulated:

H1: There is a statistically significant difference in the level of leadership commitment with regard to the categorization of the accommodation facility.

H2: There is a statistically significant difference in the level of employee involvement with regard to the categorization of the accommodation facility.

The research encompassed medium-sized and large hotel companies in the Republic of Croatia, classified under NKD I551, which includes 82 hotel enterprises, of which 16 are large and 66 are medium-sized companies, according to 2023 data. A structured measurement instrument designed to analyze managerial attitudes was used to collect data. The sample can be described as a quota and judgmental sample, as it includes a very small and specific segment of the population. The research was conducted between December 2023 and February 2024 and is based on 244 completed questionnaires.

The questionnaire used in the research was designed as a comprehensive measurement instrument in the Croatian language, constructed on the basis of previously developed and empirically validated instruments and scales. Its detailed structure and content are explained below.

The constructs of leadership commitment and employee involvement were operationalized using

ranih mjernih ljestvica: za predanost vodstva korištene su ljestvice prema Yasaru (2019) te Bourantu i sur. (2019), dok je za uključenost zaposlenika primijenjena ljestvica koju su razvili Hirzel i sur. (2017). Sve čestice mjerene su na Likertovoj skali od 7 stupnjeva, u rasponu od 1 (u potpunosti se ne slažem) do 7 (u potpunosti se slažem). Prije distribucije glavnog upitnika provedeno je pilot-istraživanje na manjem uzorku ispitanika, s ciljem provjere razumljivosti tvrdnji i funkcionalnosti instrumenta.

REZULTATI ISTRAŽIVANJA

U nastavku su prikazani rezultati provedenog istraživanja. U analizi podataka korištene su metode deskriptivne i inferencijalne statistike. Budući da je analiza normalnosti pokazala da podatci ne slijede normalnu distribuciju, primijenjeni su odgovarajući neparametrijski testovi. Za ispitivanje razlika među više skupina korišten je Kruskal-Wallisov test kao neparametrijska alternativa jednosmjernoj analizi varijance (ANOVA). Ispitivanjem su obuhvaćene skupine smještajnih objekata s različitim kategorizacijama (dvije, tri, četiri i pet zvjezdica), pri čemu su rezultati testirani pomoću softverskog paketa SPSS v24.

validated measurement scales: for leadership commitment, scales developed by Yasar (2019) and Bouranta et al. (2019) were used, while employee involvement was measured using the scale developed by Hirzel et al. (2017). All items were measured on a seven-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Prior to the distribution of the final questionnaire, a pilot study was conducted on a smaller group of respondents to verify the clarity of statements and the functionality of the instrument.

RESEARCH RESULTS

The following section presents the results of the conducted research. Descriptive and inferential statistical methods were used in the data analysis. Since the normality test showed that the data did not follow a normal distribution, appropriate non-parametric tests were applied. To examine differences between multiple groups, the Kruskal-Wallis test was used as a non-parametric alternative to one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). The analysis included groups of accommodation facilities with different categorizations (two, three, four, and five stars), and the results were tested using the SPSS v24 software package.

TABLICA 1. KARAKTERISTIKE ISPITANIKA (N 244)
TABLE 1. CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS (N = 244)

Spol ispitanika / Gender	n	%
Muškarac / Male	123	50,4 %
Žena / Female	121	49,6 %
Dobna skupina ispitanika / Age group		
18 – 25 godina / years	1	0,4 %
26 – 30 godina / years	16	6,6 %
31 – 45 godina / years	147	60,2 %
46 – 60 godina / years	75	30,7 %
61 i više godina / 61+ years	5	2,0 %
Obrazovna struktura ispitanika / Educational level		
Srednja škola / Secondary education	60	24,6 %
Fakultet (prijediplomski studij) / Bachelor's degree	41	16,8 %
Fakultet (diplomski studij) / Master's degree	106	43,4 %
Poslijediplomski studij (magisterij, doktorat) / Postgraduate degree (MBA/PhD)	37	15,2 %
Funkcija ispitanika / Job position		
Voditelj/direktor smještajnog objekta / Hotel/Accommodation manager	100	41,0 %
Voditelj odjela u smještajnom objektu / Department manager	128	52,4 %
Upravna funkcija / Administrative function	16	6,6 %
Vrsta smještajnog kapaciteta / Type of accommodation facility		
Hotel / Hotel	136	61,5 %
Kamp / Camp	68	30,8 %
Turističko naselje / Tourist resort	17	7,7 %
Kategorizacija objekta / Accommodation categorization		
5*****	66	30,0 %
4****	119	54,1 %
3***	29	13,2 %
2**	6	2,7 %

Izvor: istraživanje autora / Source: Author's research

Struktura uzorka prikazana u Tablici 1 obuhvaća ravnomjernu zastupljenost prema spolu, s udjelom muškaraca od 50,4 % i žena 49,6 %. Najveći broj ispitanika pripada dobnoj skupini od 31 do 45 godina (60,2 %), dok su ostale dobne skupine manje zastupljene, pri čemu je udio ispitanika mlađih od 30 godina tek 7 %, a starijih od 60 godina 2 %. U odnosu na obrazovnu strukturu većina ispitanika ima visoko obrazovanje: 43,4 % završilo je diplomski studij, dok

