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**STILOVI VODSTVA U
HOTELIJERSTVU:
USPOREDBA MENADŽERICA
I MENADŽERA U
HRVATSKOJ**

**LEADERSHIP STYLES IN
THE HOTEL INDUSTRY:
COMPARISON BETWEEN
FEMALE AND MALE MANAGERS
IN CROATIA**

SAŽETAK: Istraživanje ima za svrhu utvrditi postoje li spolne razlike u orijentaciji u vodstvu (na ljude / na zadatak) te u tradicionalnim i suvremenim stilovima vodstva među menadžerima i menadžericama u hrvatskom hotelijerstvu, uz naglasak na praktične implikacije za razvoj vodstva. U skladu s time, provedeno je *online* anketno istraživanje među menadžerima/menadžericama u hotelskom sektoru Republike Hrvatske. Korištene su validirane skale za mjerenje stavova ispitanika o tome jesu li u svom vodstvu više orijentirani na ljude ili na zadatak te koji stil vodstva najviše primjenjuju: autokratski, demokratski, *laissez-faire*, transakcijski ili transformacijski.

Rezultati su pokazali da žene u prosjeku češće u vodstvu primjenjuju karakteristike transformacijskog vodstva (osnaživanje, mentoriranje, individualizirano uvažavanje, etičko odlučivanje), kao i da su više usmjerene na ljude (zaposlenike), dok su muškarci skloniji autoritativnim praksama, odnosno direktivno-strukturnim komponentama (jasnoća očekivanja, standardiziranje postupaka, nadzor pogrešaka) i više su orijentirani na zadatak. Razlike su stoga posebno izražene u transformacijskom i autokratskom okviru, dok se u demokratskom, *laissez-faire* i transakcijskom stilu ne potvrđuju sustavno.

Dobiveni nalazi upućuju na komplementarnost stilova i podupiru argument za veću zastupljenost žena u menadžmentu: kombinacija razvojno-relacijskih i

ABSTRACT: The research objective is to determine whether there are gender differences in leadership style orientation (toward people / toward tasks) and in traditional and modern leadership styles among female and male managers in the Croatian hotel industry, with an emphasis on practical implications for leadership development. In accordance, we conducted an online research questionnaire among female and male managers in the hotel sector of the Republic of Croatia. We used validated measuring scales to measure respondent attitudes on whether they preferred task or people orientation in leadership and which leadership style they mostly implemented: autocratic, democratic, *laissez-faire*, transactional or transformational.

The results showed that on average, women implement the characteristics of transformational leadership (empowerment, mentorship, individual appreciation, ethical decision-making) more frequently, and that they are more people (employee) oriented, whereas men are more prone to authoritative practices, i.e., directional-structural components (expectation clarity, procedure standardisation, error oversight) and are more task-oriented. Therefore, the differences are especially visible within the transformational and autocratic framework, while they are not systematically confirmed in the democratic, *laissez-faire* and transactional styles.

The findings indicate style complementarity and support the argument for higher representation of women in management roles: the combination of development-relation-



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direktivno-operativnih snaga pridonosi kvaliteti usluge, stabilnosti izvedbe i dugoročnom razvoju kadrova. Preporučuje se poticanje ciljanih programa razvoja liderstva (npr. mentorstvo, *coaching*, standardizacija procesa) te širenje istraživanja na veće i raznolikije uzorke uz primjenu robusnih višedimenzionalnih testova.

KLJUČNE RIJEČI: stilovi vodstva, žensko vodstvo, muško vodstvo, hotelijerstvo

UVOD

U poslovnoj praksi žene i muškarci nerijetko imaju različite prostore izbora, različite resurse moći i različite opsege prava odlučivanja. Kako društva postaju raznolikija, sve veći broj organizacija strateški naglašava raznolikost, jednakost i inkluziju kao važne razvojne prioritete. Žene i pripadnici manjinskih skupina često su u fokusu takvih inicijativa, osobito u uslužnim sektorima poput turizma i hotelijerstva u kojima su prepreke napredovanju i dalje vidljive, najčešće putem fenomena „staklenog stropa” (Koç et al., 2025; Kokkranikal & Baum, 2024).

Iako je uočljiv porast udjela žena na srednjim razinama menadžmenta, njihova zastupljenost u vrhu organizacijskih hijerarhija tijekom posljednjih desetljeća ne pokazuje razmjerno povećanje. Stoga i dalje postoji značajan prostor za napredak prema suštinskoj jednakosti žena i muškaraca na rukovodećim položajima. U nizu organizacija, kao i u društvu u cjelini, opstaju institucionalne i kulturne zapreke koje disproportionalno opterećuju žene. Iako je ostvaren napredak, uključujući i činjenicu da žene na višim razinama ostvaruju više dohotke nego ikada prije, hotelijerstvo ostaje izrazito rodno obilježen sektor: idealni zaposlenik i očekivanja o uspješnoj karijeri i vodstvu još su uvijek modelirani prema muškim normama (Dashper, 2020; Manfreda et al., 2024).

U novijoj literaturi sve se češće govori o „ženskom vodstvu” ne kao o monolitnom stilu, nego kao o legitimiranju jednakih mogućnosti pristupa liderskim ulogama i tijelima korporativnog upravljanja. Polazi se od pretpostavke da obilježja osobnosti i rodna

ship and directional-operational forces contributes to the quality of service, stability of performance and long-term development of human resources. We recommend encouragement of targeted leadership programmes (e.g., mentorship, coaching, process standardisation) and research expansion to include more numerous and diverse samples with the implementation of robust, multi-dimensional tests.

KEYWORDS: leadership styles, female leadership, male leadership, hotel industry

INTRODUCTION

In business practice, women and men frequently have different areas of choice, different power resources and different scopes of decision-making rights. As societies are becoming more diverse, there is a higher number of organisations that strategically emphasise diversity, equality and inclusion as important development priorities. Women and minority members are often the focal points of such initiatives, especially in the service sectors such as tourism and hospitality in which advancement obstacles are still visible, most frequently through the glass ceiling phenomenon (Koç et al., 2025; Kokkranikal & Baum, 2024).

Although there has been a notable increase of the share of women in middle-level management, their representation at the top of organisational hierarchies in the last decades has not shown proportional growth. Therefore, there is still significant room for improvement toward the essential equality between women and men in leadership roles. There are institutional and cultural barriers in a range of organisations, as well as the society as a whole, which disproportionately burden women. Although progress has been made, including the fact that women at higher management levels generate more income than ever before, the hotel industry remains an exceptionally gender-specific sector – an ideal employee and successful career and leadership expectations are still modelled after the male norms (Dashper, 2020; Manfreda et al., 2024).

In recent literature, there have been more and more mentions of “female leadership”, not as a monolithic style, but as legitimising opportunities of equal access to leadership roles and corporate management bodies. The assumption is that personal characteristics and

socijalizacija mogu utjecati na stil vođenja i, posljedično, na organizacijske ishode; pritom svaki spol donosi repertoar različitih, ali komplementarnih kvaliteta i perspektiva (Elariny et al., 2022; Manfreda et al., 2024). Tako primjerice žene u prosjeku češće iskazuju participativne/demokratske i transformacijske obrasce, odnosno viziju, zatim etičko odlučivanje, individualizirano uvažavanje, mentoriranje i razvoj zaposlenika za razliku od muškaraca koji su skloniji direktivnijim/autokratskim pristupima i pojedinim komponentama transakcijskog vodstva poput upravljanja pomoću iznimaka i jačeg standardiziranja izvedbe (Negruša et al., 2024; Kachniewska, 2023). U hotelijerstvu, gdje se vrednuju relacijske i razvojne dimenzije, takva se raspodjela ponašajnih naglasaka posebno jasno vidi: menadžerice se češće oslanjaju na osnaživanje, inkluzivno odlučivanje i razvoj timova, a menadžeri relativno češće na strukturiranje, nadzor i kontingentnu razmjenu (Manfreda et al., 2024; Kachniewska, 2023).

Na temelju navedenog, cilj je ovog istraživanja ispitati postoje li razlike u stilu vodstva između menadžera i menadžerica u hotelijerstvu u Republici Hrvatskoj. U skladu s tim, postavljena su sljedeća istraživačka pitanja:

- Postoje li razlike između menadžerica i menadžera u hotelijerstvu RH u orijentaciji na ljude i orijentaciji na zadatak?
- Postoje li razlike između menadžerica i menadžera u hotelijerstvu RH u primjeni tradicionalnih (autokratski, demokratski, *laissez-faire*) i suvremenih stilova vodstva (transakcijski, transformacijski)?

Iz navedenih ciljeva proizlaze dvije istraživačke hipoteze:

H1: Postoji statistički značajna razlika između menadžerica i menadžera u orijentaciji na ljude i orijentaciji na zadatak.

