

The Effect of Tourists' Body Language Use on Employee Motivation in Accommodation Establishments

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ABSTRACT

Accommodation businesses, which are an important branch of the service sector, have a significant share in both tourism and the national economy. For the continuity of this economic contribution, it is extremely important to motivate employees to work. If employee motivation and commitment to work are increased, the success of businesses increases. In addition to businesses, customers who come to stay also play a big role in increasing employee motivation. Verbal and non-verbal communication of customers affects the employee. Gestures and facial expressions, especially those expressed by customers that express anger, confusion, unhappiness, dissatisfaction, and hand-eyebrow-eye movements reduce the employee's work motivation. The decrease in employee motivation is a risk for the business, therefore employee motivation is very important. In this context, the study examined the effect of tourists' body language use on the work motivation of employees in accommodation establishments. The study, which consists of four basic sections, examines communication, body language, the importance of employee job satisfaction and the factors affecting it in detail. As a result of the study, it was seen that the body language use of tourists had an impact on employee work motivation. According to the findings of the study, stress, aggression and bad body language reduce employee motivation. In addition, it has been concluded that positive body language such as eye contact, appreciation, and soft facial expression increases the employee's dignity and business success.

Keywords: Tourism, Accommodation Businesses, Communication, Body Language, Motivation.

1. INTRODUCTION

Accommodation businesses are one of the environments where people with different socio-economic characteristics interact. Accommodation businesses are valued as “businesses that provide sectoral, public and social benefits” in their locations. At the same time, accommodation businesses are a critical aspect of the tourism sector. They play a vital role in shaping the overall experience of travelers and guests. One of the main reasons why accommodation is so important in the accommodation sector is its direct impact on customer

satisfaction (İnce & Korkmaz, 2020). Comfortable, clean and well-equipped accommodation provides a positive experience. The quality of accommodation from the moment guests check in to the moment they check out significantly affects their overall satisfaction, which leads to positive evaluations, repeat business and recommendations to friends and family (Demir & Altındağ, 2017). This also contributes to the growth of accommodation businesses and the economy (Duran, 2023).

The satisfaction of the employees of the accommodation businesses is as important as the tourists coming to the accommodation businesses. In a comfortable, respectful and satisfied work environment, the motivation of the employee is higher and it provides profit to the sector in which they are located. For this reason, in return for the kindness shown to the tourists coming to the accommodation businesses, it is necessary to show kindness to the employees and to establish healthy communication (İnce & Korkmaz, 2020). Communication can be carried out verbally and non-verbally. Communication carried out with body language is as effective as verbal communication. These non-verbal signals constitute a large part of daily communication. Body language is the use of physical behaviors, expressions and attitudes to establish non-verbal communication (Mengi, 2013). Body language provides information about how people perceive you and how you perceive them. The use of body language has the power to create positive and negative emotions in people and affect motivation. Therefore, just as in verbal communication, attention should be paid to the use of body language.

Body language, which greatly affects people, is used in many aspects of daily life. In this study, the effect of tourists' body language use on the work motivation of employees in accommodation establishments was examined. The body language used by tourists towards employees can provide a positive atmosphere and support positive relationships. While facial expressions, gestures and eye gaze generally constitute the three main types of body language, other aspects such as posture and personal distance are also important elements used to convey information and influence the other party. Otherwise, not establishing eye contact, a bad or negative facial expression, negative hand-arm movements can reduce the employee's motivation. It is inevitable that this decrease in work motivation will be reflected in work performance. In this context, the body language used by tourists plays an extremely important role in the employee's work motivation. The aim of the study is to present the effect of tourists' body language on employee motivation, which is an important element of accommodation establishments that provide great profit to the economy. Many factors such as the reputation of the employees in the sector, the employer's approach, and the work environment affect the work motivation of employees. In addition, the body language used by tourists is also extremely important for work motivation. There is a significant and positive relationship between the work motivation and performance of the employees. As the work motivation of the employee increases, the performance reflected to the work will be good in that direction. The study is very important in terms of revealing the importance of service quality, management strategies and body language for employees in the tourism sector. At the same time, it also sheds light on future studies on the subject, which constitutes the importance of this study.

2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Since individuals are social beings, the issue of communication is important in terms of continuing their lives collectively and being open to interaction with different individuals. Individuals in society cannot meet some of their needs alone, and communication has become a necessity for division of labor. Humans have two basic qualities, unlike other living beings. The first is the ability to think, while the second is the ability to speak. However, in this regard, people need to have healthy thoughts before they start talking, in other words, they should not start talking without thinking (Şahin & Aral, 2012).

