Empowering Leadership through Maun-Alin Concept: Enhancing Employee Readiness and Cultural Integration in a Top Hotel In Timor-Leste

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Abstract:- This study explores horizontal mismatches at Hotel Novo Turismo Resort & Spa, examining the discrepancies between managers' abilities and work willingness, as well as the misalignment between employees' knowledge and work enthusiasm. The research utilizes a qualitative descriptive approach, with a case study chosen as the research method to address the research questions. Data collection techniques include interviews, observations, and document analysis. The data obtained are further validated through triangulation of data. The findings indicate that self-learning contributes to improving employee readiness for work, while leadership mentoring helps address horizontal mismatches among managers. Aligning the limitations of employees' knowledge and work enthusiasm can be achieved through the Maun-Alin concept. The limitations of this study are primarily focused on the hospitality industry within the context of mismatch with the undereducated. The practical implication of this research is that each employee possesses untapped potential that can be maximized by the company through appropriate strategies.

Keywords:- Mismatch, Maun-Alin, Leadership mentoring, Horizontal, Improving employee readiness.

I. INTRODUCTION

Hotel Novo Turismo Resort & Spa in Timor-Leste is facing the challenge of "mismatch undereducated," which involves the misalignment between the abilities and willingness to work among managers. Despite their experience, the managers realize that experience alone is not sufficient to address the challenges in managing human resources within the hotel. Additionally, the "mismatched undereducated" challenge is also experienced by the employees in this hotel. Disparities between knowledge and work enthusiasm among employees are related to different educational backgrounds and job demands in the hospitality industry.

The study conducted by Putri & Febriani, (2021) reveals that the level of undereducated mismatch in Timor-Leste reaches sixty percent, which is higher compared to other ASEAN member countries. This finding is further supported by several previous studies. Weaver (2018) on tourism development innovation in Timor-Leste indicates that the limitation of tourism development in the country is influenced by factors such as the lack of knowledge and skills that hinder the progress of the sector. On the other hand, Ford (2016) suggests that the limitation of internal resources in companies is a result of the lack of support from entrepreneurs to advance the tourism sector in the country. Meanwhile, Independent Education Consultant & Burns, (2017) highlights the challenges in the education sector in Timor-Leste, also related to the limitation of knowledge and skills. Overall, the findings from these studies confirm the existence of a mismatch between knowledge and skills, both vertically and horizontally, across various sectors in Timor-Leste. However, it is worth noting that this research only focuses on the undereducated mismatch in the hotel industry, with a case study of a manager who, with limited knowledge, was able to maintain the company's competitiveness during times of crisis.

This indicates a gap between the needs and capabilities in the hospitality and tourism sectors. Referring to recent studies in the last five years (Currie, 2018; McWilliam et al., 2020), it is suggested that an appropriate approach is needed to address the vertical and horizontal mismatch issues at various levels of society and organizations. Therefore, the importance of this study lies in analyzing the suitable approach to address these problems.

Based on recent studies in the last five years, the phenomenon of "mismatch undereducated," as researched by Chen et al. (2019) dan Kaki et al. (2022), has a negative impact on career mobility and individual development opportunities. Additionally, employees who are undereducated face difficulties in advancing their careers and taking advantage of better development opportunities (Alam & Roslan, 2021). These studies agree that mismatch with the undereducated has a negative impact. However, differences in context and strategic approaches can lead to varied outcomes.

To address the issue of undereducated mismatch, the approaches of leadership mentoring and the implementation of Maun-Alin values can be relevant strategies to potentially mitigate the negative impact of mismatch in the context of the hospitality industry in Timor-Leste. The leadership mentoring approach can help employees identify and address qualification disparities by providing appropriate guidance and training.