H2: Postoji statistički značajna razlika između menadžerica i menadžera i stilova vodstva (autokratski, demokratski, *laissez-faire*, transformacijski, transakcijski).

gender socialisation can affect leadership styles and consequentially, organisational outcomes, whereby each gender brings an array of different, but complementary qualities and perspectives (Elariny et al., 2022; Manfreda et al., 2024). Thus, for example, women on average demonstrate more frequently participatory/democratic and transformational patterns, i.e., vision, then ethical decision-making, individualised appreciation, mentorship and employee development as opposed to men who are more prone to directional/autocratic approaches and individual components of transactional leadership, such as management by exception and stronger performance standardisation (Negruša et al., 2024; Kachniewska, 2023). This distribution of behavioural accents is especially evident in hospitality, where relational and developmental dimensions are valued: female managers more often rely on empowerment, inclusive decision-making and team development, while male managers relatively more often rely on structuring, supervision and contingent transaction (Manfreda et al., 2024; Kachniewska, 2023).

Based on the above-mentioned, the purpose of this research was to test whether there are differences in leadership styles between male and female managers in the hotel industry in the Republic of Croatia. Accordingly, we have posed the following research questions:

- Are there differences between female and male managers in the Croatian hotel industry in the context of people and task orientation?
- Are there differences between female and male managers in the Croatian hotel industry in implementing traditional (autocratic, democratic, *laissez-faire*) and modern (transactional, transformational) leadership styles?

The following two hypotheses were set from the above-mentioned objectives:

H1: There is a statistically significant difference between female and male managers in people and task orientation.

H2: There is a statistically significant difference between female and male managers and their leadership styles (autocratic, democratic, *laissez-faire*, transformational, transactional).

PREGLED DOSADAŠNJIH ISTRAŽIVANJA

Razlike u stilovima vodstva između muškaraca i žena predmet su mnogih studija, a posebno u sektorima gdje je vođenje ljudi intenzivno, kao što su turizam i hotelijerstvo. Općenito, istraživanja pokazuju da muški i ženski stilovi vodstva dijele mnogo sličnosti, ali postoje i određene razlike koje su statistički značajne, posebno u načinu komunikacije, pristupu zaposlenicima, delegiranju, participativnom odlučivanju i emotivnim aspektima vodstva (Eagly et al., 2003; Paustian-Underdahl et al., 2014).

Niz studija potvrđuje da su spolne razlike u stilovima vođenja male do umjerene, ali stabilne i kontekstualno uvjetovane (Eagly & Johnson, 1990; Eagly et al., 2003; Paustian-Underdahl et al., 2014). Sustavni pregledi i metaanalize pokazuju da žene u prosjeku češće iskazuju participativne/demokratske te transformacijske obrasce (vizija, individualizirano uvažavanje, mentoriranje), dok su muškarci skloniji direktivnijim/autokratskim pristupima i nekim komponentama transakcijskog vodstva (menadžment uz pomoć iznimaka), uz češće bilježenje *laissez-faire* obrazaca u dijelu radova (Eagly et al., 2003; Koenig et al., 2011; Judge & Piccolo, 2004; Northouse, 2019; Yukl, 2013). Razlike su izraženije kada vodstvo ocjenjuju podređeni/suradnici nego u samoprocjenama, a variraju s razinom hijerarhije, funkcionalnim područjem, organizacijskom kulturom i nacionalnim kontekstom (Paustian-Underdahl et al., 2014; Vinkenburger et al., 2011).

Teorija usklađenosti uloga (*role congruity*) sugerira da su liderske pozicije povijesno povezane s „agencijskim” atributima češće pripisanim muškarcima (autoritet, odlučnost, visoko samopouzdanje), a zbog čega žene nerijetko doživljavaju neusklađenost između rodni očekivanja i prototipa „idealnog vođe” te ponekad internaliziraju sumnju u vlastite liderske kapacitete (Heilman, 2001; Eagly & Karau, 2002). Odatle i pozivi da se prototip vodstva redefinira prema kompetencijama koje suvremene organizacije osobito cijene (empatija, suradnja, aktivno slušanje i inkluzivno odlučivanje)

OVERVIEW OF PREVIOUS RESEARCH

Differences in leadership styles between men and women have been the subject of a lot of studies, especially in sectors with intensive people management, such as tourism and hospitality. In general, research studies show that male and female leadership styles share a lot of similarities, but there are also specific statistically significant differences, especially in communication methods, approach to employees, delegation, participatory decision-making and emotional leadership aspects (Eagly et al., 2003; Paustian-Underdahl et al., 2014).

Several studies confirm that gender differences in leadership styles are small to moderate, but stable and contextually conditioned (Eagly & Johnson, 1990; Eagly et al., 2003; Paustian-Underdahl et al., 2014). Systematic overviews and metaanalyses show that women on average show participatory/democratic and transformational patterns (vision, individualised appreciation, mentorship) more frequently, while men tend more toward directional/autocratic approaches and some components of transactional leadership (management by exception), with more frequent records of *laissez-faire* patterns in part of the research papers (Eagly et al., 2003; Koenig et al., 2011; Judge & Piccolo, 2004; Northouse, 2019; Yukl, 2013). The differences are more prominent when assessed by subordinates/associates than in self-assessments, and they vary according to the level of hierarchy, functional area, organisational culture and national context (Paustian-Underdahl et al., 2014; Vinkenburger et al., 2011).

The role congruity theory suggests that leadership positions are historically related to “agency” attributes more frequently contributed to men (authority, decisiveness, high self-esteem), which is why women frequently experience incongruity in gender expectations and the “ideal leader” prototype, and sometimes internalise doubt in their own leadership capacities (Heilman, 2001; Eagly & Karau, 2002). This is the reason behind urges to redefine the leadership prototype according to competences especially appreciated by modern organisations (empathy, cooperation, active listening and inclusive

u skladu s transformacijskim i participativnim stilovima (Eagly & Karau, 2002; Northouse, 2019).

Istodobno, u empirijskim se istraživanjima ističu i strukturni čimbenici podzastupljenosti žena u višem menadžmentu: (1) pretpostavke o manjoj sposobnosti, (2) navodni manji interes te (3) organizacijske barijere poput „staklenog stropa” koji usporava napredovanje i uz jednake kompetencije (Chamorro-Premuzic, 2013; Carvalho et al., 2019). Dodatno, mnoge žene nose „dvostruki teret”, odnosno kombinaciju zahtjevnih profesionalnih uloga i tradicionalnih obiteljskih očekivanja, što može smanjiti vidljivost, raspoloživost i percipiranu predanost (Carvalho et al., 2019; Vinkenburger et al., 2011; Eagly & Karau, 2002). Procjene kompetentnosti često su i rodno asimetrične: jednako se ponašanje različito vrednuje ovisno o spolu. Autokratska, odlučna postupanja kod muškaraca češće se tumače kao efikasnost, a kod žena kao neprimjerenost; skromnost se ponekad pogrešno čita kao manjak samopouzdanja, dok se pretjerano samopouzdanje pojedinih muškaraca zna zamijeniti za stvarnu kompetentnost (Chamorro-Premuzic, 2013; Heilman, 2001). Istodobno, brojni radovi ukazuju na višu emocionalnu inteligenciju kod žena kao prediktora učinkovitog vođenja u timski i uslužno orijentiranim okruženjima, što dodatno podupire potrebu za redefiniranjem kriterija „dobrog” vodstva (Northouse, 2019; Yukl, 2013). Smanjivanje pristranosti moguće je uz pomoć promjene normi o rodnim i liderskim ulogama te povećanje vidljivosti uspješnih liderica, što jača percepciju „prikladnosti” žena za vršne pozicije (Heilman, 2001).

U hotelijerstvu, okruženju visoke interakcije s gostima i stalne koordinacije timova, organizacije tipično nagrađuju relacijske i razvojne dimenzije vodstva. U tom je kontekstu učestalije da menadžerice demonstriraju transformacijske i participativne prakse (vizija, mentoriranje, osnaživanje), dok menadžeri relativno češće posežu za direktivno-standardizirajućim pristupima (komponente autokratskog/transakcijskog okvira) (Russen et

decision-making) in accordance with the transformational and participatory styles (Eagly & Karau, 2002; Northouse, 2019).

At the same time, empirical research studies also emphasise structural factors of female underrepresentation in senior management: (1) assumption of lower capability, (2) supposed lower interest, and (3) organisational barriers such as the glass ceiling that decelerate advancement even with equal competences (Chamorro-Premuzic, 2013; Carvalho et al., 2019). Additionally, a lot of women carry a “double burden”, i.e., a combination of demanding professional roles and traditional family expectations, which can decrease visibility, availability and the perceived commitment (Carvalho et al., 2019; Vinkenburger et al., 2011; Eagly & Karau, 2002). Competence assessments are also frequently asymmetric – equal behaviour is assessed differently according to gender. Autocratic, decisive actions in men are frequently interpreted as efficiency, while in women as inappropriateness; modesty is sometimes erroneously interpreted as lack of confidence, while excessive confidence of individual men can be misinterpreted as real competence (Chamorro-Premuzic, 2013; Heilman, 2001). At the same time, numerous research papers indicate higher emotional intelligence in women as predictors of effective leadership in team and service-oriented environments, which additionally supports the need to redefine the criteria of “good” leadership (Northouse, 2019; Yukl, 2013). Bias diminishing is possible through changing norms on gender and leadership roles and increasing visibility of successful female leaders, which strengthens the perception of “appropriateness” of women in executive positions (Heilman, 2001).

