



Union Leadership Style and Hotel Management in Selected First-Class Hotels Metro Manila: Basis for Strategic Enhancement Plan

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ABSTRACT

Effective labor-management relations are essential for maintaining organizational stability, employee engagement, and service quality in the hospitality industry. This study examined the relationship between union leadership style and hotel management practices in selected first-class hotels in Metro Manila as the basis for a Strategic Enhancement Plan. Specifically, it assessed union leadership style in terms of communication, decision-making, conflict resolution, inclusiveness and participation, transparency, professional development, employee welfare advocacy, and negotiation, as well as hotel management practices involving policy implementation, labor-management collaboration, grievance handling, collective bargaining support, and employee welfare programs. A quantitative descriptive research design was employed involving 135 respondents, consisting of labor union officers, hotel employees, and human resource managers selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected using a validated researcher-made questionnaire and analyzed through frequency and percentage distribution, weighted mean, analysis of variance (ANOVA), and Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. The findings revealed that both union leadership style and hotel management practices were generally perceived as evident across the participating hotels. Communication, transparency, employee participation, policy implementation, and grievance handling received favorable assessments, reflecting positive labor-management interactions. Statistical analysis further showed significant relationships between selected dimensions of union leadership style and hotel management practices, indicating that effective union leadership contributes to improved workplace cooperation and organizational effectiveness. However, communication gaps, inconsistent policy implementation, and challenges in grievance handling and negotiation remain areas requiring continuous improvement. Based on these findings, a Strategic Enhancement Plan was developed and evaluated as highly acceptable. The study concludes that strengthening collaborative labor-management practices through effective union leadership and responsive management initiatives can enhance workplace relations, employee engagement, and long-term organizational effectiveness within the hospitality industry.

Keywords: collective bargaining, hotel management, hospitality industry, labor-management relations, union leadership, strategic enhancement plan

INTRODUCTION

The hospitality industry relies heavily on the relationship between employees and management to sustain service quality and operational efficiency. In unionized hotels, this relationship is further shaped by the presence of labor unions, which serve as representatives of employee welfare and rights. Union leaders play a crucial role in communication, participation, conflict resolution, and negotiation, while hotel management ensures policy implementation, operational control, and employee engagement.

In recent years, union leadership has evolved beyond traditional bargaining functions. Modern union leaders are expected to promote dialogue, strengthen cooperation with management, and support participative decision-making. These roles are particularly important in hospitality settings, where employee performance directly affects customer satisfaction.



Hotel management practices also significantly influence workplace relations. Fair policies, effective grievance systems, and employee-centered programs contribute to organizational stability. However, weak communication and inconsistent implementation of policies may create tension between labor and management.

Although international studies have explored leadership and labor relations, limited research has focused on how union leadership style relates to hotel management practices in first-class hotels in Metro Manila. This gap is critical in the Philippine context, where unionized hospitality establishments operate under collective bargaining agreements and require strong labor-management collaboration.

Thus, this study examined the relationship between union leadership style and hotel management practices in selected first-class hotels in Metro Manila. It also assessed key leadership and management dimensions and developed a Strategic Enhancement Plan to strengthen labor-management cooperation.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Leadership is widely recognized as a key factor influencing organizational behavior and employee performance. Contemporary leadership studies emphasize communication, participation, and transparency as essential components of effective leadership (Northouse, 2022; Yukl & Gardner, 2020).

In labor relations, union leadership plays an important role in balancing employee welfare and organizational efficiency. Budd (2021) and Budd and Bhawe (2023) highlight that modern labor relations require cooperation between unions and management rather than adversarial interaction. In the Philippine context, Amante (2019) emphasizes the importance of union representation in strengthening employee voice and industrial democracy.

Empirical research further confirms that participative and transparent leadership enhances employee engagement and trust. Studies by Jung and Kim (2024) and Wang et al. (2024) show that effective leadership improves job satisfaction, collaboration, and conflict management outcomes. In the hospitality industry, management practices such as grievance handling, policy implementation, and employee welfare programs are essential for maintaining service quality (Bateman & Snell, 2023; Walker, 2021). HR-focused studies also show that strong employee support systems improve organizational performance and satisfaction (Kim & Park, 2021; Shah & Shrestha, 2022). Despite these findings, there remains limited research examining union leadership style in relation to hotel management practices in first-class hotels in Metro Manila. This study addresses this gap by integrating both perspectives within a single empirical framework.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

A quantitative descriptive design was used to determine the relationship between union leadership style and hotel management practices.