Meanwhile, the implementation of Maun-Alin values, which emphasize togetherness, mutual support, and respect within the organizational culture, can create a more inclusive environment that supports individual development. By applying these values, it is hoped that a positive work atmosphere will be fostered, where employees feel supported and valued, thus increasing their opportunities for personal

growth and optimal contributions to the hospitality industry in Timor-Leste.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Mismatch Concept

The concept of "mismatch" can be understood from various perspectives depending on the specific context (Bian, 2020). Mismatch involves the misalignment of qualifications and skills of individuals with the job demands. Vertical mismatch reflects the discrepancy between high qualifications and low work productivity (Sam, 2019), while horizontal mismatch involves the mismatch of skills, skill shortages, field of study mismatch, and skill obsolescence (Alam et al., 2021; Alam & Roslan, 2021). The impact of mismatch includes increased unemployment rates and hindrance to economic growth (K. Haddad & Habibi, 2017). This is evidenced by the fact that Timor-Leste is one of the countries that sends low and high-educated laborers to various countries such as Australia, Korea, and several European nations.

Efforts to address mismatch involve mentoring (Zaitouni & Ouakouak, 2018), work experience abilities (Chang, 2019), knowledge, skills (Chau, 2018), wisdom and critical thinking maturity (Anderson, 2019), as well as empowering individual learning autonomy (Contrafatto et al., 2019; Malek Abdul Malek & Bakar, 2020; Schirmer & Geithner, 2018). Informal meetings among employees are also crucial for building emotional closeness within the organization (Lehmann-Willenbrock et al., 2020). In addressing mismatch, it is essential to consider the cultural aspects of a group as a basis for making changes in organizational governance (Currie, 2018; Maria et al., 2022; Voyer et al., 2020).

B. Hofstede Dimension Culture

Culture as the "software of the human mind," encompassing the thoughts, feelings, and actions of individuals (Hofstede, 2011). He identifies six cultural dimensions, which are Power Distance, Uncertainty Avoidance, Individualism versus Collectivism, Masculinity versus Femininity, Long-Term versus Short-Term Orientation, and Indulgence versus Restraint. These dimensions differentiate between members of a society. In an organizational culture that prioritizes togetherness and mutual respect to address mismatch among the undereducated, it is highly relevant to the value of collectivism, which emphasizes the importance of focusing on shared goals and well-being rather than individual interests. With this value, the organization can create an inclusive and harmonious work environment, where all team members feel supported and valued, regardless of their educational background. Through this approach, the company can enhance the readiness of employees with low education levels and achieve success in overcoming the challenges of undereducated mismatch.

C. Local Wisdom

Based on Edward Hall's cultural concept, as presented by Ferreira et al. (2014), local wisdom values have high relevance in the context of undereducated mismatch. Cultural factors such as particularism, interpersonal relationships, and affective aspects can influence how individuals adapt to the work environment. Observational findings indicate that individuals from cultures leaning towards particularism are more flexible in adapting to tasks that may not align with their formal education. They tend to rely on personal relationships and networks to obtain the support and information they need. Moreover, in handling mismatches by the undereducated, individuals often rely on their experiences and traditions to address complex work situations. Therefore, Pauluzzo et al. (2018) emphasize that local and organizational wisdom values mutually influence the aspects of reciprocal learning, which motivate organizations and individuals to address the issue of undereducated mismatch.

D. Motivation

The drive to achieve better performance requires high motivation from all key components within a company. Motivation theory based on needs suggests that individuals have a reservoir of potential energy that is developed based on the strength of individual motivation in a given situation and the available opportunities (McClelland, 2009). In the context of mismatched undereducation, the needs for achievement and affiliation may be more suitable to focus on in motivating employees.

The need for achievement drives individuals to attain goals and perform job tasks effectively, which can help them overcome the mismatch between qualifications and job demands. When employees feel capable of achieving success in their work, it can enhance their enthusiasm and motivation. On the other hand, the need for affiliation focuses on social relationships and a sense of camaraderie within the team or organization.