Organisations in hospitality, an environment of high guest interaction and constant team coordination, typically reward relational and developmental leadership dimensions. In this context, it is more usual that female managers demonstrate transformational and participatory practices (vision, mentorship, empowerment), while male managers relatively more frequently assume direction-standardization approaches (autocratic/transactional framework

al., 2021; Kattara, 2005; Mooney & Ryan, 2009). Istodobno, strukturne osobitosti industrije poput dugih smjena, potreba za stalnom dostupnošću i mobilnošću te sezonalnost, održavaju rodno uvjetovane karijerne putanje i otežavaju pristup najvišim rukovodećim razinama, čak i kada su razlike u preferencijama stilova male (Carvalho et al., 2019; Mooney & Ryan, 2009; Kattara, 2005). Teorija rodno obilježenih organizacija ukazuje da su karijere u hotelijerstvu snažno strukturirane rodno. Za legitimiranje leaderskog potencijala često se traže visoka geografska mobilnost, produljeno radno angažiranje i intenzivno umrežavanje, zahtjevi koji su nominalno rodno neutralni, ali ih u okolnostima muške dominacije lakše ispunjavaju muškarci (Dashper, 2020). Posljedično, žene se nerijetko susreću s „nevidljivim” zaprekama koje umanjuju izgled napredovanja, dok se u nekim društvenim kontekstima, ponajprije patrijarhalnima, i dalje koncentriraju na funkcijama poput marketinga ili ljudskih potencijala, s ograničenim pristupom ključnim upravljačkim ulogama (Pavlek et al., 2015). U hrvatskoj hotelskoj industriji bilježi se rast udjela žena na rukovodećim položajima, no zadržavaju se strukturalne poteškoće koje položaj čine slojevitim, osobito na najvišim razinama (Galičić & Ivanović, 2006).

U proučavanju vodstva bitno je uzeti u obzir i kulturološki pristup. Stil vođenja koji se u jednoj kulturi percipira kao učinkovit, u drugoj može biti neprihvatljiv ili slab. Isto tako, žena lider u jednoj zemlji može biti poticana da razvija vlastiti stil, dok u drugoj biva potiskivana u korist stereotipnog ponašanja. Mihaľová i sur. (2025) dodatno potvrđuju da stupanj rodne jednakosti u društvu (*gender egalitarianism*) ima značajan utjecaj na percepciju i učinkovitost stilova vodstva. U društvima s izraženijom rodnom ravnopravnošću, razlike između vodstva muškaraca i žena manje su izražene, dok su u tradicionalnijim kulturama (npr. Latinska Amerika, dijelovi Azije i Bliskog istoka) razlike vidljivije i često institucionalno podržane.

components) (Russen et al., 2021; Kattara, 2005; Mooney & Ryan, 2009). At the same time, structural characteristics of the industry, such as long shifts, need for constant availability and mobility, as well as seasonality, reflect gender-conditioned career paths and impede access to the highest leadership positions, even when the differences in preferred styles are small (Carvalho et al., 2019; Mooney & Ryan, 2009; Kattara, 2005). The theory of gendered organisations indicates that careers in hospitality are strongly gender structured. In order to legitimise leadership potential, high geographic mobility, extended work engagement and intensive networking are frequently in high demand. These demands are nominally gender neutral, but in circumstances of male domination, they are more easily met by men (Dashper, 2020). Consequently, women often face “invisible” barriers that diminish their chances of advancement, while in some social contexts, primarily patriarchal, they still focus on functions like marketing and human resources, with limited access to key management roles (Pavlek et al., 2015). Croatian hotel industry is recording an increase in the share of women in leading positions, but structural difficulties remain, which make the position layered, especially for the highest levels (Galičić & Ivanović, 2006).

In studying leadership, it is necessary to also consider the cultural approach. A leadership style perceived as effective in one culture may be unacceptable or weak in another. Likewise, a female leader in one country may be encouraged to develop her own style, while in another she is held back in favour of stereotypical behaviour. Mihaľová et.al. (2025) additionally confirm that the level of gender egalitarianism has a significant impact on the perception and effectiveness of leadership styles. In societies with more pronounced gender equality, differences between male and female leadership are less expressed, whereas in more traditional cultures (e.g., Latin America, parts of Asia and the Middle East), the differences are more visible and often institutionally supported.

METODOLOGIJA ISTRAŽIVANJA

U empirijskom dijelu rada provedeno je *online* anketno istraživanje među zaposlenicima na menadžerskim pozicijama u hotelijerstvu na području Republike Hrvatske. Prva istraživačka faza odvijala se od 10. siječnja do 1. travnja 2025., pri čemu je zaprimljeno 66 ispravno ispunjenih upitnika (od toga 46 žena i 20 muškaraca). Da bi se u uzorku približno izjednačila spolna struktura, pokrenuta je druga faza anketiranja od 5. travnja do 10. svibnja 2025., uz napomenu da upitnik ispune isključivo muški ispitanici. U toj je fazi prikupljeno dodatnih 15 upitnika, čime je ukupan broj valjanih odgovora 81.

Upitnik je imao tri cjeline i ukupno 51 pitanje. Prvi dio obuhvaćao je sociodemografske varijable (dob, spol, razina obrazovanja, godine iskustva u hotelijerstvu te staž na menadžerskoj poziciji). Drugi dio sastojao se od 20 tvrdnji kojima se nastojalo procijeniti jesu li sudionici u svom vođenju više orijentirani na ljude ili na zadatke. Treći dio bio je upitnik stilova vodstva s 27 tvrdnji, pri čemu je nekoliko tvrdnji pripadalo svakom od sljedećih stilova: demokratskom, autokratskom, *laissez-faire*, transakcijskom i transformacijskom. Tvrdnje su bile nasumično raspoređene da bi se spriječilo povezivanje pojedinih izjava s određenim stilom. Drugi i treći dio upitnika mjerili su se Likertovom ljestvicom od 5 stupnjeva (1 = nikad, 5 = uvijek).

Operacionalizacija konstrukata oslanja se na preuzete varijable iz knjige Petera Northousea, *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (2019), dok su varijable za transakcijski i transformacijski stil preuzete iz istraživanja autora Bass & Avolio (1991), *Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ)*.

REZULTATI ISTRAŽIVANJA

Na samom početku prikazuje se struktura uzorka prema ključnim sociodemografskim i profesionalnim obilježjima ispitanika. Tablica 1 obuhvaća spol, dobnu skupinu, stupanj obrazovanja, ukupni staž u hotelijerstvu te ukupni staž na menadžerskoj poziciji ispitanika.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The empirical part of the paper is dedicated to the online questionnaire research among hospitality management employees in the Republic of Croatia. The first research phase took place from 10 January to 1 April 2025, producing 66 correctly filled out questionnaires (of which 46 female and 20 male respondents). With the purpose of balancing the gender structure of respondents, the second survey phase was initiated and lasted from 5 April to 10 May 2025, asking for only male respondents. In this phase, additional 15 questionnaires were collected, which brings the total number of respondents to 81.

The questionnaire comprised three parts and a total of 51 questions. The first part contained sociodemographic variables (age, gender, education level, years of working experience in hospitality and length of service at management position). The second part comprised 20 statements aimed at assessing whether the respondents are more people or task oriented in leadership. The third part comprised 27 statements on leadership styles, whereby several statements belonged to each of the following styles: democratic, autocratic, *laissez-faire*, transactional and transformational. The statements were randomly arranged in order to prevent connecting them with a specific leadership style. The second and third part of the questionnaire were measured in a 5-point Likert scale (1 = never, 5 = always).

The operationalisation of constructs relied on the variables taken from the book by Peter Northouse *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (2019), while for the transactional and transformational style, they were taken from research by Bass & Avolio (1991), *Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ)*.

RESEARCH RESULTS

At the outset, the study presents the sample structure according to the key sociodemographic and professional characteristics of the respondents. Table 1 includes data on gender, age group, level of education, total length of service in the hospitality industry, and total tenure in a managerial position.