The sample structure presented in Table 1 shows an even gender distribution, with males representing 50.4% and females 49.6%. The majority of respondents are between 31 and 45 years old (60.2%), while younger respondents under 30 represent only 7%, and respondents older than 60 represent 2%. Regarding educational structure, most respondents have higher education: 43.4% hold a master's degree and an additional 15.2%

dodatnih 15,2 % ima poslijediplomski stupanj. Udio ispitanika sa srednjoškolskim obrazovanjem iznosi 24,6 %, a s prijediplomskim studijem 16,8 %. Prema radnoj funkciji čak 52,4 % ispitanika voditelji su odje-
 la, a 41,0 % voditelji ili direktori smještajnih objekata. Upravne funkcije čini manji dio uzorka (6,6 %). Veza-
 no za vrstu smještajnog objekta većina je zaposlenika zaposlena u hotelima (61,5 %), zatim u kampovima (30,8 %) te turističkim naseljima (7,7 %). Kad je riječ
 o kategorizaciji objekata u kojima ispitanici rade, naj-
 zastupljeniji su objekti s četirima zvjezdicama (54,1 %), zatim objekti s pet zvjezdica (30,0 %), te s trima
 zvjezdicama (13,2 %) i dvjema zvjezdicama (2,7 %).

have a postgraduate degree. Respondents with secondary education represent 24.6%, and those with a bachelor's degree 16.8%. In terms of job
 roles, 52.4% are department managers, and 41.0% are managers or directors of accommodation facil-
 ities. Administrative functions represent a smaller part of the sample (6.6%). Concerning the type of
 accommodation facility, most respondents work in hotels (61.5%), followed by camps (30.8%) and
 tourist resorts (7.7%). Regarding facility catego-
 rization, the largest share are four-star facilities (54.1%), followed by five-star facilities (30.0%),
 three-star (13.2%), and two-star (2.7%).

TABLICA 2. DESKRIPTIVNA STATISTIKA KONSTRUKTA UKLJUČENOST ZAPOSLENIKA
TABLE 2. DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE CONSTRUCT: EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT

Tvrdnja Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Zaposlenici mogu primijeniti poboljšanja u svom radnom okruženju. Employees can implement improvements in their work environment.	6,10	,926	-1,052	1,253
Zaposlenici imaju sve potrebne alate i informacije za obavljanje posla. Employees have all the necessary tools and information to perform their work.	6,06	1,023	-1,102	1,157
Zaposlenici mogu predložiti poboljšanja i nove ideje. Employees can propose improvements and new ideas.	6,35	,993	-1,847	3,598

Izvor: istraživanje autora / Source: Author's research

Analiza rezultata deskriptivne statistike u Tablici 2 vezanih za konstrukt uključenost zaposlenika
 pokazuje visoke prosječne vrijednosti za sve ispitane tvrdnje koje se kreću u rasponu od 6,06 do 6,35, što
 ukazuje na pozitivan stav zaposlenika prema moguć-
 nosti primjene poboljšanja, pristupu informacijama, predlaganju ideja i međusobnoj podršci u radnom
 okruženju. Tvrdnja „Zaposlenici mogu predložiti poboljšanja i nove ideje” ima najvišu vrijednost ko-
 jom se ukazuje da su ispitivane organizacije koje doi-
 sta uključuju zaposlenika u aktivnosti kontinuiranog poboljšanja. Vrijednosti standardne devijacije, koje
 se kreću između 0,926 i 1,023, sugeriraju relativno
 nisku disperziju odgovora, odnosno da su odgovori konzistentni unutar uzorka. Međutim, koeficijenti
 asimetrije (engl. skewness) kod svih tvrdnji ukazuju
 na negativnu asimetriju (u rasponu od -1,052 do
 -1,847), dok su koeficijenti zaobljenosti (engl. kur-
 tosis) za dvije tvrdnje iznad prihvatljivih vrijednosti

The descriptive statistics (Table 2) show high mean values for all statements (6.06 to 6.35), in-
 dicating a positive perception of opportunities to implement improvements, access to information,
 idea submission and mutual support. The state-
 ment “*Employees can propose improvements and new ideas*” has the highest mean value, suggesting
 that the organizations examined genuinely involve employees in continuous improvement. Standard
 deviation values (0.926–1.023) indicate low vari-
 ance, meaning responses were consistent. Howev-
 er, negative skewness (-1.052 to -1.847), and high kurtosis values for two statements (above 3) suggest
 a non-normal distribution, justifying the use of non-parametric tests.

(iznad 3), što sugerira da distribucija nije normalna, pa se na temelju ovih rezultata u daljnjim testovima primjenjuju neparametrijski testovi.

TABLICA 3. DESKRIPTIVNA STATISTIKA KONSTRUKTA PREDANOST VODSTVA
TABLE 3. DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE CONSTRUCT: LEADERSHIP COMMITMENT

Tvrdnja / Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Viši menadžment potiče razvoj novih i inovativnih ideja. Top management encourages development of new and innovative ideas.	5,19	1,006	-1,422	1,956
Viši menadžment prihvaća ideje i prijedloge zaposlenika. Top management accepts employee ideas and suggestions.	4,79	1,235	-1,289	1,864
Potiče se razvijanje vlastitih ideja radi poboljšanja poslovanja poduzeća. Employees are encouraged to develop their own ideas to improve business operations.	4,87	1,299	-1,527	2,617
Viši menadžment osigurava resurse za aktivnosti poboljšanja kvalitete. Top management provides resources for quality improvement activities.	4,94	1,132	-1,347	2,564
Viši menadžment daje prioritet kvaliteti procesa, proizvoda i usluga. Top management prioritizes the quality of processes, products, and services.	5,13	1,002	-1,356	2,239
Viši menadžment daje ovlasti zaposlenicima za sudjelovanje u aktivnostima poboljšanja. / Top management empowers employees to participate in improvement activities.	4,70	1,172	-1,093	1,511
Viši menadžment postavlja pitanje kvalitete kao jedan od svojih prioriteta. Top management prioritizes quality as one of its key objectives.	5,16	1,181	-1,781	3,657
Viši menadžment aktivno sudjeluje u poboljšanju kvalitete. Top management actively participates in quality improvement.	5,17	1,163	-1,780	3,401