In situations of mismatch undereducated, creating a supportive and collaborative work environment can help mitigate the negative impact of qualification mismatches. Feeling supported and motivated by colleagues and a positive environment, employees may be better equipped to face challenges and difficulties in their work. Therefore, understanding and fulfilling the needs for achievement and affiliation can be effective strategies in enhancing employee motivation and commitment when dealing with mismatched undereducated situations.

E. Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment is the characteristic relationship between organizational members and their individual decision to stay and contribute with enthusiasm to the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1997). There are three dimensions of organizational commitment: firstly, affective commitment is related to members' emotional engagement with the organization; secondly, continuance commitment is based on the perceived risks of leaving the organization; thirdly, normative commitment involves feelings of responsibility and obligation towards the organization based on values, norms, and beliefs. This concept explains behavior and the strong desire to remain loyal to the organization with self-identification and recognition of the organization's values and goals.

In the context of undereducated mismatch, these three forms of commitment become important factors in employees' responses to the situation of mismatch. Employees with affective commitment will feel emotionally attached to the organization and have intrinsic motivation to contribute even when facing mismatches. Furthermore, continuance commitment can keep employees from leaving due to job switching risks amidst qualification limitations. Meanwhile, normative commitment drives employees to take responsibility and seek ways to overcome the negative impacts of undereducated mismatch. With a strong commitment to the organization, employees can remain motivated and positively contribute in finding solutions to the challenges they face.

F. Learning Organization

The concept of a learning organization considers learning as the key to achieving better organizational performance. By continuously promoting learning and innovation at all levels, organizations can better adapt to environmental changes and create competitive advantages. Eyo et al. (2022) research shows that learning within an organization can be enhanced from lower levels to higher levels, thus depicting learning as a continuous and ongoing process. This aligns with the proposed concept of a learning organization by Abed (2020), which emphasizes the importance of learning as an integral part of the organizational culture to equip employees with knowledge and skills.

A learning organization provides opportunities for employees to develop necessary skills, encourages creativity and innovation, and enhances collaboration and knowledge sharing (Ghazali et al., 2015). With this approach, organizations can optimize the potential of employees through effective knowledge management and better achieve organizational goals (Lunenburg, 2020). In this context, Szabla et al. (2020) suggest that the learning process should focus on specific aspects, both through formal and informal meetings (Holt & Johnsen, 2019), without neglecting efficiency and effectiveness (Mohyla et al., 2018). Additionally, the role of leaders is crucial in supporting a learning culture and mobilizing support and resources within a learning organization (Pan et al., 2020).

G. Leadership

According to Louw and Barker (2021), leadership plays a crucial role in knowledge-based organizations by directing interpersonal influence through communication processes towards relational or functional goals. This type of leadership involves knowledge workers in producing, integrating, and sharing their specialized knowledge and ideas as a primary contribution to the organization. In this context, leadership also becomes a central element in the processes of creating, acquiring, utilizing, and integrating organizational knowledge (Pellegrini et al., 2020).

Transformational leadership, as described by Sokolović et al. (2022), connects creative thinking, persistence, energy, intuition, and sensitivity to the needs of individuals within the organizational culture. Empowering leadership is also an effective form of empowerment in facing challenges and crises in business (Faulks et al., 2021). With transformational and empowering leadership, knowledge-based organizations can create an innovative, competitive environment capable of addressing challenges more effectively to achieve success in business.

III. RESEARCH METHODS

The research utilized a case study approach to investigate the application of local wisdom values (Maun-Alin) in the relationship between leaders and team members at Hotel Novo Turismo Resort & Spa in Dili. The study was conducted over an 8-month period and involved three main informants as research participants, namely the human resource manager, regular employees, and company owners. The research specifically focused on managers with a background in Senior High School (SMA) education.

The data was collected through direct observation, which took place over an 8-month period, to observe interactions between managers and employees in the hotel's work environment. Additionally, data was collected through in-depth interviews with open-ended questions aimed at gaining deep insights into the management approach and the application of local wisdom values (Maun-Alin) in the relationship between leaders and team members. Secondary data was obtained through a review of relevant company policies and procedures to provide additional context and support the analysis of findings from primary data.