Research Respondents

The study involved 135 respondents: 35 union officers, 94 hotel employees, and 6 HR managers from selected first-class hotels in Metro Manila. Purposive sampling was used.

Research Instrument

A validated researcher-made questionnaire was used. It covered union leadership style, hotel management practices, workplace issues, and acceptability of the enhancement plan. A 4-point Likert scale was applied.

Data Gathering Procedure

Permission was obtained from participating hotels. Questionnaires were personally distributed and retrieved. Confidentiality and voluntary participation were ensured.



Statistical Treatment of Data

Data were analyzed using frequency, percentage, weighted mean, ANOVA, and Pearson correlation at a 0.05 significance level.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical standards were observed, including informed consent, confidentiality, and voluntary participation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Respondents' Profile

Table 1. Profile of the Respondents

Respondent Group	Frequency	Percentage
Labor Union Officers	35	25.93
Hotel Employees	94	69.63
Human Resource Managers	6	4.44
Total	135	100.00

To distinguish the number of the responders, Table 1 presented the distribution of the respondents who participated in the study. Of the 135 respondents, 94 (69.63%) were hotel employees, 35 (25.93%) were labor union officers, and 6 (4.44%) were human resource managers. The larger proportion of hotel employees reflects the workforce composition of the participating hotels and provides substantial insights into employees' perceptions of union leadership and hotel management practices. Meanwhile, the inclusion of labor union officers and human resource managers ensured that the perspectives of both labor and management were represented, providing a more comprehensive assessment of labor-management relations in the selected first-class hotels in Metro Manila.

Union Leadership Style

Table 2. Summary of the Assessment of Union Leadership Style

Union Leadership Style	Composite WM	Interpretation	Rank
Negotiation	3.99	Evident	1
Transparency	3.92	Evident	2
Communication	3.86	Evident	3
Conflict Resolution	3.85	Evident	4
Advocacy for Employee Welfare	3.84	Evident	5
Inclusiveness and Participation	3.82	Evident	6
Support for Professional Development	3.78	Evident	7
Decision-Making Approach	3.73	Evident	8
Grand Mean	3.85	Evident	



To explore the level of union leadership style in the selected first-class hotels, Table 2 illustrated the respondents' assessment of union leadership style. The overall composite weighted mean of 3.85, interpreted as Evident, indicates that union leadership practices were consistently demonstrated in the selected first-class hotels in Metro Manila. Among the eight dimensions, negotiation obtained the highest rating (WM = 3.99), followed by transparency (WM = 3.92) and communication (WM = 3.86). These findings suggest that respondents perceived union leaders as effective in representing employee interests, maintaining open communication, and promoting transparency in labor-management relations. In contrast, decision-making approach received the lowest rating (WM = 3.73), although it remained within the Evident category. This indicates that greater employee involvement in decision-making may further strengthen union leadership and workplace collaboration. Overall, the findings emphasize that effective union leadership supports positive labor-management relations and contributes to organizational stability. These results are consistent with the study of Jung and Kim, who found that transparent and service-oriented union leadership enhances employee trust, cooperation, and job satisfaction.

Hotel Management Practices

Table 3. Summary of the Assessment of Hotel Management Practices

Hotel Management Practice	Composite WM	Interpretation	Rank
Policy Implementation and Compliance	3.86	Evident	1
Negotiation and Collective Bargaining Support	3.73	Evident	2
Conflict Resolution Mechanisms	3.70	Evident	3
Labor-Management Collaboration	3.62	Evident	4
Workplace Grievance Handling	3.61	Evident	5
Employee Welfare and Engagement Programs	3.52	Evident	6
Grand Mean	3.67	Evident	

Table 3 presents the respondents' assessment of hotel management practices in the selected first-class hotels in Metro Manila. The overall composite weighted mean of 3.67, interpreted as Evident, indicates that hotel management practices were generally perceived as effective. Among the assessed dimensions, Policy Implementation and Compliance received the highest rating (WM = 3.86), followed by Negotiation and Collective Bargaining Support (WM = 3.73) and Conflict Resolution Mechanisms (WM = 3.70), suggesting that management maintains established policies, supports collective bargaining processes, and utilizes appropriate mechanisms to address workplace concerns. Conversely, Employee Welfare and Engagement Programs obtained the lowest rating (WM = 3.52), although it remained within the Evident category, indicating opportunities to further strengthen employee development and engagement initiatives. Overall, the findings suggest that effective management practices contribute to positive labor-management relations and organizational stability, consistent with the observations of Bateman & Snell (2023) and Walker (2021), who emphasized that sound management practices promote employee engagement, organizational effectiveness, and sustainable workplace relationships.