Izvor: istraživanje autora Source: Author's research

Analiza rezultata deskriptivne statistike vezanih za predanost vodstva (Tablica 3) pokazuje nešto niže prosječne vrijednosti u odnosu na uključenost zaposlenika, s rasponom od 4,70 do 5,19. Tvrdnja „Viši menadžment potiče razvoj novih i inovativnih ideja” ima najvišu prosječnu ocjenu te ukazuje na to da je menadžment otvoren za uključivanje zaposlenika u aktivnosti poboljšanja. Vrijednosti standardne devijacije nešto su više (između 1,002 i 1,299), što ukazuje na veći stupanj neslaganja među ispitanicima u odnosu na pojedine tvrdnje. Koeficijenti asimetrije također ukazuju na negativnu asimetriju kod svih tvrdnji (*skewness* od -1,093 do -1,781), dok su vrijednosti *kurtosisa* kod najmanje četiriju tvrdnji iznad 2,5, što ukazuje na odstupanja od normalne distribucije. Zbog ovih će se odstupanja u analizi primijeniti neparametrijski testovi.

Analysis of the results of descriptive statistics related to leadership commitment (Table 3) shows slightly lower average values in relation to employee involvement, with a range of 4.70 to 5.19. The statement “Senior management encourages the development of new and innovative ideas” has the highest average score and indicates that management is open to involving employees in improvement activities. The values of the standard deviation are slightly higher (between 1.002 and 1.299), which indicates a greater degree of disagreement among respondents in relation to individual statements. Asymmetry coefficients also indicate negative asymmetry in all statements (*skewness* from -1.093 to -1.781), while *kurtosis* values in at least four statements are above 2.5, which indicates deviations from the normal distribution. Because of these discrepancies, non-parametric tests will be applied in the analysis.

Kruskal-Wallis test neparametrijski je postupak koji se upotrebljava za procjenu razlika među trima ili više skupinama. Za razliku od parametrijskih metoda ovaj se test oslanja na rangove podataka (Newbold et al., 2010, str. 662). U ovoj su analizi rezultati ispitanika uspoređeni prema vrsti smještajnog objekta. Analiza razlika u percepciji predanosti vodstva i uključenosti zaposlenika u odnosu na kategorizaciju smještajnih objekata prikazana je u tablicama od 4 do 7.

The Kruskal-Wallis test is a non-parametric procedure used to evaluate differences among three or more groups. Unlike parametric methods, this test relies on data ranks (Newbold et al., 2010, p. 662). In this analysis, the results of the respondents were compared according to the type of accommodation facility. The analysis of differences in the perception of leadership commitment and employee involvement in relation to the categorization of accommodation facilities is shown in tables 4 to 7.

TABLICA 4. PRIKAZ REZULTATA KRUSKAL-WALLIS TESTA ZA KONSTRUKT PREDANOST VODSTVA
TABLE 4. KRUSKAL-WALLIS TEST RESULTS FOR LEADERSHIP COMMITMENT

Kategorija / Category	N	Prosjeak ranga / Mean rank
5*****	66	123,65
4****	119	109,84
3***	29	92,59
2**	6	65,58
Ukupno / Total	220	

Izvor: istraživanje autora / Source: Author's research

Rezultati prikazani u Tablici 4 ukazuju na postojanje varijacija u percepciji predanosti vodstva među ispitanicima menadžerima u objektima različite kategorije. Najviši prosječni rang zabilježen je u objektima s pet zvjezdica (123,65), zatim slijede objekti s četirima zvjezdicama (109,84), potom objekti s trima zvjezdicama (92,59), dok je najniži prosječni rang zabilježen u objektima s dvjema zvjezdicama (65,58). Ovi rezultati upućuju na postojanje razlika u ocjenama predanosti vodstva u odnosu na kategorizaciju smještajnih objekata te da su u višim kategorijama vođe više predane aktivnostima kontinuiranog poboljšanja i kvalitete.

The results presented in Table 4 indicate that there are variations in the perception of leadership commitment among respondents - managers in different categories of facilities. The highest average rank was recorded in five-star facilities (123.65), followed by four-star facilities (109.84), then three-star facilities (92.59), while the lowest average rank was recorded in two-star facilities (65.58). These results indicate that there are differences in the ratings of leadership commitment in relation to the categorization of accommodation facilities and that in higher categories, leaders are more committed to continuous improvement and quality activities.

TABLICA 5. POKAZATELJI KRUSKAL-WALLIS TESTA ZA KONSTRUKT PREDANOST VODSTVA
TABLE 5. KRUSKAL-WALLIS TEST SIGNIFICANCE FOR LEADERSHIP COMMITMENT

Varijabla Variable	Kruskal-Wallis H	Df	p-vrijednost p-value
Predanost vodstva Leadership commitment	8,171	3	,043

Izvor: istraživanje autora Source: Author's research

Rezultati provedenog Kruskal-Wallis testa prikazanih u Tablici 5 ukazuju da postoje statistički značajne razlike među četirima promatranim distribucijama ($\chi^2 = 8,171$, $p < 0,05$). Primijećena je razlika među rezultatima provedenih poboljšanja u odnosu na kategorizaciju smještajnih objekata. Dobiveni rezultati sugeriraju da kategorizacija smještajnih objekata ima statistički značajan utjecaj na percepciju predanosti vodstva.