The main objective of this research is to provide a comprehensive understanding of the Maun-Alin concept in the context of the work environment and its impact on leadership quality and team member relationships. By combining primary and secondary data, this research aims to offer comprehensive insights into the implementation of local wisdom values (Maun-Alin) in management practices at the hotel. The data analysis process in this research was conducted through three essential steps: data reduction, data presentation, and drawing research conclusions to interpret findings relevant to the research questions.

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. Increasing Employee Readiness

This study found that Novo Turismo Resort & Spa places significant emphasis on prior experience in the culinary industry when recruiting employees. Experience in the culinary industry is a crucial factor in the employee recruitment process at this hotel, even though high school graduates like informants A1 and A2 have different work experiences. The hotel has adopted a method of job preparation through temporary placements in various hotel departments, guided by the General Manager, which has proven effective in preparing employees before they start their jobs.

This job preparation process helps employees understand various operational aspects of the hotel and makes them more prepared to perform their duties when they start their jobs. However, the research findings indicate that despite going through a good job preparation process and having experience in the culinary industry, the abilities and knowledge of the employees still vary. Therefore, hotel

management needs to adjust strategies to enhance employee capabilities and address existing knowledge gaps to achieve consistent and optimal service quality.

This statement is supported by the following opinions from informants:

"I only realized when I started working here that experience is highly needed but not enough. There are many things I need to learn in this company." (Informant 1, personal interview, 17/01/2021).

Informant 1's statement is supported by Informant 2's (confirmation) statement as follows:

"Our manager is someone who always demands us to learn all the time, stating that working here is actually an opportunity to learn new things related to our job." (Informant 2, personal interview, 18/01/2021).

The second informant's statement is further supported by Informant 3's (owner of the company) statement as follows:

"At first, we needed people with managerial experience, but even if they lacked experience, what's important is their willingness and enthusiasm to learn. The company has specific strategies to develop their abilities." (Confirmation from the company owner, personal interview, 24/01/2023).

The statement from Informant 1 about the importance of learning within the organization is supported by Informant 2, who emphasizes the learning culture, as well as the statement from the company owner who acknowledges the skill development strategies, all of which reaffirm the concept of a learning organization. In this organization, learning is considered a continuous process, and employees are encouraged to keep learning, innovating, and adapting to changes. This creates a dynamic, efficient, and growth-oriented work environment for mutual success.

The research indicates that focused learning on specific job-related aspects is crucial. Researchers such as Eyo et al. (2022) and Abed (2020) emphasize that the learning process for each individual within the organization is vital and involves various formal and informal meetings. However, (Holt & Johnsen, 2019) highlight the need to maintain efficiency in the learning process, avoiding wasting energy, time, and resources. Therefore, organizations need to create suitable learning conditions to enrich employees' skills and encourage the emergence of new ideas in facing changes in the work environment.

This is in line with the understanding that achieving successful learning conditions requires active support from organizational leaders (Lee et al., 2018) and comprehensive mentoring processes to enhance individual capabilities within the organization (Muhammed & Zaim, 2020). Empowering leadership plays a crucial role in employees' behavior (Bindra et al., 2023), to foster creativity and productivity (Szelągowski, 2014), and generate new ideas in implementing changes (Muhammad & Zaim, 2021). Thus, it is emphasized that a learning system rooted in practical and situational-based learning is a concrete action in managerial development (Margaryan et al., 2013). This is highly relevant to the understanding of empowering leadership found in this study.

