

# **Analysis of the impact of ethical leadership on working conditions in the workplace.**

A case study of “Holiday Club Åre” and “Ski star Åre” in Åre, Sweden.

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## Abstract

Labour in our current dispensation can be understood by critically examining their embeddedness in their geographical spaces and their spatial connection to those geographical spaces. Meanwhile, it has been highly contested by famous economic geographers like Andrew Herod and Don Mitchell, who argues that although labour shapes their economic and political spaces, they do not do this by choice and, as such, their power to make structural changes had been overemphasised. Therefore, a further study into other structures in which labour works and live can help reveal the extent of their influence on structures of any kind. Mainly, working conditions are essential for workers, and this study contests their power of influence on them.

Notably, working conditions are formulated by the employers basing their decisions on their societal values, morals, and other factors. In order to understand the interplay of these components in influencing the decision of employers on working conditions, ethical leadership at the workplace is necessary to be studied to uncover how employers' ethical stances influence the working conditions of their workers. Particularly, ethical leadership is a complex structure involving a leadership style and ethics that affect employers' decision-making process.

This qualitative paper used purposive and snowball non-probability sampling techniques to select participants from Holiday Club Åre and Ski Star Åre. The results from this study show that ethical leadership influences working conditions and it existed within the two workplaces even during the pandemic; however, it is unevenly exhibited, and the reason for such disparities can be attributed to the personalistic characteristics of the managers. Namely, ethical leadership and good working conditions lead to a higher level of job satisfaction and trust in leadership, higher productivity, behaviour emulation and reduction in counterproductive behaviour at the workplace. Workers were also found to have a marginal structural impact on their working conditions because of their low bargaining power despite the support of their labour agency.

Keywords: Ethical leadership, Working conditions, labour, Holiday Club Åre, Ski Star Åre, Tourism.

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# Chapter One

## Introduction

"Labour" is eminent in our modern society, and one of the ways of understanding it requires a critical analysis of how workers are embedded in geographical spaces and their spatial relation to these geographical spaces. In an argument made by Herod (2001) on labour geography, he described how labour as an active agent shape both their political and economic landscape. However, this finding has been less explicated in the economic geography domain. In contrast to the scarcity of findings on labour as an active agent, capital, a dominant variable in economic geography, has been highly conceptualised in the economic geography of both Marxism and Neoclassicism. Prior to Herod (2001)'s assertion, he described elsewhere that "... workers have a vested interest in attempting to make space in certain ways. Workers' abilities to produce and manipulate geographic space in particular ways are a potent form of social power" (Herod,1997, p.3). Making inferences from Herod's work on labour geography, labour in a way is not passive but produces a landscape in its "own image".

Moreover, in the labour geography literature, "place" is known to be a powerful component created by human experiences (Massey, 2005; Jones et al., 2014) This means that a "place" can dictate the flow of activities, labour, events, investment decisions, and working conditions in a specific geographical space. For example, workers may choose to accept any kind of work in a particular

geographical area because there is not much they can do. This can be due to fewer available jobs or "spatial mismatch," i.e., they have the wrong skill set for the job market in that location, or they are not ready to move to a different location because of social, political or other ties (Herod, 1997; Zampoukos, 2018). In some cases, this geographical incongruity may force the workers to accept any working conditions offered to them since they are spatially entrapped in a specific geographical area due to the factors mentioned above. The case of "spatial mismatch" can be higher in local economies with a high dependency on a single economic industry (He et al. 2012). For example, Åre which is highly dependent on tourism (ÅreMunicipality, 2020). Other than Åre being a single industry dependent town, it also in a way functions as a "growth pole" with its nearby towns like Duved, Undersåker, Brattland and Järpen as peripheries" ( Gavrila-Paven et al., 2017). Although, as a core growth pole, it is supposed to stimulate local development through "trickle-down" effects, benefits have not yet been realised leading to people commuting daily to the Åre to work from nearby areas ( Lundmark, 2006) while others might move there temporarily or permanently because of the jobs opportunities (Domański & Gwosdz, 2010; Lundmark, 2006) despite the difficulty in securing accommodation in the destination. Consequently, more people will compete for fewer jobs, and employers will have access to a pool of labour. Hence proper working conditions might not be put in place.