The results of the Kruskal-Wallis test presented in Table 5 indicate that there are statistically significant differences among the four observed distributions ($\chi^2 = 8.171$, $p < 0.05$). A difference was observed between the results of the implemented improvements in relation to the categorization of accommodation facilities. The obtained results suggest that the categorization of accommodation facilities has a statistically significant impact on the perception of leadership commitment.

TABLICA 6. PRIKAZ REZULTATA KRUSKAL-WALLIS TESTA ZA KONSTRUKT UKLJUČENOST ZAPOSLENIKA
TABLE 6. KRUSKAL-WALLIS TEST RESULTS FOR EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT

Kategorija / Category	N	Prosjeak ranga / Mean rank
5*****	66	120,30
4****	119	108,39
3***	29	105,79
2**	6	67,33
Ukupno / Total	220	

Izvor: istraživanje autora / Source: Author's research

Rezultati prikazani u Tablici 6 pokazuju razlike u prosječnim rangovima uključenosti zaposlenika u odnosu na kategorizaciju objekata. Najviši prosječni rang zabilježen je u objektima s pet zvjezdica (120,30), potom slijede objekti s četirima zvjezdicama (108,39), zatim objekti s trima zvjezdicama (105,79), dok je najniža vrijednost zabilježena u objektima s dvjema zvjezdicama (67,33). Ove razlike ukazuju na tendenciju većeg angažmana zaposlenika u smještajnim objektima viših kategorija, no rezultati u nastavku ukazuju da navedeno nije statistički značajno.

The results presented in Table 6 show differences in the average ranks of employee involvement in relation to the categorization of the facilities. The highest average rank was recorded in five-star facilities (120.30), followed by four-star facilities (108.39), then three-star facilities (105.79), while the lowest value was recorded in two-star facilities (67.33). These differences indicate a tendency for greater employee engagement in higher-category accommodation facilities, but the results below indicate that this is not statistically significant.

TABLICA 7. POKAZATELJI KRUSKAL-WALLIS TESTA ZA KONSTRUKT UKLJUČENOST ZAPOSLENIKA
TABLE 7. KRUSKAL-WALLIS TEST SIGNIFICANCE FOR EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT

Varijabla Variable	Kruskal-Wallis H	Df	p-vrijednost p-value
Uključenost zaposlenika Employee involvement	4,774	3	,189

Izvor: istraživanje autora Source: Author's research

Na temelju rezultata provedenog Kruskal-Wallis testa (Tablica 7) utvrđuje se da ne postoji statistički značajna razlika ($\chi^2 = 4,774$, $p > 0,05$) te da ne postoji osnova za zaključivanje da su skupine različite u smislu varijable koja se ispituje (uključenost zaposlenika).

Navedeni rezultati sugeriraju da iako organizacije s višom kategorijom ostvaruju veći prosjek rangova te samim time i veće ocjene za uključenost zaposlenika, to ne mora nužno biti presudan faktor za postizanje uspješnosti primjene kontinuiranih poboljšanja. Stoga, ovi rezultati sugeriraju da u analiziranom kontekstu prisutnost kategorizacije nije bila presudna za statistički značajne razlike u razini uključenosti zaposlenika.

DISKUSIJA

U percepciji predanosti vodstva najviši prosječni rang zabilježen je kod hotela s pet zvjezdica (123,65), dok najniži pripada objektima s dvjema zvjezdicama (65,58). Ovakav trend upućuje na to da su menadžeri u visoko kategoriziranim objektima percipirali višu razinu predanosti vodstva u provedbi aktivnosti kontinuiranih poboljšanja. Dobiveni rezultati statistički su značajni ($p > 0,05$) te ističu važnost kategorizacije kao indikatora organizacijske predanosti u upravljanju kvalitetom. Brojna istraživanja potvrđuju da je predanost vodstva u visoko kategoriziranim hotelima ključan čimbenik izvrsnosti, a Wanjiku i Kungu (2022) povezuju ga sa zadovoljstvom gostiju i rastom prihoda, Sunil i sur. (2021) s uspješnom primjenom TQM praksi te Ishizaka i sur. (2019) s prilagođavanjem odluka očekivanjima gostiju.

Al-Sabi i sur. (2023) također utvrđuju značajan učinak predanosti vodstva za primjenu kontinuiranih poboljšanja te ističu da menadžeri u hotelskoj industriji trebaju osigurati da zaposlenici razumiju svoju ulogu u provedbi praksi kontinuiranih poboljšanja i upravljanja kvalitetom da bi postigli učinkovite rezultate. Paipa-Galeano i sur. (2020) provode studiju slučaja primjene kontinuiranih poboljšanja u proizvodnoj i prerađivačkoj indu-

Based on the results of the Kruskal-Wallis test (Table 7), it is determined that there is no statistically significant difference ($\chi^2 = 4.774$, $p > 0.05$) and that there is no basis for concluding that the groups are different in terms of the variable being examined (employee involvement).

The above results suggest that although organizations with a higher category achieve higher average ranks and thus higher ratings for employee involvement, this is not necessarily a decisive factor for achieving the success of continuous improvement implementation. Therefore, these results suggest that in the analyzed context the presence of categorization was not crucial for statistically significant differences in the level of employee involvement.

DISCUSSION

In the perception of leadership commitment, the highest mean rank was recorded in five-star hotels (123.65), while the lowest was recorded in two-star facilities (65.58). This trend indicates that managers in highly categorized facilities perceive a higher level of leadership commitment in the implementation of continuous improvement activities. The obtained results are statistically significant ($p < 0.05$), highlighting the importance of categorization as an indicator of organizational commitment to quality management. Numerous studies confirm that leadership commitment in highly categorized hotels is a key factor of excellence. Wanjiku and Kungu (2022) associate leadership commitment with guest satisfaction and revenue growth; Sunil et al. (2021) associate it with successful implementation of TQM practices; and Ishizaka et al. (2019) connect it with decision-making that aligns with guest expectations.