B. Empowering Leadership

The presentation highlights the importance of empowering leadership in the context of career and individual skill development within the organization. The statement from Informant 1 illustrates the awareness that experience alone is not sufficient, and there is much to be learned within the company. This statement is confirmed by Informant 2, who emphasizes that managers always demand continuous learning, and work provides opportunities to learn new things. This sentiment is further supported by the company owner, who affirms the significance of having the willingness and enthusiasm to learn as part of the skill development strategy in the company. In this context, empowering leadership becomes relevant as leaders in the company serve as a source of guidance and support in facing challenges and developing capabilities. Empowering leadership assists individuals in continuous learning and growth in their managerial roles, thus fostering a work environment that supports individual growth and leadership effectiveness within the organization.

The following opinions from informants further support these statements:

"After the work preparation period was completed, I was appointed as the HRD manager, but I expressed that I was not yet capable of holding a managerial position, so I still needed mentoring from the General Manager," (Informant 1, personal interview, 17/01/2022).

Informant 1's statement is supported by Informant 2's statement as follows:

"Maun Julio is an honest and unambitious person, but he is a manager who likes to help others in difficult times," (Informant 2, personal interview, 18/01/2021).

The second statement from the informants is supported by the following statement from the company owner:

"Julio's position as deputy manager and the managerial position were intentionally left vacant because he needs further preparation to manage the HR in this hotel," (Confirmation from the company owner, personal interview, 24/01/2023).

Julio, after a preparatory period, has been appointed as the HRD Manager, but he feels that he is not fully ready and still needs mentoring. This understanding aligns with Dadhabai et al. (2022), which emphasizes the importance of emotional intelligence as a critical aspect of managerial leadership ability. In the statement of informant II, it was revealed that Julio is an honest manager, not ambitious, and always ready to help others in difficult times. This reflects an attitude of openness to change for the common good, which is in line with the views of Grin et al. (2018). The statement from the company owner, stating that the managerial position was deliberately left vacant and Julio was appointed as Deputy Manager to receive further training in managing

human resources in the hotel, demonstrates the company's commitment to providing opportunities for employees to develop in leadership roles.

This reflects the aspects of recognition and appreciation, in line with the concept of Damarsiwi et al. (2021), stating that recognition and appreciation play a crucial role in motivating employees, building a positive work culture, and enhancing team performance. Therefore, the awareness of the importance of emotional intelligence in managerial roles, the support and mentoring from the General Manager, and the company's commitment to providing opportunities and recognition for employees, are crucial factors in Julio's career development as a leader in the company.

Recent studies indicate that to improve team performance, open and effective communication is a key factor. Through open communication, leaders can listen to the aspirations, needs, and concerns of team members (Aidah, 2020). This allows leaders to better understand individuals within the team (Kalogiannidis, 2020), strengthen emotional connections (Ashkanasy et al., 2019), and foster a deeper sense of belonging (Ngobeni et al., 2022). Field observation data shows that the use of local terms such as "Maun" or "Kakak" can also create a sense of family and brotherhood within the team, creating a positive and enjoyable work atmosphere. The positive impact of open communication and the use of local terms is an increase in trust, collaboration, and a sense of ownership towards the shared vision and mission. Therefore, Mach et al. (2021) emphasize that teams that feel heard and valued will be more motivated to contribute maximally and achieve organizational goals together. Additionally, effective communication also helps minimize misunderstandings, reduce conflicts, and enhance efficiency in daily tasks. Based on this, Kamali et al. (2015) stress the importance of leadership development programs taking cultural and organizational aspects into account. In this context, it can be formulated that culture-based leadership becomes essential in creating a productive and harmonious work environment and contributing to competitive team performance.

C. The Importance of Culture-Based Leadership

In the workplace team, Julio (the manager) always prioritizes cooperation and honesty. He never shows excessive ambition to seek personal gain. Employees feel comfortable talking to him because of his humble attitude and readiness to help them in difficult situations. The manager truly understands the values of local wisdom and implements them in his leadership style. Additionally, the manager often uses informal terms like 'friends,' which creates a sense of family bond among the employees. All team members feel valued and heard by Julio, and this has strengthened the overall team spirit of the employees. This statement is supported by the following opinion of an informant;

"During lunchtime, I often approach my colleagues and tell them that because our guests work here, we should treat them as our own family" (Informant 1, personal interview, 10/02/2022).