Communicating is not just talking. In other words, it is stated that individuals do not communicate by just talking. In addition, in addition to the conversations stated as verbal communication, communication can also be established through body language as non-verbal communication. Sometimes, when words run out, sentences can get stuck in a person's throat. Nothing can be said at this time. In this regard, the person in front of them can interpret some situations through body language, based on facial expressions and body posture (Atak, 2005).

People generally prefer to communicate with their entire bodies. The reason for this is that the meaning directed to the body is more reliable, and words that contradict the movements of the body are not given much importance. When we look at nonverbal communication, it is stated that individuals show situations that they cannot express verbally due to some external and internal factors with some of their body movements. In this type of communication, people convey some messages to each other without writing or speaking. For this reason, in nonverbal communication, what individuals do is taken into consideration rather than what they say (Dökmen, 2013).

In terms of nonverbal communication, it is stated that people present situations that they cannot express verbally in terms of some elements with body language. The importance of nonverbal communication is stated by Albert Mehrabian as 7% of words, 38% of the way words are pronounced depending on factors such as tone of voice, and 55% of body language. The effect of body language in communication is given in Figure 1 (Pala, 2006).

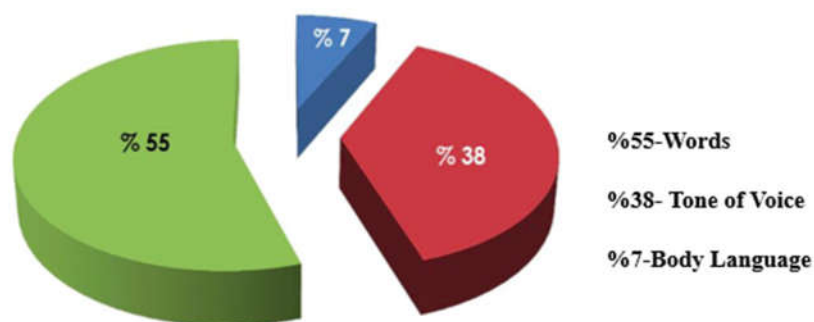


Figure 1. The Effect of Body Language in Communication

Source: Pala, (2006).

There are two different functions in terms of nonverbal communication. The first function is to convey some meanings with nonverbal communication. For example, a badge worn on the collar indicates a profession, an idea is approved by nodding, a friend's hand is held to show love for him. The second function is evaluated as nonverbal communication contributing to verbal communication and supporting rationality. The speaking individual contributes to his verbal expression with his body and facial expressions. The person listening to the speech provides feedback to the speaking individual with the body and facial expressions he exhibits (Harrison, 1973).

Nonverbal communication type includes elements such as facial expressions (mimics), body movements (gestures), physical contact (touch), interpersonal distance and physical appearance. It is expressed in the form of facial expressions, body and hand movements, body posture and eye contact. Gestures are evaluated as the most appropriate indication in terms of emotions. Special messages are given to the person in front of them by establishing different physical contacts. Interpersonal distance is also very important in terms of nonverbal communication. Physical appearance is important in terms of the first impression in terms of relationships between individuals, as it controls and directs people (Ünüvar, 2009).

There are three different types of communication between employees in accommodation establishments, between employees and upper-level managers, and between employees and incoming guests. The communication in question is carried out in the form of body language communication, i.e. nonverbal communication, written communication, and verbal communication. The maintenance of communication types in a negative or positive manner is also reflected in the motivations of employees in a negative or positive manner. Different individuals with many qualities provide services as employees in accommodation establishments. Employees are a very important source of productivity and innovation in establishments (İnce & Gençay, 2017).

In order to increase or ensure the productivity of working individuals, it is necessary to exhibit motivating behaviors at the highest level. In work life, people are expressed as the value of the highest importance. Therefore, the desired success of work depends on using the human value of the highest importance, with maximum efficiency and maximum effectiveness. Ensuring that any employee carries out their job efficiently is directly related to motivating the employee at the maximum level. Motivation includes many stages from personal care, from meeting personal needs to the individual being able to prove himself/herself (Çolak, 2009).

Increasing motivation within the business causes employees to perform at the highest level. In line with the support provided, it is aimed for employees working in businesses to meet their demands and needs and to carry out their work much more effectively and efficiently in the business. The sustainability of accommodation businesses is related to employees reaching sufficient satisfaction in line with their own desires and being compatible with the given job. For this reason, regardless of the business's field of application, special focus should be placed on motivation by upper-level managers. It is not expected for any unmotivated employee to exhibit high-level performance (Karaçar, 2019).

Accommodation businesses are one of the environments where people with different socio-economic characteristics interact. Being able to manage the communication structure between these multi-faceted interaction elements is a very valuable service. Accommodation businesses are valued as businesses that provide sectoral, public and social benefits in their locations. It is inevitable for such businesses to communicate effectively with both internal and external audiences. For this reason, they prefer to benefit from many communication techniques professionally. One of these and the most important one is physical attitudes called body language (Demir, 2002).