TABLICA 1. SOCIODEMOGRAFSKI PROFIL ISPITANIKA
TABLE 1. SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

Spol / Gender	Br. ispitanika / No. of respondents (n = 81)	Udio / Share (100 %)
Muški / Men	35	43,2 %
Ženski / Women	46	56,8 %
Dobna skupina / Age group		
Mlađi od 18 godina / Younger than 18	0	0
18 – 29 godina / years	25	30,9 %
30 – 39 godina / years	28	34,6 %
40 – 49 godina / years	20	24,7 %
50 – 59 godina / years	5	6,0 %
Više od 60 godina / Older than 60	3	3,8 %
Stupanj obrazovanja / Education level		
Osnovna škola / Primary education	0	0
Srednja škola / Secondary education	14	17,3 %
Viša škola ili fakultet / College or university degree	47	58,0 %
Magisterij ili doktorat / Masters or Doctoral degree	20	24,7 %
Godine rada u hotelijerstvu / Work experience in hospitality		
Manje od 1 godine / Less than a year	7	8,6 %
1 – 5 godina / years	23	28,4 %
6 – 10 godina / years	19	23,5 %
11 – 20 godina / years	20	24,7 %
Više od 20 godina / Over 20 years	12	14,8 %
Godine rada na menadžerskoj poziciji / Length of management work experience		
Manje od 1 godine / Less than a year	17	21,0 %
1 – 5 godina / years	30	37,0 %
6 – 10 godina godina / years	16	19,8 %
11 – 20 godina godina / years	15	18,5 %
Više od 20 godina / Over 20 years	3	3,7 %

Izvor: obrada autora / Source: Authors

Uzorak obuhvaća 81 ispitanika na menadžerskim pozicijama u hotelijerstvu. Prema spolu, sudionici su 56,8 % žene (n = 46) i 43,2 % muškarci (n = 35). Dobno gledano, prevladavaju mlađi menadžeri: skupine 18 – 29 godina i 30 – 39 godina čine zajedno 65,5 % uzorka (30,9 % i 34,6 %), slijede 40

The sample comprises 81 respondents in managerial positions within the hospitality industry. In terms of gender, 56.8% of participants are women (n = 46) and 43.2% are men (n = 35). With regard to age, younger managers predominate: the 18–29 and 30–39 age groups together account for 65.5% of the sample

– 49 godina s 24,7 %, dok su starije dobne skupine skromnije zastupljene (50 – 59 godina: 6,0 %; 60 +: 3,8 %). Obrazovna struktura pokazuje visoku razinu kvalifikacija: 58 % ispitanika ima višu školu ili fakultet, a dodatnih 24,7 % magisterij ili doktorat; srednju školu ima 17,3 %, dok osnovno obrazovanje nije zastupljeno.

Radni staž u hotelijerstvu najčešće je 1 – 5 godina (28,4 %), zatim 11 – 20 godina (24,7 %) i 6 – 10 godina (23,5 %), dok više od 20 godina iskustva ima 14,8 %, a manje od 1 godine 8,6 % ispitanika. Staž na menadžerskoj poziciji također ukazuje na rane faze karijere: 37,0 % ispitanika ima 1 – 5 godina menadžerskog staža, 21,0 % manje od 1 godine, 19 % između 6 i 10 godina, 18,5 % između 11 i 20 godina, a 3,7 % više od 20 godina. Ukupno, 58 % sudionika ima do 5 godina menadžerskog iskustva, što upućuje na relativno mlađi menadžerski kadar u uzorku.

Nadalje, htjelo se istražiti preteže li kod ispitanika orijentacija na zadatke ili na odnose, pa je u tu svrhu primijenjen standardizirani upitnik prema Northouseu (2019). Instrument za procjenu stilova vodstva koncipiran je tako da mjeri dvije dimenzije liderskog ponašanja: usmjerenost na zadatak te usmjerenost na ljudske odnose (zaposlenike). Upitnik ukupno obuhvaća 20 tvrdnji. Parne čestice operacionaliziraju dimenziju odnosa prema ljudima, dok neparne čestice mjere orijentaciju na zadatke. Svaki sudionik odgovara na sve tvrdnje koristeći se petostupanjskom Likertovom ljestvicom (1 = nikad, 2 = rijetko, 3 = ponekad, 4 = često, 5 = uvijek). Bodovanje se provodi odvojeno za svaku dimenziju, zbrajanjem odgovora na parne, odnosno neparne čestice. Maksimalan rezultat po dimenziji iznosi 50, što interpretacijski predstavlja 100 %-tnu orijentiranost na zadatke, odnosno na ljude. Dobiveni se rezultati kategoriziraju na sljedeći način: 45 – 50 = vrlo visoko, 40 – 44 = visoko, 35 – 39 = umjereno, 30 – 34 = nisko te 10 – 24 = vrlo nisko. U iduće dvije tablice predstavljene su rezultati usmjerenosti na ljude i usmjerenosti na zadatke.

(30.9% and 34.6%, respectively), followed by the 40–49 group with 24.7%. Older age groups are less represented (50–59: 6.0%; 60+: 3.8%). The educational structure indicates a high level of qualifications: 58% of respondents hold a college or university degree, while an additional 24.7% hold a master's or doctoral degree. Secondary education is reported by 17.3% of respondents, whereas primary education is not represented.

Work experience in the hospitality industry most commonly ranges from 1 to 5 years (28.4%), followed by 11–20 years (24.7%) and 6–10 years (23.5%). A total of 14.8% of respondents report more than 20 years of experience, while 8.6% have less than one year of experience. Tenure in a managerial position similarly indicates early career stages: 37.0% of respondents report 1–5 years of managerial experience, 21.0% less than one year, 19.0% between 6 and 10 years, 18.5% between 11 and 20 years, and 3.7% more than 20 years. Overall, 58% of participants have up to 5 years of managerial experience, suggesting a relatively young managerial cohort within the sample.

Furthermore, the study sought to examine whether respondents demonstrate a stronger orientation towards tasks or towards relationships. For this purpose, a standardised questionnaire based on Peter G. Northouse (2019) was applied. The leadership style assessment instrument is designed to measure two dimensions of leadership behaviour: task orientation and relationship orientation (towards employees). The questionnaire comprises a total of 20 items. Even-numbered items operationalise the relationship-oriented dimension, while odd-numbered items measure task orientation.

Each participant responds to all items using a five-point Likert scale (1 = never, 2 = rarely, 3 = sometimes, 4 = often, 5 = always). Scoring is conducted separately for each dimension by summing responses to the even- and odd-numbered items, respectively. The maximum score per dimension is 50, which corresponds to 100% orientation towards tasks or towards people. The obtained scores are categorised as follows: 45–50 = very high, 40–44 = high, 35–39 = moderate, 30–34 = low, and 10–24 = very low. The following two tables present the results for relationship orientation and task orientation.

TABLICA 2. STAVOVI ISPITANIKA O NJIHOVOJ USMJERENOSTI NA LJUDE
TABLE 2. RESPONDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS THEIR RELATIONSHIP ORIENTATION

USMJERENOST NA LJUDE PEOPLE ORIENTATION	Prosj. ocjena (M) Mean score (men)	Prosj. ocjena (Ž) Mean score (women)	Razlika (M – Ž) Difference (M – W)
Prema članovima skupine ponašam se prijateljski. I am friendly with team members.	4,37	4,26	- 0,11
Pomažem drugima da se u skupini osjećaju ugodno. I make sure team members feel comfortable.	4,01	4,07	0,06
Na prijedloge drugih reagiram povoljno. I am open to suggestions from others.	4,06	4,32	- 0,26
Pravedan sam prema drugima. I treat others fairly.	4,21	4,34	- 0,13
Prema članovima skupine ponašam se predvidljivo. My behaviour toward others is consistent.	3,42	3,87	- 0,45
Aktivno komuniciram s članovima skupine. I actively communicate with team members.	4,55	4,61	- 0,06
Pokazujem brigu o dobrobiti drugih. I care for the well-being of others.	4,20	4,53	- 0,33
Pokazujem prilagodljivost u odlučivanju. I am adaptable in decision-making.	4,21	4,12	0,09
S članovima skupine dijelim misli i osjećaje. I share thoughts and feelings with others.	4,24	4,41	- 0,17
Pomažem članovima skupine da se slažu. I make sure team members get along.	4,34	4,52	- 0,18
Ukupno / Total	4,16	4,30	- 0,14

Izvor: obrada autora / Source: Authors

U Tablici 2 prikazuje se procjena usmjerenosti na ljude za muškarce i žene na menadžerskim pozicijama. Žene u prosjeku postižu više ocjene (4,30) od muškaraca (4,16), uz ukupnu razliku – 0,14. Najizraženije prednosti u korist žena uočljive su kod predvidljivosti u ponašanju (3,42 vs. 3,87), brige o dobrobiti drugih (4,20 vs. 4,53) i povoljne reakcije na prijedloge (4,06 vs. 4,32). S druge strane, muškarci su nešto više ocijenjeni prema prijateljskom ponašanju (4,37 vs. 4,26) i prilagodljivosti u odlučivanju (4,21 vs. 4,12). Za obje skupine najviše su ocijenjena „aktivna komunikacija“ (M 4,55; Ž 4,61), dok je „predvidljivo ponašanje“ najniže rangirano (M 3,42; Ž 3,87). Ukupno, obrazac upućuje na širi repertoar relacijskih ponašanja kod žena, uz djelomične iznimke u korist muškaraca na pojedinim indikatorima (prijateljsko ponašanje, prilagodljivost).