Al-Sabi et al. (2023) also confirm a significant effect of leadership commitment on the application of continuous improvement, emphasizing that managers in the hotel industry should ensure that employees understand their role in the implementation of continuous improvement and quality management practices to achieve effective results. Paipa-Galeano et al. (2020) conducted a case study on continuous improvement in the manufacturing and processing

striji, naglašavajući podršku vodstva kao ključnu za postizanje kontinuiranog poboljšanja. Rezultati istraživanja Sesar i Hunjet (2021) pokazali su da podrška vodstva ojačava vezu između sustava kontinuiranog poboljšanja i performansi procesa. U hotelijerstvu je podrška vodstva također ključna za uspješnost, što potvrđuju studije Amina i sur. (2017), Changa i sur. (2021), Kumara i Krishnaraja (2018) te istraživanje Papaioannou i sur. (2024). Empirijska istraživanja poput onih Sunila i sur. (2021), koristeći se regresijskom analizom, ukazuju na ulogu predanosti vodstva u upravljanju kvalitetom u hotelijerstvu, naglašavajući značajan utjecaj vodstva na performanse hotela.

Nadalje, iako rezultati istraživanja ukazuju na to da su u hotelima više kategorizacije zabilježeni viši prosječni rangovi uključenosti zaposlenika, nije utvrđena statistički značajna razlika ($p > 0,05$). Ovaj rezultat sugerira da kategorija smještajnog objekta sama po sebi ne predstavlja odlučujući čimbenik u promicanju angažmana i uključenosti zaposlenika u svakodnevne aktivnosti upravljanja kvalitetom. Umjesto toga, može se pretpostaviti da su i drugi organizacijski čimbenici, poput interne kulture, sustava edukacije, stilova vodstva ili mehanizama motivacije, od značaja za poticanje uključenosti zaposlenika u aktivnosti kontinuiranog poboljšanja. Posebnu važnost u ovom kontekstu ima edukacija. Prema Akroushu i sur. (2013) i Wangu i sur. (2012), edukacija zaposlenicima omogućava stjecanje ključnih znanja i vještina, čime se izravno unaprjeđuje njihova sposobnost obavljanja poslova te aktivnog sudjelovanja u procesima poboljšanja. U sektoru hotelijerstva Wu i sur. (2021) te Al-Sabi i sur. (2023) ističu da edukacija ima izražen i pozitivan učinak na rezultate poslovanja hotela, što naglašava njezinu ključnu ulogu. Samo educirani i motivirani zaposlenici imaju predispozicije za aktivno sudjelovanje u aktivnostima unaprjeđenja kvalitete. S obzirom na navedeno, preporuka za buduća istraživanja jest usmjeravanje na analizu uloge neformalnih aspekata organizacijske dinamike da bi se dublje razumjeli uvjeti koji potiču angažman i aktivno sudjelovanje zaposlenika, neovisno o formalnoj kategorizaciji

industry, emphasizing leadership support as essential for achieving continuous improvement. The research conducted by Sesar and Hunjet (2021) demonstrates that leadership support strengthens the relationship between continuous improvement systems and process performance. In the hotel industry, leadership support is also crucial for success, as confirmed in the studies by Amin et al. (2017), Chang et al. (2021), Kumar and Krishnaraj (2018), and Papaioannou et al. (2024). Empirical research, such as that by Sunil et al. (2021), using regression analysis, further highlights the significant impact of leadership commitment on hotel performance and quality management outcomes.

Furthermore, although the research results indicate that higher-category hotels have higher mean ranks for employee involvement, no statistically significant difference was found ($p > 0,05$). This result suggests that accommodation categorization itself is not a decisive factor in promoting employee engagement and involvement in daily quality management activities. Instead, it can be assumed that other organizational factors—such as internal culture, training systems, leadership styles, and motivation mechanisms—play a significant role in fostering employee involvement in continuous improvement activities. Training is of particular importance in this context. According to Akroush et al. (2013) and Wang et al. (2012), training enables employees to acquire key knowledge and skills, directly improving their ability to perform tasks and participate actively in improvement processes. In the hospitality sector, Wu et al. (2021) and Al-Sabi et al. (2023) emphasize that training has a strong positive effect on hotel performance, underlining its crucial role. Only trained and motivated employees have the predisposition to actively participate in quality improvement activities. Based on these findings, future research is recommended to focus on the role of informal organizational dynamics in order to gain a deeper understanding of the conditions that promote employee engagement and their active participation, regardless of formal hotel categorization.

objekta. Međutim, vrijedi istaknuti da dosadašnja istraživanja nude oprečne rezultate. Primjerice, Ramdhani i Djamil (2024) nisu pronašli statistički značajan učinak komunikacije na uključenost zaposlenika i njihovu učinkovitost iako je motivacija pokazala značajan učinak posredovan angažmanom zaposlenika. Ovi rezultati ukazuju na složenost fenomena te potrebu za daljnjim istraživanjem različitih determinanti uključenosti zaposlenika.