Difference in the Respondents' Assessment

Table 4. Comparative Assessment of Union Leadership Style by Respondent Group

Dimension	F-value	Decision
Communication	24.12	Significant



Decision-Making Approach	24.47	Significant
Conflict Resolution	31.07	Significant
Inclusiveness and Participation	4.07	Significant
Transparency	8.99	Significant
Support for Professional Development	11.28	Significant
Advocacy for Employee Welfare	11.28	Significant
Negotiation	2.45	Not Significant

Level of significance = 0.05.

As determined in Table 4, the comparative assessment of union leadership style among labor union officers, hotel employees, and human resource managers. Significant differences were observed in the respondents' assessments of communication ($F = 24.12$), decision-making approach ($F = 24.47$), conflict resolution ($F = 31.07$), inclusiveness and participation ($F = 4.07$), transparency ($F = 8.99$), support for professional development ($F = 11.28$), and advocacy for employee welfare ($F = 11.28$), leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis for these dimensions. These findings indicate that respondents perceived several aspects of union leadership differently based on their organizational roles and responsibilities. In contrast, negotiation did not yield a significant difference ($F = 2.45$), indicating that respondents shared relatively similar perceptions regarding the union's effectiveness in negotiation. The results suggest that although perceptions varied across several leadership dimensions, there was broad agreement on the union's role in collective bargaining and negotiation. This finding supports the view of Peter G. Northouse (2022), who emphasized that leadership effectiveness may be perceived differently by stakeholders depending on their roles and interactions within the organization, while shared organizational experiences can contribute to common perceptions in specific leadership functions.

Relationship Between Union Leadership Style and Hotel Management Practices

Table 5. Correlation Between Union Leadership Style and Hotel Management Practices

Hotel Management Dimension	r	Interpretation	Decision
Policy Implementation and Compliance	.99	Very Strong	Significant
Conflict Resolution Mechanisms	.99	Very Strong	Significant
Labor-Management Collaboration	.99	Very Strong	Significant
Workplace Grievance Handling	.99	Very Strong	Significant
Negotiation and Collective Bargaining Support	.99	Very Strong	Significant
Employee Welfare and Engagement Programs	.99	Very Strong	Significant

Significance level = .05.

Table 5 shows that union leadership style was significantly associated with all dimensions of hotel management practices. Very strong positive correlations were observed for policy implementation and compliance ($r = .99$), conflict resolution mechanisms ($r = .99$), labor-management collaboration ($r = .99$), workplace grievance handling ($r = .99$), negotiation and collective bargaining support ($r = .99$), and employee welfare and engagement programs ($r = .99$). These findings indicate that stronger union leadership practices are associated with more effective hotel management practices. The results suggest that communication, participation,



transparency, and employee advocacy contribute to stronger labor-management cooperation and organizational effectiveness.

Problems Encountered

Union Leadership Style

The respondents moderately encountered challenges related to union leadership style (overall WM = 2.76). The most frequently reported concerns were delays in bargaining processes due to the late provision of management documents (WM = 2.96), communication that lacked sufficient clarity (WM = 2.90), heavy workloads limiting employee participation (WM = 2.90), and limited updates on negotiation progress (WM = 2.88). The least reported concern was unequal dissemination of invitations to union activities across departments (WM = 2.57).

These findings indicate that communication, participation, and negotiation processes remain areas requiring improvement despite the generally positive assessment of union leadership. Similar observations have been reported in labor-management studies, where effective communication and timely information sharing are essential to strengthening employee trust and organizational cooperation.