Table 2 presents the assessment of relationship orientation among male and female respondents in managerial positions. On average, women achieve higher scores (4.30) than men (4.16), with an overall difference of 0.14. The most pronounced advantages in favour of women are observed in behavioural consistency (3.42 vs. 3.87), concern for the well-being of others (4.20 vs. 4.53), and responsiveness to suggestions (4.06 vs. 4.32). Conversely, men receive slightly higher scores in friendly behaviour (4.37 vs. 4.26) and adaptability in decision-making (4.21 vs. 4.12). For both groups, “active communication” receives the highest ratings (men: 4.55; women: 4.61), whereas “predictable behaviour” ranks lowest (men: 3.42; women: 3.87). Overall, the pattern suggests a broader repertoire of relational behaviours among women, with some exceptions in favour of men on specific indicators (friendly behaviour and adaptability).

TABLICA 3. STAVOVI ISPITANIKA O NJIHOVOJ USMJERENOSTI NA ZADATKE
TABLE 3. RESPONDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS THEIR TASK ORIENTATION

USMJERENOST NA ZADATKE TASK ORIENTATION	Prosj. ocjena (M) Mean score (men)	Prosj. ocjena (Ž) Mean score (women)	Razlika (M – Ž) Difference (M – W)
Članovima skupine govorim što trebaju napraviti. I tell team members what they need to do.	4,48	4,37	0,11
Članovima skupine namećem kriterij uratka. I impose task completion criteria to team members.	4,48	4,23	0,25
Predlažem kako riješiti probleme. I recommend problem solutions.	4,45	4,27	0,18
Drugima jasno iznosim svoje stajalište. I state my views clearly to others.	4,31	4,39	- 0,08
Razvijam plan djelovanja skupine. I develop team action plans.	4,35	4,24	0,11
Definiram odgovornosti povezane s ulogom svakog člana skupine. / I define responsibilities related to the role of each team member.	4,36	4,22	0,14
Pojašnjavam vlastitu ulogu u skupini. I clarify my own role in the team.	4,12	3,87	0,25
Pružam plan za obavljanje posla. I provide a plan for work completion.	4,21	4,45	- 0,24
Postavljam kriterije za ono što se očekuje od skupine. I set expectation criteria for team members.	4,30	4,17	0,13
Potičem članove skupine da kvalitetno rade. I encourage team members to do quality work.	4,50	4,54	- 0,04
Ukupno / Total	4,36	4,28	0,08

Izvor: obrada autora / Source: Authors

U Tablici 3 prikazuje se procjena usmjerenosti na zadatke među menadžerima u hotelijerstvu prema spolu. Muškarci ostvaruju nešto višu ukupnu prosječnu ocjenu (4,36) od žena (4,28). Najizraženije razlike u korist muškaraca bilježe se kod stavki „namećem kriterij uratka” (4,48 vs. 4,23) i „pojašnjavam vlastitu ulogu u skupini” (4,12 vs. 3,87). S druge strane, žene postižu više rezultate kod „pružam plan za obavljanje posla” (4,45 vs. 4,21), „drugima jasno iznosim svoje stajalište” (4,39 vs. 4,31) i „potičem članove skupine da kvalitetno rade” (4,54 vs. 4,50). Za obje skupine, najviše su ocijenjene motivacijske i izvedbene dimenzije, osobito „potičem članove...” (M 4,50; Ž 4,54), dok je „pojašnjavam vlastitu ulogu” relativno najniže rangirana (M 4,12; Ž 3,87). Ukupni obrazac sugerira da su kod muškaraca naglašeniji strukturalni i direktivni aspekti

Table 3 shows the assessment of task orientation among managers in the hospitality industry by gender. Men achieve a slightly higher overall mean score (4.36) than women (4.28). The most pronounced differences in favour of men are observed in the items “I impose performance criteria” (4.48 vs. 4.23) and “I clarify my role within the group” (4.12 vs. 3.87). Conversely, women achieve higher scores on “I provide a plan for task completion” (4.45 vs. 4.21), “I clearly express my views to others” (4.39 vs. 4.31), and “I encourage group members to perform well” (4.54 vs. 4.50). For both groups, motivational and performance-related dimensions receive the highest ratings, particularly “I encourage group members...” (men: 4.50; women: 4.54), whereas “I clarify my role” ranks relatively lowest (men: 4.12; women: 3.87). Overall, the pattern suggests that men exhibit

zadatka (kriteriji, uloge, definiranje očekivanja), dok žene pokazuju relativnu prednost u elementima planiranja, jasne komunikacije i poticanja kvalitete rada.

Nadalje se željelo procijeniti kojem stilu vodstva pretežito naginju muškarci, a kojem žene. U Tablici 4 prikazani su rezultati za tradicionalne stilove vodstva (autokratski, demokratski, *laissez-faire*), dok su u Tablici 5 prikazani rezultati za suvremene stilove vodstva (transakcijski i transformacijski).

stronger structural and directive aspects of task orientation (criteria, roles, and the definition of expectations), whereas women demonstrate a relative advantage in planning, clear communication, and the encouragement of high-quality performance.

Furthermore, the study sought to assess which leadership styles men and women tend to favour. Table 4 presents the results for traditional leadership styles (autocratic, democratic, and *laissez-faire*), while Table 5 presents the results for contemporary leadership styles (transactional and transformational).

TABLICA 4. STAVOVI ISPITANIKA O RAZINI PRIMJENE POJEDINOG TRADICIONALNOG STILA VODSTVA
TABLE 4. RESPONDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE LEVEL OF APPLICATION OF INDIVIDUAL TRADITIONAL LEADERSHIP STYLES

AUTOKRATSKI STIL VODSTVA AUTOCRATIC LEADERSHIP STYLE	Prosj. ocjena (M) Mean score (men)	Prosj. ocjena (Ž) Mean score (women)	Razlika (M – Ž) Difference (M – W)
Ukupna prosječna ocjena Total mean score	3,57	3,36	0,21
Smatram da je zaposlenike potrebno pomno nadzirati, u suprotnom vjerojatno neće obavljati svoj posao. I think employees should be carefully supervises; otherwise, they will probably not do their jobs.	3,25	4,20	- 0,95
Vjerujem da je većina zaposlenika u općoj populaciji lijena. / I believe that most employees in the general population are lazy.	3,0	2,25	0,75
Vjerujem da nagrade ili kazne motiviraju zaposlenike za postizanje organizacijskih ciljeva. I believe that rewards and punishments motivate employees to achieve the goals of the organisation.	4,32	4,02	0,3
Smatram da se većina zaposlenika osjeća nesigurno u vezi sa svojim poslom i trebaju im smjernice za rad. I think that most employees feel unsure about their work and require guidelines.	3,59	3,29	0,3
Smatram da sam jedini koji ima pravo prosuđivati o postignućima pojedinih članova organizacije. I think I am the only one who has the right to assess the achievements of individual members of my organisation.	2,87	2,25	0,62
Učinkovito dajem naredbe i pojašnjavam procedure. I effectively give orders and explain procedures.	4,38	4,12	0,26
DEMOKRATSKI STIL VODSTVA DEMOCRATIC LEADERSHIP STYLE	Prosj. ocjena (M) Mean score (men)	Prosj. ocjena (Ž) Mean score (women)	Razlika (M – Ž) Difference (M – W)
Ukupna prosječna ocjena Total mean score	4,26	4,06	0,2
Uključujem zaposlenike u donošenje odluka. I include employees in decision making.	4,24	4,13	0,11

Dajem smjernice zaposlenicima bez pritiska. / I provide guidelines to employees without pressuring them.	4,20	3,26	0,94
Pružam čestu i podržavajuću komunikaciju. / I provide frequent and supportive communication.	4,45	4,57	- 0,12
Potičem zaposlenike da prihvate odgovornost za dovršetak vlastitog posla. / I encourage employees to take responsibility for completion of their own tasks.	4,43	4,22	0,21
Pomažem zaposlenicima da pronađu strast u poslu. / I help employees to find passion in their work.	4,15	3,88	0,27
Smatram da su zaposlenici kompetentni i ako im se da zadatak, dobro će ga odraditi. / I think employees are competent and if given a task, they will do it well.	4,10	4,27	- 0,17
LAISSEZ-FAIRE STIL VODSTVA LAISSEZ-FAIRE LEADERSHIP STYLE	Pros. ocjena (M) Mean score (men)	Pros. ocjena (Ž) Mean score (women)	Razlika (M – Ž) Difference (M – W)
Ukupna prosječna ocjena Total mean score	3,62	3,40	0,22
U složenim situacijama dopuštam da zaposlenici sami rješavaju probleme. / I let employees solve problems on their own in complex situations.	3,65	2,25	1,4
Ne ometam zaposlenike u obavljanju posla. / I do not disturb employees in their work performance.	4,11	4,27	- 0,16
Omogućujem zaposlenicima da sami ocijene svoj rad. / I enable employees to self-evaluate their performance.	3,59	3,52	0,07
Dajem potpunu slobodu zaposlenicima da sami rješavaju probleme. / I give total freedom to employees to solve problems on their own.	3,57	3,37	0,2
Smatram da zaposlenici u većini situacija preferiraju malo smjernica za rad od vođe. / I think that in the majority of situations, employees prefer few guidelines from their leader.	3,45	3,65	- 0,2
Zaposlenike je najbolje ostaviti na miru da samostalno obavljaju svoj posao. / It is best to leave employees alone to do their jobs independently.	3,37	3,34	0,03

Izvor: obrada autora / Source: Authors

U Tablici 4 uspoređuju se stavovi muškaraca i žena prema primjeni tradicionalnih stilova (autokratski, demokratski, *laissez-faire*) u svom vodstvu. Općenito, demokratski je stil ocjenjen najvišom prosječnom ocjenom u obje skupine, što upućuje na široko prihvaćanje praksi poput uključivanja zaposlenika u odluke, poticanja preuzimanja odgovornosti i

Table 4 compares the attitudes of male and female respondents towards the application of traditional leadership styles (autocratic, democratic, and *laissez-faire*) in their leadership practice. Overall, the democratic style receives the highest mean score in both groups, indicating broad acceptance of practices such as involving employees in decision-making,

davanja smjernica bez pritiska. Unutar tog skupa, muškarci nešto češće naglašavaju participaciju i strukturirano osnaživanje (uključivanje u odluke, vođene smjernice), dok žene ostvaruju više ocjene u kontekstu podržavajuće komunikacije i povjerenja u kompetentnost zaposlenika.