ZAKLJUČAK

Istraživanje ima nekoliko ograničenja koja treba uzeti u obzir pri interpretaciji rezultata. Uzorak od 244 ispitanika, iako dovoljan za osnovne zaključke, ograničava generalizaciju nalaza na širi hotelski sektor. Nadalje, istraživanje je provedeno među menadžerima, dok percepcija zaposlenika nije uključena, što znači da cjelokupna organizacijska perspektiva možda nije u potpunosti obuhvaćena. Polazeći od navedenih ograničenja, moguće je formulirati nekoliko smjernica za buduća istraživanja. Kao što je prethodno istaknuto, preporučuje se uključivanje dodatnih organizacijskih konstrukata da bi se preciznije utvrdilo koji čimbenici utječu na uključenost zaposlenika. Dodatno, buduća istraživanja trebala bi uključiti i percepciju zaposlenika, a ne samo menadžera, te ispitati uzročno-posljedične odnose među kategorijama hotela, stilova vodstva i uključenosti zaposlenika, s intencijom da se pozitivni primjeri i uspješne prakse iz visokokategoriziranih hotela mogu prenijeti i primijeniti u hotelima niže kategorije.

Nadalje, preporučuje se da hotelska poduzeća zaposlenicima osiguraju sigurne i anonimne kanale za iznošenje prijedloga i sugestija. To se može ostvariti, primjerice, putem anonimnih anketa čime se zaposlenicima omogućuje aktivno sudjelovanje u procesu davanja prijedloga za unaprjeđenje organizacijskih praksi i poslovnih procesa. Prijedlozi koji dolaze iz različitih izvora, zaposlenika, gostiju, internih i eksternih audita, trebaju biti sustavno analizirani i obrađeni putem posebno formiranih timova za provedbu poboljšanja. Ovi timovi trebali

However, existing research provides contradictory results. For example, Ramdhani and Djamil (2024) did not find a statistically significant effect of communication on employee involvement and performance, although motivation showed a significant effect mediated by employee engagement. These results indicate the complexity of the phenomenon and the need for further research into different determinants of employee involvement.

CONCLUSION

This research has several limitations that must be considered when interpreting the results. The sample of 244 respondents, while sufficient for drawing general conclusions, limits the generalizability of the findings to the wider hotel sector. Additionally, the research was conducted among managers, while the perception of employees was not included, meaning that the full organizational perspective may not have been fully captured. Based on these limitations, several directions for future research may be proposed. As previously noted, it is recommended to include additional organizational constructs to more precisely identify the factors that influence employee involvement. Moreover, future studies should include employee perceptions, not only managerial perceptions, and examine causal relationships among hotel categorization, leadership styles, and employee involvement, with the intention of transferring positive examples and successful practices from higher-category hotels to lower-category hotels.

Furthermore, it is recommended that hotel companies provide employees with safe and anonymous channels for submitting proposals and suggestions. This can be achieved, for example, through anonymous surveys, enabling employees to actively participate in providing suggestions for improving organizational practices and business processes. Suggestions received from various sources—employees, guests, internal and external audits—should be systematically analyzed and processed by specially formed improvement teams. These teams should include members from different departments, employees across all hierarchical levels, and manage-

bi uključivati članove iz različitih odjela, zaposlenike na svim razinama hijerarhije te menadžment iz različitih objekata. Posebno je korisno uključiti osoblje iz objekata više kategorizacije s ciljem prijenosa znanja i generiranja novih ideja. Implementacija kontinuiranih poboljšanja strukturiranim, timskim pristupom omogućava hotelima da sustavno unaprjeđuju svoje usluge i interne procese, da prate provedena poboljšanja i dugoročno postignu uspjeh u svim aspektima poboljšanja.

ment from different facilities. Including staff from higher-category facilities is especially beneficial for facilitating knowledge transfer and generating new ideas.

Implementing continuous improvement through a structured, team-based approach enables hotels to systematically improve their services and internal processes, monitor implemented improvements, and achieve long-term success across all aspects of improvement.

LITERATURA / REFERENCES

- Ahmed, P. K., Loh, A. Y., & Zairi, M. (1999). Cultures for continuous improvement and learning. *Total Quality Management*, 10(4-5), pp 426–434.
- Akroush, M. N., Abu-ElSamen, A. A., Samawi, G. A., & Odetallah, A. L. (2013). Internal marketing and service quality in restaurants. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 31(4), pp 304–336.
- Alfandi, A. M. (2020). Hotel-related factors and employee performance: The case of Jordanian four star hotels. *International business research*, 13(3), pp 1–68.
- Al-Omari, G. I., Hanandeh, R., Al-Somaidae, M. M., Al Jarrah, M. A., & Alnajdawi, S. (2020). Work-life balance and its impact on employee satisfaction on five star hotels. *Management Science Letters*, 10(4), pp 871–880.
- Al-Refaie, A. (2015). Effects of human resource management on hotel performance using structural equation modeling. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 43, pp 293–303.
- Al-Sabi, S. M., Ma'moun, M. M. A. A., & Masadeh, A. H. M. (2017). The impact of total quality management implementation on employees' service recovery performance in five-star hotels in Jordan. *European Journal of Business and Management*, 9(11), pp 135–151.
- Al-Sabi, S. M., Al-Ababneh, M. M., Masadeh, M. A., & Elshaer, I. A. (2023). Enhancing innovation performance in the hotel industry: the role of employee empowerment and quality management practices. *Administrative Sciences*, 13(3), pp 1–17.
- Alukal, V. G. & Manos, A. (2006). *Lean kaizen*. Quality Press.
- Amin, M., Aldakhil, A. M., Wu, C., Rezaei, S., & Cobanolu, C. (2017). The structural relationship between TQM, employee satisfaction and hotel performance. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 29(4), pp 1256–1278.
- Bakotić, D. & Rogošić, A. (2017). Employee involvement as a key determinant of core quality management practices. *Total Quality Management & Business Excellence*, 28(11-12), pp 1209–1226.
- Berger, A. (1997). Continuous improvement and kaizen: Standardization and organizational designs. *Integrated Manufacturing Systems*, 8(2), pp 110–117. <https://doi.org/10.1108/09576069710165792>
- Bessant, J., Caffyn, S., Gilbert, J., Harding, R., & Webb, S. (1994). Rediscovering continuous improvement. *Tech-novation*, 14(1), pp 17–29. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0166-4972\(94\)90067-1](https://doi.org/10.1016/0166-4972(94)90067-1)
- Bessant, J. & Caffyn, S. (1999). Developing strategic continuous improvement capability. *International Journal of Operations & Production Management*, 19(11), 1106–1119. <https://doi.org/10.1108/01443579910291050>
- Bouranta, N., Psomas, E., Suárez-Barraza, M. F., & Jaca, C. (2019). The key factors of total quality management in the service sector: a cross-cultural study. *Benchmarking: An International Journal*, 26(3), pp 893–921.