Hotel Management

Respondents also moderately encountered challenges related to hotel management (overall WM = 2.97). The highest-rated concerns included stalled discussions arising from conflicting union and management priorities (WM = 3.23), delays in resolving workplace disputes (WM = 3.08), uncertainty regarding grievance reporting (WM = 3.01), and delayed implementation of negotiated agreements because of administrative constraints (WM = 2.99). These findings suggest that improving communication channels, conflict resolution mechanisms, and implementation of negotiated agreements could further strengthen labor-management relations within the participating hotels.

Proposed Strategic Enhancement Plan

Based on the findings of the study, a Strategic Enhancement Plan was developed to strengthen union leadership and hotel management practices in selected first-class hotels. The plan focuses on improving communication, participatory decision-making, conflict resolution, transparency, employee welfare, professional development, and labor-management collaboration. It also incorporates monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to ensure the effective implementation of planned interventions.

The proposed strategies aim to address the identified concerns related to communication gaps, delays in grievance handling and negotiations, limited employee participation, and inconsistencies in policy implementation. Through these interventions, the plan seeks to promote organizational effectiveness, strengthen labor-management relations, and enhance employee engagement.

Strategic Area	Key Intervention	Expected Outcome
Communication	Regular information briefings and standardized communication protocols	Improved clarity and information dissemination
Decision-Making	Structured consultation meetings	Greater employee participation
Conflict Resolution	Standardized grievance procedures	Faster dispute resolution
Transparency	Periodic financial and operational reports	Increased trust and accountability
Professional Development	Leadership and negotiation training	Enhanced leadership competencies



Employee Welfare	Wellness and recognition programs	Higher employee engagement
Labor-Management Collaboration	Quarterly dialogue meetings	Stronger cooperation

Acceptability of the Strategic Enhancement Plan

Table 6. Acceptability of the Proposed Strategic Enhancement Plan

Indicator	Composite WM	Interpretation	Rank
Supports employees' long-term career aspirations	4.13	Acceptable	1
Strengthens employees' loyalty and sense of belonging	4.09	Acceptable	2
Viewed as fair and equitable	4.07	Acceptable	3
Responsive to employees' professional and personal needs	4.04	Acceptable	4
Clear objectives, benefits, and implementation procedures	3.97	Acceptable	5.5
Employees' readiness to participate	3.97	Acceptable	5.5
Overall Weighted Mean	4.05	Acceptable	

Table 6 shows that the proposed Strategic Enhancement Plan was rated acceptable by the respondents, with an overall weighted mean of 4.05. The highest-rated indicator was its support for employees' long-term career aspirations (WM = 4.13), followed by its ability to strengthen employees' loyalty and sense of belonging to the organization (WM = 4.09). Respondents also considered the proposed plan fair and equitable (WM = 4.07) and responsive to employees' professional and personal needs (WM = 4.04). Although the indicators on the clarity of implementation procedures and employees' readiness to participate received the lowest ratings (WM = 3.97), both were still interpreted as acceptable. These findings suggest that the proposed Strategic Enhancement Plan is perceived as a practical and feasible intervention for enhancing employee retention and organizational commitment. This supports the view that well-designed retention initiatives can strengthen employee engagement, career development, and long-term organizational sustainability.

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

This study was limited to selected first-class hotels in Metro Manila and utilized a quantitative descriptive design. The findings therefore reflect the perceptions of the respondents within the participating hotels and may not be generalized to all hotel establishments. Future studies may employ mixed methods or include hotels from other regions to provide a broader understanding of labor-management practices.

CONCLUSION

The study confirms that union leadership and hotel management are closely interconnected in shaping workplace relations. Effective communication, participation, transparency, and collaboration contribute to stronger organizational stability and employee engagement.

Union leadership functions not only as employee representation but also as a partner in organizational development. Likewise, management practices that support fairness and engagement strengthen workplace trust and cooperation.

The Strategic Enhancement Plan provides a practical framework for improving labor-management relations and enhancing organizational effectiveness in the hospitality sector.



RECOMMENDATION

Hotel organizations should strengthen labor-management collaboration through consistent communication, participative decision-making, and transparent policies.

Union leaders and HR practitioners are encouraged to adopt the Strategic Enhancement Plan to improve grievance handling, negotiation processes, and employee engagement.

Future research may expand the scope to other regions or hospitality sectors and consider qualitative approaches to deepen understanding of labor-management dynamics.

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