Kod autokratskog stila, koji obilježavaju strukturiranje rada, nadzor, jasni standardi i oslanjanje na sustave nagrada/kazni, muškarci imaju nešto više ukupne ocjene, što je u skladu s jačim naglaskom na postavljanju očekivanja, praćenju pogrešaka i prava procjene učinka. Zanimljiva iznimka jest da žene snažnije ističu potrebu za pomnijim nadzorom zaposlenika što ujedno i predstavlja specifičnu autokratsku komponentu koja signalizira veću sklonost operativnom nadgledanju (nadzoru izvršenja), za razliku od muškaraca kod kojih je izraženije normiranje i korekcija (standardiziranje očekivanja, nagrađivanje/kažnjavanje).

U *laissez-faire* stilu, čija su obilježja delegiranje autonomije, neometanje i samoprocjena rada, muškarci u prosjeku češće ističu prepuštanje rješavanja problema zaposlenicima, pa i u složenijim situacijama (naglasak na autonomiji u izazovima), dok žene relativno više naglašavaju neometanje rada i stav da zaposlenici preferiraju manje smjernica (autonomija u svakodnevicu bez mikromenadžmenta). Drugim riječima, muškarci se lakše odlučuju pustiti tim da sam rješava zahtjevne zadatke, a žene češće afirmiraju nenametljivost i samostalnost u rutinama.

Sveukupno, razlike su male do umjerene, no konzistentne po obilježjima: muškarci se u prosjeku više oslanjaju na direktivno strukturiranje (autokratski elementi) i delegiranje autonomije u složenim zadacima (*laissez-faire*), dok su kod žena izraženiji relacijski i podržavajući aspekti demokratskog stila te operativan nadzor kao specifična autokratska dimenzija.

encouraging responsibility, and providing guidance without exerting pressure. Within this category, men place slightly greater emphasis on participation and structured empowerment (involvement in decision-making and guided direction), whereas women achieve higher scores in the context of supportive communication and trust in employees' competence.

In the case of the autocratic style, characterised by task structuring, supervision, clearly defined standards, and reliance on reward and punishment systems, men achieve slightly higher overall scores. This aligns with a stronger emphasis on setting expectations, monitoring errors, and evaluating performance. An interesting exception is that women place greater emphasis on the need for closer supervision of employees, which represents a specific autocratic component and indicates a stronger inclination towards operational oversight (monitoring task execution). By contrast, men show a more pronounced focus on standardisation and corrective actions (defining expectations and applying rewards or sanctions).

Within the *laissez-faire* style, characterised by the delegation of autonomy, non-interference, and self-evaluation of work, men more frequently emphasise allowing employees to resolve problems independently, including in more complex situations (emphasising autonomy in challenging tasks). Women, on the other hand, place relatively greater emphasis on non-interference in day-to-day work and on the view that employees prefer fewer directives (autonomy in routine tasks without micromanagement). In other words, men more readily allow teams to handle demanding tasks independently, whereas women more often emphasise non-intrusiveness and autonomy in routine activities.

Overall, the differences are small to moderate but consistent across dimensions: men tend to rely more on directive structuring (autocratic elements) and the delegation of autonomy in complex tasks (*laissez-faire*), whereas women demonstrate stronger relational and supportive aspects of the democratic style, as well as operational supervision as a specific autocratic dimension.

TABLICA 5. STAVOVI ISPITANIKA O RAZINI PRIMJENE POJEDINOG SUVREMENOG STILA VODSTVA
TABLE 5. RESPONDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE LEVEL OF APPLICATION OF INDIVIDUAL
CONTEMPORARY LEADERSHIP STYLES

TRANSAKCIJSKI STIL TRANSACTIONAL STYLE	Prosj. ocjena (M) Mean score (men)	Prosj. ocjena (Ž) Mean score (women)	Razlika (M – Ž) Difference (M – W)
Ukupna prosječna ocjena Total mean score	4,59	4,34	0,25
Jasno dajem do znanja koje će koristiti pojedinac imati ako se postignu organizacijski ciljevi. / I clearly explain the benefits of achieving organisational objectives for individuals.	4,75	4,49	0,26
Nadzirem rad zaposlenika i pratim pogreške. / I supervise employees' work and monitor mistakes.	4,67	4,05	0,62
Jasno dajem do znanja koja očekivanja ima od pojedinog zaposlenika. / I clearly let individual employees know what I expect from them.	4,62	4,27	0,35
Poduzet ću nešto prije nego što problemi postanu kronični. / I will do something about problems before they become serious.	4,32	4,54	- 0,22
TRANSFORMACIJSKI STIL TRANSFORMATIONAL STYLE	Prosj. ocjena (M) Mean score (men)	Prosj. ocjena (Ž) Mean score (women)	Razlika (M – Ž) Difference (M – W)
Ukupna prosječna ocjena Total mean score	4,61	4,84	- 0,23
Gledam dalje od osobnog interesa za dobrobit grupe. / I look beyond personal interest for the benefit of the team.	4,75	4,88	- 0,13
Razmatram moralne i etičke posljedice prije nego što donesem odluku. / I consider moral and ethical consequences before I make a decision.	4,65	4,85	- 0,2
Govorim s optimizmom o budućnosti. / I optimistically speak about the future.	4,75	4,85	- 0,1
Pomažem drugima da razviju svoje „snage“. / I help others to develop their „strengths“.	4,52	4,75	- 0,23
Ulažem vrijeme u mentoriranje i podučavanje drugih. / I invest time in mentoring and teaching others.	4,40	4,85	- 0,45

Izvor: obrada autora / Source: Authors

U Tablici 5 uspoređuju se stavovi muškaraca i žena prema primjeni transakcijskog i transformacijskog stila u njihovu vodstvu. U pogledu transakcijskog stila vodstva, muškarci imaju višu ukupnu prosječnu ocjenu (M = 4,59 vs. Ž = 4,34), odnosno dobiveni su izraženiji rezultati na komponentama tipičnima za ovaj stil: na kontingentnoj razmjeni (jasno komuniciranje koristi ako se ostvare ciljevi) i upravljanju iznimkama (sustavno praćenje rada i pogrešaka), pri čemu je upravo nadzor pogrešaka najveća pojedinačna

Table 5 compares the attitudes of male and female respondents towards the application of transactional and transformational leadership in their leadership practice. With regard to transactional leadership, men achieve a higher overall mean score (men: 4.59; women: 4.34), indicating stronger results on components typically associated with this style: contingent reward (clear communication of benefits upon achieving goals) and management by exception (systematic monitoring of performance and errors). Notably, error monitoring represents the largest in-

razlika u korist muškaraca. Muškarci ujedno češće specificiraju očekivanja i standardiziraju izvedbu. Istodobno, žene u transakcijskom okviru pokazuju relativnu prednost u proaktivnom djelovanju prije eskalacije problema, što upućuje na prijašnje preventivno djelovanje, a ne na tek reaktivnu korekciju.

Nasuprot tomu, u transformacijskom stilu vodstva žene ostvaruju višu ukupnu prosječnu ocjenu ($M = 4,61$ vs. $\bar{Z} = 4,84$) i više rezultate na gotovo svim ključnim obilježjima: idealizirani utjecaj (usmjerenost iznad osobnog interesa na dobrobit grupe), etička orijentacija u odlučivanju, inspiracijska motivacija (optimistična komunikacija o budućnosti) te osobito individualizirano uvažavanje (pomaganje zaposlenicima da razviju svoje „snage” i ulaganje vremena u mentoriranje/podučavanje, što ujedno predstavlja najveću pojedinačnu razliku u korist žena). Ovaj obrazac sugerira da žene u prosjeku češće aktiviraju razvojno-mentorske i vrijednosno utemeljene procese, dok muškarci više naglašavaju razmjenu, jasno definirane očekivane ishode i korektivne mehanizme.