- Caffyn, S. (1999). Development of a continuous improvement self-assessment tool. *International Journal of Operations & Production Management*, 19(11), pp 1138–1153. <https://doi.org/10.1108/01443579910291050>
- Chang, H. T., Chou, Y. J., Miao, M. C., & Liou, J. W. (2021). The effects of leadership style on service quality: enrichment or depletion of innovation behaviour and job standardisation. *Total Quality Management & Business Excellence*, 32(5-6), pp 676–692.
- Chathoth, P. K. & Olsen, M. D. (2002). Organisational leadership and strategy in the hospitality industry. *Journal of services research*, 2(1), pp 1–25.
- Das, A., Kumar, V., & Kumar, U. (2011). The role of leadership competencies for implementing TQM: An empirical study in Thai manufacturing industry. *International Journal of Quality and Reliability Management*, 28(2), pp 195–219.
- Farrington, T., Antony, J., & O’Gorman, K. D. (2018). Continuous improvement methodologies and practices in hospitality and tourism. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 30(1), pp 581–600. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCHM-03-2017-0141>
- Fotopoulos, C. B. & Psomas, E. L. (2009). The impact of „soft” and „hard” TQM elements on quality management results. *International Journal of Quality & Reliability Management*, 26(2), pp 150–163.
- Gonzalez, R. V. D. & Martins, M. F. (2016). Capability for continuous improvement: Analysis of companies from automotive and capital goods industries. *TQM Journal*, 28(2), pp 250–274. <https://doi.org/10.1108/TQM-07-2014-0059>
- Hirzel, A. K., Leyer, M., & Moormann, J. (2017). The role of employee empowerment in the implementation of continuous improvement: Evidence from a case study of a financial services provider. *International Journal of Operations & Production Management*, 37(10), pp 1563–1579. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJOPM-12-2015-0780>
- Holtskog, H. (2013). *Continuous improvement beyond the lean understanding*. *Procedia CIRP*, 7, pp 575–579. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.procir.2013.06.035>
- HRN EN ISO 9000, Sustavi upravljanja kvalitetom – Terminološki rječnik i načela (ISO 9000:2015 ; EN ISO 9000:2015), Hrvatski zavod za norme, Zagreb (6th edition).
- HRN EN ISO 9001, Sustavi upravljanja kvalitetom – Zahtjevi (ISO 9001:2015 ; EN ISO 9001:2015), Hrvatski zavod za norme, Zagreb (6th edition)
- Ishizaka, A., Quintano, A., Labib, A., & Apostolakis, A. (2019). Do five-star hotel managers know their customers’ priorities? An AHP-Prioritised scorecard study. *EuroMed Journal of Business*, 14(2), pp 137–167.
- ISO 9000:2015, <https://www.iso.org/files/live/sites/isoorg/files/store/en/PUB100080.pdf> (July, 24, 2025)
- Jimoh, R., Oyewobi, L., Isa, R., & Waziri, I. (2019). Total quality management practices and organizational performance: the mediating roles of strategies for continuous improvement. *International Journal of Construction Management*, 19(2), pp 162–177. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15623599.2017.1411456>
- Kandampully, J, Mok, C., & Sparks, B. (Ed.), *Service Quality Management in Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure*, The Haworth Hospitality Press, New York, 2000.
- Keshavarz, Y., Aziz, Y. A., Jamshidi, D., & Ansari, Z. (2019). A comparative study of outcome quality, perceived value, and loyalty in four-star and five-star hotels. *International Journal of Tourism Cities*, 5(2), pp 270–287.
- Kiran, D. R. (2017). *Total quality management: Key concepts and case studies*. Butterworth-Heinemann. BS Publication, Amsterdam.
- Kotler, P., Brown, J. T., & Makens, J. (2010). *Marketing u ugostiteljstvu, hotelijerstvu i turizmu*. Mate d. o. o., Zagreb.
- Kumar, G. S. & Krishnaraj, R. (2018). Influence of leadership styles on employees commitment to service quality. *International Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Systems*, 11(1), pp 38–46.