Employees in accommodation establishments are employed to achieve the goal of providing the best service to tourists. The visual appearance of the establishment is as important as its communication power. Employees who will be encountered and constantly dealt with directly by tourists must have effective and positive communication skills. The attitudes and behaviors of employees are extremely important in terms of the image of the establishment. At the same time, the interaction of top managers of accommodation establishments with employees is also extremely important. The communication method chosen by the management team and the body language they display in order to prevent the decrease in the work motivation and concentration of employees are directly related to the service quality (İmre, 2020). The structure of the individual is naturally always under the influence of the environmental element. These lead to positive or negative results and direct the individual's behavior. The concept of motivation, which is related to the person, can have a significant effect on people and change the way the individual is motivated (Karakaya & Alper, 2007).

In accommodation establishments, managers generally expect employees to provide perfect and flawless services. However, some managers do not know what employees want and how they should be provided with more suitable conditions, and they expect the highest level of service

to be provided without examining what employees expect from the work they have done. If managers are aware of what employees expect from the services they have done, they take steps to reward the situations that show improvement with training and create suitable work environments. This situation enables employees to create their own motivation (Keskin, 2013).

3. METHOD

The effectiveness of the methods is ensured by the transfer of authority provided on-site, the implementation of appropriate rewards and research-oriented efforts. In other words, it is important to prioritize the question of "Which employee should be rewarded for what purpose?" The reason for this is that providing motivation can vary depending on the age, gender and different areas of the employees (Le Tan et al., 2021). Within the framework of research conducted in the United States and Canada in 1993 regarding the motivation of employees in accommodation businesses, the following questions were asked to employees in accommodation businesses to determine the situations in which they were motivated. These questions are stated as follows (Şener, 1997);

- What are the general motivating factors for employees in accommodation businesses?
- What do employees in accommodation businesses expect from different businesses?
- Are men and women generally motivated by different work elements?
- Are employees of different ages generally motivated by various work elements?
- How do managers in accommodation businesses think about motivation?

In terms of accommodation establishments, it is important that the service sector is evaluated as a service that is realized as a result of intensive efforts and that the works progress in a heterogeneous manner. In other words, the heterogeneous nature is due to the fact that the human factor participates more intensively in the production of a significant part of the works compared to machines and equipment (Ann & Blum, 2020).

4. RESULTS

Within the scope of the research, it was observed that employees working in accommodation establishments were generally motivated by the following aspects regarding job elements (Şener, 1997);

- Good earnings,
- Providing the most appropriate security,
- Opportunities for personal characteristics to be recognized well by managers and employees,
- Working conditions at a good level,
- Appropriate evaluation of elements such as job enrichment and job expansion,
- Healthy evaluations (rewards and punishments),
- Loyalty to employees,
- Making them feel included in the job,
- Providing appropriate discipline,
- Timely provision of individual assistance,
- Creating appropriate communication environments.

It is observed that employees working in accommodation establishments are mostly motivated by issues such as good earnings, best security, opportunities for personal characteristics to be

recognized well by managers and employees. In addition, it is concluded that men and women have similar desires and that different behaviors are not exhibited in terms of motivation. In addition, it is observed that individuals working in different areas are motivated by various elements. It is important for managers with appropriate qualifications to determine the type of reward and the type of incentives to be included in order to ensure high level performance on employees (Şener, 1997).

Employees in accommodation establishments perform their jobs to satisfy their demands. The roles of managers are important in terms of ensuring the motivation of hotel employees. In this context, managers should be aware of what employees expect from their jobs and take steps in this direction. As a result, managers need to motivate employees in accommodation establishments so that they can easily continue their efforts. Within the framework of the qualities they contain in accommodation establishments, the satisfaction that employees get from their jobs is more important than in different establishments (Putra et al., 2017). According to the research conducted by Akıncı (2002) it was determined that approximately 30% of the individuals working in 5-star hotels had a high level of job satisfaction, approximately 40% had a low level of job satisfaction, and approximately 30% had a very poor level of job satisfaction.

Within accommodation businesses, connections to the organization are short-term. Although the salaries of working individuals are generally low, the situation regarding work generally progresses routinely. In this regard, it is stated that the most important problem regarding the service sector is that the majority of working individuals are people who are visible to tourists visiting accommodation businesses. In other words, the quality of accommodation businesses is revealed by their employees. This situation creates problems in areas where the qualities of the service are stated as products rather than the position where services that are evaluated badly are not considered in the context of good products. Ensuring the motivation of employees in accommodation businesses provides the key to the quality of the service by considering the integrity of the information they have about the job and the skills they have for the accommodation business (Lundberg et al., 2009).