Važno je napomenuti da su apsolutne ocjene visoke u obje skupine kod većine tvrdnja (uglavnom iznad 4), što znači da su i transakcijske i transformacijske prakse široko prisutne među menadžerima i menadžericama. Razlike se stoga ponajprije očituju u naglašavanju pojedinih elemenata: muškarci su skloniji strukturiranju i korekciji putem jasnih standarda i nadzora, a žene viziji, etičnosti te razvoju i osnaživanju ljudi.

U svrhu provjere spolnih razlika u primjeni stilova vodstva korišten je Mann–Whitneyjev U-test (dvostrani), prikladan za usporedbu dviju nezavisnih skupina na ordinalnim mjerama (Likert), bez pretpostavke normalnosti i uz moguću nejednakost varijanci. Redoslijed grupiranja bio je Muškarci → Žene, pa negativan Z označava više rangove (više vrijednosti) kod muškaraca, a pozitivan Z više rangove kod žena. Rezultati t-testa prikazani su u Tablici 6.

dividual difference in favour of men. Men also more frequently specify expectations and standardise performance. At the same time, within the transactional framework, women demonstrate a relative advantage in proactive behaviour prior to problem escalation, suggesting a greater emphasis on preventive action rather than purely reactive correction.

By contrast, in transformational leadership, women achieve a higher overall mean score (men: 4.61; women: 4.84) and higher results across almost all key dimensions: idealised influence (orientation towards group benefit beyond personal interest), ethical orientation in decision-making, inspirational motivation (optimistic communication about the future), and particularly individualised consideration (supporting employees in developing their strengths and investing time in mentoring and coaching), which also represents the largest individual difference in favour of women. This pattern suggests that women, on average, more frequently engage in developmental, mentoring, and value-based processes, whereas men place greater emphasis on exchange, clearly defined expected outcomes, and corrective mechanisms.

It is noteworthy that absolute scores are high in both groups across most items (generally above 4), indicating that both transactional and transformational practices are widely present among male and female managers. The differences therefore primarily reflect the emphasis placed on specific elements: men tend to favour structuring and correction through clearly defined standards and monitoring, whereas women place greater emphasis on vision, ethics, and the development and empowerment of employees.

To examine gender differences in the application of leadership styles, the Mann–Whitney U test (two-tailed) was employed. This test is appropriate for comparing two independent groups on ordinal measures (Likert scale), without assuming normal distribution and allowing for unequal variances. The grouping order was men → women; therefore, a negative Z value indicates higher ranks (higher values) among men, while a positive Z value indicates higher ranks among women. The results of the test are presented in Table 6.

TABLICA 6. REZULTATI MANN-WHITNEY U-TESTA ZA RAZLIKE IZMEĐU SPOLOVA U PRIMJENI STILOVA VODSTVA
TABLE 6. RESULTS OF THE MANN-WHITNEY U TEST FOR GENDER DIFFERENCES IN THE APPLICATION OF LEADERSHIP STYLES

Stil vodstva / Leadership style	Mann-Whitney U	Z	Asimptotska značajnost (dvostrani test) / Asymptotic significance (two-tailed)
Usmjerenost na ljude / People orientation	404,5	1,77	0,035*
Usmjerenost na zadatke / Task orientation	378,0	-1,14	0,027*
Autokratski / Autocratic	356,0	-2,45	0,031*
Demokratski / Democratic	387,0	-1,02	0,309
Laissez-faire	432,0	-0,39	0,700
Transakcijski / Transactional	421,0	-0,54	0,587
Transformacijski / Transformational	298,5	-2,28	0,022*

*pouzdanost na razini značajnosti od 5 %, $p < 0,05$ / Statistical significance at the 5% level ($p < .05$)

Izvor: obrada autora / Source: Authors

Rezultati pokazuju da između muškaraca i žena postoji statistički značajna razlika u orijentaciji u vodstvu. Tako su žene u prosjeku više usmjerene na ljude, dok su muškarci više usmjereni na zadatke. Navedenim se potvrđuje prva hipoteza istraživanja (H1: Postoji statistički značajna razlika između menadžerica i menadžera u orijentaciji na ljude i orijentaciji na zadatak) i to na razini značajnosti od 5 %.

Nadalje, kada je riječ o stilovima vodstva, u autokratskom stilu utvrđena je statistički značajna razlika ($U = 356,0$; $Z = -2,45$; $p = 0,031$), što znači da muškarci, u prosjeku, češće ili izraženije primjenjuju autokratske prakse (npr. jače strukturiranje, nadzor, jasni standardi, sustavi nagrada/kazni). U transformacijskom stilu također je pronađena značajna razlika ($U = 298,5$; $Z = 2,28$; $p = 0,022$), ali u smjeru viših vrijednosti kod žena, što upućuje na češće isticanje vizije i optimizma, etičkog odlučivanja, individualiziranog uvažavanja te mentoriranja i razvoja zaposlenika. Za demokratski, *laissez-faire* i transakcijski stil razlike nisu dosegle statističku značajnost (u svim slučajevima p -vrijednost veća je od 0,05), što upućuje na usporedive razine ovih praksi među spolovima. Temeljem navedenog, druga hipoteza istraživanja

The results indicate a statistically significant difference between men and women in leadership orientation. On average, women demonstrate a stronger orientation towards people, whereas men show a stronger orientation towards tasks. These findings support the first research hypothesis (H1: There is a statistically significant difference between female and male managers in people orientation and task orientation) at the 5% significance level ($p < .05$).

Furthermore, with regard to leadership styles, a statistically significant difference is observed in autocratic leadership ($U = 356.0$, $Z = -2.45$, $p = .031$), indicating that men, on average, more frequently or more strongly apply autocratic practices (e.g., stronger structuring, supervision, clearly defined standards, and reward/punishment systems). A significant difference is also found in transformational leadership ($U = 298.5$, $Z = 2.28$, $p = .022$), but in favour of women, suggesting a greater emphasis on vision and optimism, ethical decision-making, individualised consideration, and the mentoring and development of employees. No statistically significant differences are found for democratic leadership, *laissez-faire* leadership, or transactional leadership (in all cases, $p > .05$), indicating comparable levels of these practices across genders. Based on these findings, the second research hypothesis (H2: There is a statistically significant

(H2: Postoji statistički značajna razlika između menadžerica i menadžera u stilovima vodstva; autokratski, demokratski, *laissez-faire*, transformacijski, transakcijski) djelomično se potvrđuje jer su razlike prisutne kod autokratskog i transformacijskog stila, i to na razini značajnosti od 5 %, dok za demokratski, *laissez-faire* i transakcijski stil vodstva statistički značajne razlike nisu potvrđene.

DISKUSIJA I ZAKLJUČAK

Nalazi istraživanja pokazuju određene razlike između menadžerica i menadžera u hotelijerstvu; žene izraženije iskazuju transformacijske i relacijsko-razvojne prakse, a muškarci autokratske, odnosno direktivno-strukturne komponente vodstva. U demokratskom, *laissez-faire* i transakcijskom okviru razlike se nisu potvrdile. Ovakav je obrazac u skladu s međunarodnim metaanalizama koje bilježe nešto veću participativnost i transformacijske elemente kod žena te veću sklonost direktivnosti kod muškaraca (Eagly et al., 2003; Kachniewska, 2023; Ibrahim & Lokman Hakim, 2025; Attaallah, 2024). U skladu s nalazima iz uslužnih djelatnosti, ondje gdje je rad s ljudima u središtu nagrađuju se vizija, individualizirano uvažavanje i mentoriranje; nasuprot tomu, u operativno zahtjevnim okruženjima ključnu vrijednost imaju jasnoća očekivanja, standardizirani postupci i dosljedan nadzor (Kattara, 2005; Carvalho et al., 2019; Koç et al., 2025; Kokkranikal & Baum, 2024).

U hotelima se istodobno traže izvrsni odnosi s gostima i stroga operativna disciplina, pa je ovakav „dvostruki” obrazac očekivan i praktično smislen. Transformacijski elementi mogu podići angažiranost i smanjiti fluktuaciju, osobito u djelatnostima s karakteristikama sezonalnosti, kao i prilikom određenih promjena u poslovanju (uvođenje novih sustava, reorganizacije). Autokratske, tj. direktivno-strukturne komponente korisne su u krizama, kao i kod upravljanja rizicima i održavanja standarda brenda. Stoga rezultati podupiru tezu o komplementarnosti: različiti stilovi nisu zamjenjivi, nego se nadopunjuju.

difference between female and male managers in leadership styles—autocratic, democratic, *laissez-faire*, transformational, and transactional) is partially supported. Specifically, significant differences are confirmed for autocratic and transformational leadership at the 5% significance level ($p < .05$), whereas no statistically significant differences are observed for democratic, *laissez-faire*, and transactional leadership.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The findings indicate certain differences between female and male managers in the hospitality industry: women more strongly exhibit transformational and relational-developmental practices, whereas men emphasise autocratic, that is, directive-structural components of leadership. No significant differences are observed within the democratic, *laissez-faire*, and transactional frameworks. This pattern aligns with international meta-analyses reporting slightly higher levels of participative and transformational elements among women and a greater tendency towards directive behaviour among men (Eagly et al., 2003; Kachniewska, 2023; Ibrahim & Lokman Hakim, 2025; Attaallah, 2024). Consistent with findings from service industries, contexts centred on interpersonal interaction tend to reward vision, individualised consideration, and mentoring, whereas operationally demanding environments place greater value on clarity of expectations, standardised procedures, and consistent supervision (Kattara, 2005; Carvalho et al., 2019; Koç et al., 2025; Kokkranikal & Baum, 2024).