In relation to the statement, Informant II said;

"At first, I found it difficult to work in this hotel because I only graduated from a public school, but the togetherness and mutual respect between us and our superiors make me and other colleagues feel happy" (Informant 2, personal interview, 18/01/2021).

These statements are supported by Informant III's confirmation,

"The spirit of service and collaboration among employees is crucial and needs to be maintained continuously" (Informant 3, personal interview, 24/01/2023).

In the context of local wisdom values, cultural identity encompasses values, norms, beliefs, language, customs, and traditions that are part of a community (Dohn et al., 2018). Each individual also carries the cultural identity of their social group, such as ethnicity, religion, nationality, or specific geographical region. When individuals with similar cultural backgrounds meet, this cultural identity becomes a strong foundation for forming connections and emotional bonds (Veronika et al., 2021). Shared life experiences, values, perspectives, and language allow them to feel closer and understand each other better. Additionally, awareness of local wisdom values can facilitate the exchange of knowledge and traditional practices, enriching cultural heritage, and strengthening the identity of the group.

The importance of cultural identity in forming connections and bonds in human relationships has a significant impact in the workplace. It fosters a sense of togetherness, solidarity, and mutual support among group members, creating an inclusive and supportive work environment (Hofstede, 2011). These relationships are part of the cultural identity that influences how individuals communicate and interact (Peter Broeder, 2021), through language and communication styles that reflect the values and norms of the cultural group (Ragsdale, 2021). These studies reinforce that the use of the Maun-Alin concept can be an effective tool in building emotional closeness between supervisors and subordinates, which, in turn, positively affects the company's performance. By understanding and appreciating cultural identity, Hotel Novo Turismo Resort & Spa has created a harmonious, inclusive, and high-performing work environment, where employees feel valued for their uniqueness and can work effectively as a team to achieve common goals. Through recognition and appreciation of cultural identity, team members are more motivated to contribute to the fullest. In this context, cultural identity becomes a strong foundation for creating a productive, harmonious, and competitive work environment, where diversity is valued and becomes a strength for achieving shared success.

D. The Concept of Maun-Alin Reflects of Leadership Based on Local Wisdom

In the context of leadership based on local wisdom, the concept of Maun-Alin reflects the values of togetherness, mutual respect, and service-oriented spirit that form the foundation for building effective and authentic leadership qualities. As a dimension of locally-based leadership, the

Maun-Alin relationship serves as a principle that guides the behavior and actions of a leader. When a leader articulates the Maun-Alin relationship, it demonstrates a commitment to be a role model for team members and to create an inclusive and supportive work environment. As a role model, a leader who internalizes the Maun-Alin relationship shows humility, willingness to listen and understand the feelings of team members, and a dedication to serve and assist them in achieving shared goals. The leader will also exhibit an attitude of mutual respect and treat team members like family, thus creating a strong emotional bond among them. This approach is supported by the following statements from informants:

"In my approach with employees, I am inspired by my grandfather's experience, who once said, consider everyone as Maun-Alin, just like the five fingers of your hand, they all need each other to form a strong grip, do not act arrogantly towards each other" (Informant 1, personal interview, 10/02/2022).

This statement is supported by Informant II as follows:

"Maun Julio is indeed a very helpful person to me, so I can still work in this hotel until now" (Informant II, personal interview, 11/02/2022).

This statement is also supported by Informant III as follows:

"Togetherness, abilities, spirit, and the values we create are what make this company strong, and that is our strength" (Confirmation from Informant III, personal interview, 24/01/2023).