- Kumar, V., Choisine, F., de Grosbois, D., & Kumar, U. (2009). Impact of TQM on company's performance. *International Journal of Quality & Reliability Management*, 26(1), pp 23–37.
- Lazibat, T. (2009). *Upravljanje kvalitetom*. Znanstvena knjiga, Zagreb.
- Marin-Garcia, J. A., Pardo del Val, M., & Bonavía Martín, T. (2008). Longitudinal study of the results of continuous improvement in an industrial company. *Team Performance Management: An International Journal*, 14(1/2), 56–69.
- Mitreva, E., Lazarevska, E., Filiposki, O., & Gjorshevski, H. (2018). The road to perfection through continuous improvement of the business processes in the hotel A-ROSA. 7th *International Symposium on Industrial Engineering – SIE*, Faculty of Mechanical Engineering, Belgrade, pp 36–40.
- Mukhles M. Al-Ababneh (2021). The implementation of Total Quality Management (TQM) in the hotel industry. *International Journal of Tourism and Hospitality*, 1(1), pp 25–26.
- Nazarian, A., Zaeri, E., Foroudi, P., Afrouzi, A., & Atkinson, P. (2024). To lead or not to lead? A cultural examination of leadership in independent hotels. *International Hospitality Review*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IHR-02-2024-0009>
- Newbold, P., Carlson, W. L., & Thorne, B. (2010). *Statistika za poslovanje i ekonomiju*. Mate, Zagreb.
- Oropesa Vento, M., Garcia Alcaraz, J. L., Maldonado Macías, A. A., & Martínez Loya, V. (2016). The impact of managerial commitment and kaizen benefits on companies. *Journal of Manufacturing Technology Management*, 27(5), pp 692–712.
- Paipa-Galeano, L., Bernal-Torres, C. A., Agudelo-Otalora, L. M., Jarrah-Nezhad, Y., & González-Blanco, H. A. (2020). Key lessons to sustain continuous improvement: A case study of four companies. *Journal of Industrial Engineering and Management*, 13(1), pp 195–211. <https://doi.org/10.3926/jiem.2973>
- Papaioannou, A., Koronios, K., Ntasis, L., Yfantidou, G., Balaska, P., & Spyridopoulou (2024). Total quality management in sport tourism and the hospitality industry: The case of Greek luxury resorts with sport and recreation facilities and services. *Sustainability*, 16(5), 1894. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su16051894>
- Portela Maquieira, S., Tari, J. J., & Molina-Azorín, J. F. (2020). Transformational leadership and the European Foundation for Quality Management model in five-star hotels. *Journal of Tourism Analysis: Revista de Análisis Turístico*, 27(2), pp 99–118.
- Prajogo, D. & Sohal, A. (2004). The sustainability and evolution of quality improvement programmes—an Australian case study. *Total Quality Management & Business Excellence*, 15(2), pp 205–220.
- Psomas, E. & Kafetzopoulos, D. (2014). Performance measures of ISO 9001 certified and non-certified manufacturing companies. *Benchmarking: An International Journal*, 21(5), pp 756–774.
- Psomas, E. L., Fotopoulos, C. V., & Kafetzopoulos, D. P. (2010). Critical factors for effective implementation of ISO 9001 in SME service companies. *Managing Service Quality: An International Journal*, 20(5), 440–457.
- Ramdhani, R. F. & Djamil, M. (2024). The Effect of Motivation and Communication on Employee Performance with Employee Engagement as an Intervening Variable in The PT XYZ Contact Center. *Dinasti International Journal of Management Science*, 5(3), pp 360–368. <https://doi.org/10.31933/dijms.v5i3.2174>
- Sadikoglu, E. & Zehir, C. (2010). Investigating the effects of innovation and employee performance on the relationship between total quality management practices and firm performance: an empirical study of Turkish firms. *International Journal of Production Economics*, 127(1), pp 13–26.
- Sanchez-Ruiz, L., Gomez-Lopez, R., & Blanco Rojo, B. (2022). Key facilitators to continuous improvement: a Spanish insight. *Business Process Management Journal*, 28(4), pp 1071–1092.
- Sesar, V. & Hunjet, A. (2021). Relationship between Continuous Improvement and Internal Process Performance; the Role of Management Support. *Tehnički vjesnik*, 28(6), pp 2109–2114.

- Sozuer, A. (2011). Self-assessment as a gate to performance improvement: A study on hospitality management in Turkey. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 24, 1090–1097.
- Sunil, M. P., Suresh, G., & Shobharani, H. (2021). The influence of total quality management on star hotel performance. *Journal of Contemporary Issues in Business and Government*, 27(2), pp 4476–4488.
- Sustavi upravljanja kvalitetom – Temeljna načela i terminološki rječnik, HRN EN ISO 9000:2015 (5th edition, May 2017).
- Van Aartsengel, A. & Kurtoglu, S. (2013). *A guide to continuous improvement transformation: Concepts, processes, implementation*. Springer Science & Business Media.
- Vrtodušić Hrgović, A. M., Milohnić, I., & Petaković, E. (2024). TQM practices and their impact on performance in hotel companies. *Zbornik Veleučilišta u Rijeci*, 12(1), pp 321–337.
- Wanjiku, A. M. & Kungu, P. (2022). Leadership style and performance of five star hotels in Nairobi county, Kenya. *European Journal of Economic and Financial Research*, 6(1), pp 88–100.
- Wang, C. H., Chen, K., & Chen, S. (2012). Total quality management, market orientation and hotel performance: The moderating effects of external environmental factors. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 31(1), pp 119–129.
- Whitelaw, P. A. (2013). Leadership up the ladder: The construction of leadership styles in the hospitality industry. *The Journal of Contemporary Issues in Business and Government*, 19(1), pp 65–79.
- Wu, X., Wang, J., & Ling, Q. (2021). Managing internal service quality in hotels: Determinants and implications. *Tourism Management*, 86, pp 104329.
- Yasar, B. N., Sezen, B., & Karakadilar, I. S. (2019). Mediating effect of continuous improvement on the relationship between innovation and financial performance. *Total Quality Management & Business Excellence*, 30(7-8), pp 893–907.