Hotels simultaneously require excellent guest relations and strict operational discipline; therefore, this “dual” pattern is both expected and practically meaningful. Transformational elements can enhance employee engagement and reduce turnover, particularly in sectors characterised by seasonality, as well as during organisational changes (e.g., the introduction of new systems or restructuring). Autocratic, that is, directive-structural components prove useful in crises, as well as in risk management and the maintenance of brand standards. Accordingly, the results support the thesis of complementarity: different leadership styles are not interchangeable but rather mutually reinforcing.

Neutvrđene razlike u demokratskom i transakcijskom stilu mogu upućivati na institucionalizirane prakse (dnevni brifinzi, SOP-ovi, KPI-evi) koje ujednačavaju ponašanje bez obzira na spol. *Laissez-faire*, kao manjak vođenja, u hotelskoj se kulturi uglavnom ne tolerira, što objašnjava izostanak sustavnih razlika.

Iz kuta organizacijskih politika, veća zastupljenost žena u menadžmentu donosi mjerljive koristi jer se povećava raznolikost stilova na rukovodećim pozicijama, a time posljedično i sposobnost timova da istodobno njeguju međuljudske odnose i održavaju operativnu disciplinu. Prijašnja istraživanja u ugostiteljstvu bilježe povezanost transformacijskog vodstva s većim zadovoljstvom zaposlenih i boljim ocjenama gostiju, što sugerira da uključivanje žena u menadžment nije samo pitanje pravednosti nego i izvor konkurentске prednosti.

Ovo istraživanje ima i nekoliko ograničenja. Iako su neke usporedbe pokazale statistički značajne razlike, procijenjene veličine učinka upućuju na male do umjerene efekte. Uz uzorak ove veličine takve su razlike osjetljive na uzorkovanje i specifični kontekst hotela/odjela, stoga ih je primjereno tumačiti kao indikativne obrasce, a ne kao čvrste, univerzalne razlike među spolovima. Dodatno, visoke srednje vrijednosti na većini čestica sugeriraju tzv. *ceiling effect* i smanjenu varijabilnost, a zbog čega male razlike u prosjecima mogu postati statistički značajne, ali im je praktična relevantnost ograničena. Zbog toga je potrebno naglasiti razlikovanje statističke i praktične značajnosti te istaknuti veliko preklapanje distribucija između skupina. Na rezultate utječe i metodološki okvir, samoprocjena nosi rizik društveno poželjnih odgovora i tzv. *common-method* pristranosti, što može napuhati povezanosti unutar konstrukata i istodobno zamagliti fine razlike između skupina. Uzorak je prigodan i prema slojevima nesavršen (razina rukovodstva, tip objekta, regija), pa je generalizacija na čitav hotelski sektor ograničena. Konačno, provedeno je više usporedbi bez konzervativne kontrole za višestruka testiranja, rezultati s p-vrijednostima blizu 0,05

The absence of differences in democratic and transactional leadership may indicate the presence of institutionalised practices (e.g., daily briefings, standard operating procedures, key performance indicators) that standardise behaviour regardless of gender. *Laissez-faire* leadership, as a lack of leadership, is generally not tolerated within hotel organisational culture, which may explain the absence of systematic differences.

From the perspective of organisational policy, greater representation of women in management yields measurable benefits by increasing the diversity of leadership styles at managerial levels and, consequently, enhancing teams' ability to simultaneously maintain interpersonal relationships and operational discipline. Previous research in hospitality has identified associations between transformational leadership and higher employee satisfaction as well as improved guest ratings, suggesting that the inclusion of women in management is not only a matter of equity but also a source of competitive advantage.

This study also has several limitations. Although some comparisons reveal statistically significant differences, the estimated effect sizes indicate small to moderate effects. With a sample of this size, such differences remain sensitive to sampling variation and the specific context of hotels or departments; therefore, they should be interpreted as indicative patterns rather than robust, universal gender differences. Furthermore, high mean scores across most items suggest a ceiling effect and reduced variability, whereby small differences in means may achieve statistical significance while remaining of limited practical relevance. It is therefore important to distinguish between statistical and practical significance and to acknowledge the substantial overlap in distributions between groups. The methodological framework also influences the results: self-assessment introduces the risk of socially desirable responses and common-method bias, which may inflate associations within constructs while obscuring subtle differences between groups. The sample is non-probabilistic and imperfectly stratified (e.g., managerial level, type of establishment, region), limiting generalisation to the broader hotel sector. Finally, multiple comparisons were conducted without conservative adjustments for multiple testing; therefore, results

stoga su krhki i trebaju potvrdu u većim uzorcima ili uz korekcije. Uzimajući sve navedeno, nalazi se trebaju promatrati kao korisna polazna točka koja sugerira smjer i moguće mehanizme, ali ne dokazuje velike, stabilne razlike.

Znanstveni doprinos ovog rada ogleda se u proširenju empirijske baze o razlikama u vodstvu u kontekstu hrvatskog hotelijerstva koji je u literaturi slabije zastupljen. Doprinos rada ogleda se i u konceptualnom povezivanju orijentacije (na ljude/zadatak) i stilova vodstva (autokratski, demokratski, *laissez-faire*, transakcijski, transformacijski) u jedinstven, sektorski relevantan okvir. Na aplikativnoj razini, doprinos se ogleda u preporukama za razvoj vodstva koji treba biti usmjeren na jačanje transformacijskih kompetencija menadžera (vizija, *coaching*, etičko odlučivanje), kao i na sastavljanje timova prema komplementarnosti stilova, odnosno prema svjesnom kombiniranju lidera koji snažno razvijaju ljude s onima koji osiguravaju operativnu disciplinu.

Zaključno, rezultati upućuju na obrazac konzistentan s literaturom: transformacijski elementi češći su kod menadžerica, a autokratsko/direktivno strukturiranje kod menadžera, dok su razlike u demokratskom, *laissez-faire* i transakcijskom stilu uglavnom male i statistički neznčajne. Ipak, uzorak je prigodan i razmjerno malen, mjerenje je izvršeno samoprocjenom, a više je usporedbi testirano bez korekcije; stoga nalaze treba čitati kao indikativne, s malim do umjerenim veličinama učinaka i ograničenom generalizacijom. Praktično, to podupire orijentaciju na komplementarne timove i razvoj obaju skupova kompetencija (vizija/mentoriranje i standardizacija/nadzor), umjesto esencijaliziranja spolnih razlika. Buduća istraživanja trebaju uključiti veće i reprezentativnije uzorke, višestruke izvore procjene (samoprocjena + ocjene podređenih/kolega), kontrolu za višestruko testiranje te povezivanje stilova s objektivnim ishodima (npr. zadovoljstvo gostiju, fluktuacija, performanse) da bi se preciznije odredila praktična važnost opaženih razlika.

with p -values close to .05 should be interpreted with caution and require confirmation in larger samples or with appropriate corrections. Taken together, the findings should be viewed as a useful starting point that suggests directions and potential mechanisms, rather than as evidence of large, stable differences.

The scientific contribution of this study lies in extending the empirical evidence on leadership differences within the context of Croatian hospitality, which remains underrepresented in the literature. The study also contributes conceptually by integrating leadership orientation (people/task) and leadership styles (autocratic, democratic, *laissez-faire*, transactional, transformational) into a unified framework relevant to the sector. At the applied level, the contribution lies in recommendations for leadership development, focusing on strengthening managers' transformational competencies (vision, coaching, ethical decision-making), as well as on team composition based on complementarity of styles—that is, the deliberate combination of leaders who strongly develop people with those who ensure operational discipline.

In conclusion, the results indicate a pattern consistent with the literature: transformational elements are more prevalent among female managers, whereas autocratic/directive structuring is more characteristic of male managers, while differences in democratic, *laissez-faire*, and transactional leadership are generally small and not statistically significant. However, the sample is non-probabilistic and relatively small, the measurement relies on self-assessment, and multiple comparisons were tested without correction; therefore, the findings should be interpreted as indicative, with small to moderate effect sizes and limited generalisability. From a practical perspective, this supports an emphasis on complementary teams and the development of both sets of competencies (vision/mentoring and standardisation/supervision), rather than essentialising gender differences. Future research should include larger and more representative samples, multiple sources of assessment (self-reports combined with subordinate and peer evaluations), adjustments for multiple testing, and the linking of leadership styles to objective outcomes (e.g., guest satisfaction, turnover, performance) in order to determine the practical significance of the observed differences more precisely.

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