Based on the previous information and statements from the informants, Maun-Alin can be assumed as an approach or philosophy in the local culture that describes the relationship between individuals as "Maun" (elder sibling) and "Alin" (younger sibling). This concept reflects the values of local wisdom that emphasize the importance of togetherness, mutual respect, and a spirit of helping each other in interactions among members of the community or group (Dohn et al., 2018).

In the context of Hotel Novo Turismo Resort & Spa, Maun-Alin can be applied as the foundation of the relationship between the leader (Maun) and team members (Alin). Maun-Alin in the workplace focuses on several aspects, such as promoting a culture of togetherness and mutual respect, reflecting a strong spirit of service in the relationship between the leader and team members, accepting the conditions in the workplace, fostering closer relationships, motivating team members, and creating an organizational culture while building a strong emotional attachment between the leader and team members. Therefore, from a contextual perspective, (Dijk, 2021.) proposes that emotional attachment is one aspect involved in social and communication contexts, as emotional attachment between individuals or groups can influence how they communicate, respond to information, and understand the overall situation. Hornikx and Le Pair (2017) emphasize that emotional attachment can create a sense of connection, relevance, or sympathy to the conveyed message, making the message more meaningful to individuals.

I the context of this research, emotional attachment among group members can enhance trust, loyalty, and cooperation, which in turn can influence how they interact and communicate with each other, thereby maintaining the company's existence in the challenges of competition in the hospitality industry in Timor-Leste.

V. CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this research indicates that Hotel Novo Turismo Resort & Spa has successfully overcome the mismatch of education by effectively implementing the Maun-Alin concept as the foundation of locally-based leadership. The Maun-Alin concept embodies values of togetherness, mutual respect, and a strong spirit of service, forming the basis for building effective and authentic leadership qualities. Through the application of the Maun-Alin concept, the leader, Julio, has managed to create an inclusive, supportive, and harmonious work environment. Recognition and appreciation of cultural identities also play a crucial role in strengthening the relationship between the leader and team members, motivating them to contribute maximally. The Maun-Alin concept, along with leadership mentoring, serves as a strong foundation for the hotel in addressing the mismatch of education at both the employee and managerial levels, resulting in a productive and efficient work environment.

A. Implications of the Research
- Employee Readiness Enhancement: By implementing the Maun-Alin concept, the hotel can enhance employee readiness before starting their work. The approach of work preparation with guidance from the leader has proven to be effective, especially for those with lower educational backgrounds. This can improve employees' skills and knowledge, enabling them to achieve consistent and optimal service quality. This implication impacts the overall team performance and creates an inclusive work environment that is focused on individual growth.
- Strengthening Organizational Culture: The Maun-Alin concept embodies local wisdom values, such as togetherness, mutual respect, and a strong spirit of service. By applying this concept, the hotel can strengthen an organizational culture that is inclusive, harmonious, and competitive. Cultural identity becomes a strong foundation in creating a close relationship between the leader and team members, as well as motivating employees to contribute to the maximum. Strengthening the organizational culture can also enhance employee satisfaction and loyalty, thus having a positive impact on employee retention and the company's image.

B. Limitations of the Study
- **Limited Generalization:** This research was conducted at one hotel in Timor-Leste, so the findings may not be directly generalizable to other hotels or the hospitality industry in different locations. Each organization has its unique cultural context and work environment, requiring

further research to validate these results in different contexts.

- **Uncontrolled External Factors:** The study is also influenced by external factors that cannot be controlled, such as market changes or government policies. These factors can affect the implementation of the Maun-Alin concept and overall employee readiness.
- **Subjectivity of Data:** The data used in this study comes from in-depth interviews with informants, which may introduce subjectivity in data interpretation and collection. Although steps have been taken to minimize bias, further research could use other more objective research methods.

Nevertheless, the findings of this research provide valuable insights into the importance of the Maun-Alin concept in addressing mismatched undereducated and strengthening culturally-based leadership qualities in the hospitality industry. These implications can serve as a basis for the development of more effective and competitive management strategies in facing challenges in the evolving work environment.

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