Accommodation businesses can benefit from various approaches and theories regarding motivation. If the elements that provide motivation for accommodation businesses can be clearly stated, they will create advanced working environments, low-level expenses and advanced tourist relations. Managers of accommodation businesses need to analyze the reliability of different theories, how to best build on these theories and in what ways to be successful under specific business conditions. This situation becomes one of the indicators that enable managers in accommodation businesses to develop themselves and be successful (Akçadağ & Özdemir, 2005).

Within the framework of motivation, the main goal is considered to contribute to the work of employees to be productive and willing. In order to achieve this goal, managers of accommodation establishments and researchers offer examples and recommendations regarding the application. The tools used in terms of motivation do not always have the same effect in every place and time. A tool that contains encouraging qualities for an individual may not have the same effect for a different situation. For example, in order to make individuals working in an accommodation establishment effective in terms of motivation, the salary situation may be more effective for a different individual with the sufficiency of economic tools. In addition, activities for different incentive tools may show commitment to the value judgment, environmental elements, education and social level of individuals. From a different perspective, activities related to incentive tools in order to provide motivation may also be dependent on the social order (Kıngır & Mesci, 2010).

In terms of individuals living in a consumer society, economic tools are generally taken into consideration. However, in mystical and closed societies within the scope of traditions, the power that drives people to do business depends on beliefs and psychological factors rather than economic tools. The best example of this situation is that the perspective on motivation varies in societies that have the understanding of “a bite, a cardigan” rather than working hard and earning more money (İrdem, 2020). It is possible to say that the manager and motivation tools play an extremely active role in the work motivation of employees. However, there are many factors that affect the work motivation of employees. One of these is the body language used by tourists visiting accommodation establishments towards employees. The body language used by tourists also affects the work motivation of employees.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

As a social being, humans need to interact and communicate with other people for their continued existence. This communication can be established verbally or nonverbally through body language. Whether it is for facilitating daily life, exchanging ideas, or in a work environment, body language is an important element that affects the other person as much as verbal communication. Body language provides feedback to the other party through the person's movements. While this feedback can make a person feel happy and respected, it can also make them feel bad, worthless, and demotivate them at times. Therefore, it is necessary to pay attention to body language uses such as gestures, hand-arm movements, eye contact, and contact.

In this study, the effects of body language used by tourists in accommodation establishments on the work motivation of employees were examined. When the effect of body language used by tourists on the work motivation of employees was evaluated, it was determined that body language use was quite important. According to the studies, it was seen that positive body language use on the part of tourists increases employee motivation. Smiling, sincere gestures and facial expressions contribute to employees feeling valued and thus being more motivated to work. Establishing a positive interaction with the other party enables the employee to work more honestly, cheerfully and meticulously. This situation increases the employee's job satisfaction and contentment and positively affects work performance. This positive communication environment also encourages accommodation establishments to grow, increases motivation and productivity, and creates a healthy work environment.

The findings obtained in the study indicate that the use of negative body language negatively affects the employee. The formation of harsh or rude facial expressions by tourists in accommodations reduces the morale and motivation of the employee. In addition, it can also turn into a risky situation for the business. Because an employee who is not satisfied with the environment he works in also loses his commitment to the job. Therefore, the use of negative body language by tourists causes negative feelings such as dissatisfaction, boredom, irritability, and alienation from work in the employee. The reflections of negative body language on the employee negatively affect the work environment and the business. In such a case, the employee can exhibit tense, stressful, and sometimes aggressive behaviors. This situation can also damage the work environment and collaborative working relationships. Therefore, a toxic work environment is formed.

As a result, it has been determined that body language used by tourists has positive and negative effects on employees. The study has revealed the importance of body language, which directly affects work motivation. In accommodation establishments where body language use is so important, management needs to develop various strategies. In addition, activities, seminars and positive feedback, promotion opportunities, wage increases or awards that increase employee motivation and make them feel valued should be offered. As a result, positive

communication includes regular and constructive feedback. It is necessary to pay attention to the factors affecting employee job satisfaction specified in the study. At this point, it should be noted that serious duties fall on the organization and the manager. Increasing employee motivation also increases the success and profit of the business. Such feedback and positive work atmosphere mentioned above create a productive work environment for continuous growth and stable development, and this benefits both the individual and the entire team.

This study can be an important resource in terms of revealing the importance of body language used by guests in accommodation establishments and its relationship with employees' work motivation. In addition, it is thought that the study will contribute to the literature and guide future research within the scope of the information it provides regarding other factors that increase work motivation and job dissatisfaction.

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