According to the International Labour Organization (n.d), working conditions are fundamental to every paid work and employment relationships. It covers issues ranging from working periods to remuneration and mental demands, and physical conditions in the workplace. Eurofound, (n.d) similarly defined

working conditions as "the working environment and aspects of an employee's terms and conditions of employment. It also covers matters such as the organisation of work and work activities; training, skills and employability; health, safety, and wellbeing; and working time and work-life balance" with several laws implemented to enforce the components of these conditions.

Working conditions need to be favourable in all spheres of work to give workers the needed work satisfaction and support to help protect their working period, work-life balance, wellbeing and so on (Raziq & Maulabakhsh, 2015) regardless of seasonal changes or geographic components. However, despite this necessary condition for employees, employers' personal interests, values, and motivation could affect the creation of these conditions. Haywood (1992) affirms that employers or managers' values and motivation shape their morality and ethical considerations. Therefore, to understand the working conditions of employees formulated by employers, one needs to understand their "leadership styles" and "ethical value systems" under which they operate in a particular workplace.

Ethical leadership can be described as "the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, and the promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement, and decision making" (Brown et al., 2005, p 120). According to Brown & Treviño (2006), qualities like honesty, integrity, care for others, altruism, visibility, group determination, reliability and supporting proper rights characterise ethical leaders, and it helps them to make a sound decision on business issues that in the end influences the satisfaction of their employees. Generally, employees are affected by their employers' strategic decisions and, since they are at the bottom of the decision-making chain, they

are likely to suffer the consequences from the decision even if it is not based on ethical grounds but gives economic benefits to the makers.

### **Problem statement**

Labour geography is characterised by four principal strands, as indicated by Coe & Jordhus-Lier (2011). According to Coe & Jordhus-Lier (2011), the primary strand is interested in labour unionisation. In contrast, the second strand is concerned with the regularisation and segmentation of labour in a specific location or labour market. The second strand also indicates a shift in interest from welfare towards workfare in certain jurisdictions. As indicated by Coe & Jordhus-Lier (2011), the third strand seeks to synthesise employment relations with individual and work-based identities. This strand also theorised the concept of work to include unpaid work, community volunteerism and gender-based subjectivities and identities at the workplace, and ethnic base identity construction. Lastly, the fourth strand is concerned with how labour shapes geography and how geography shapes workers' actions.

In recent times, the fourth strand, which identifies how labour shapes its economic or political landscape, is considered to have been overemphasised. As a result, Mitchell (2011) suggested a further study into structures within which labour lives and work. This, in his argument, will reveal the power dynamics within capital and the state, which the defencelessness of workers might have fuelled. In other words, Mitchell (2011) argues that workers' power in shaping their economic landscape has been overplayed and as such, workers do not possess enough power to make significant structural changes, which might

affect their political or economic landscape. In reference to the working conditions of labour, we could argue in the same line that workers do not have much control in choosing their working conditions despite the structural support of labour's agency.

While it has been discussed herein that employers create working conditions basing the decisions on their societal values, morals and other ethical factors, ethical leadership should be one of the structures to be further studied to uncover the force that workers have in making changes in matters pertaining to their working conditions and how their employers' ethical stances do influence the making of their working conditions. Notably, ethical leadership is also a complex structure involving a leadership style and ethics that affect employers' decision-making process, which in turn can affect workers in the long run (Brown et al., 2005; Brown & Treviño 2006).

Further, according to Fuchs (2019), ethical leadership is a complex structure with economic and political roots, which is scant in tourism geography studies because they have overlooked its impacts while it is growing in mainstream management studies with a particular interest in leadership ethics. This argument can be made the same for the labour geography scholarship, which is interested in the spatial dimension of labour and its relations to economic and political systems. The reason for such a similar argument is that ethical leadership can be identified as both a political and an economic system that could impact labour working conditions in a particular workplace. That is to say, ethical leadership, which is both a political and an economic system, can be explained in reference to space or the workplace where it operates. Therefore,

since labour geographers are much interested in spatial relationships between labour; political and economic geographic systems, a scant in academic literature in ethical leadership within labour geography can be considered a crucial issue that needs urgent attention.

For labour to be satisfied with their working environment per se, the working conditions must be aligned with their interests. In most cases, working conditions cannot be formulated without the interplay of the employer's values, morality, and interest, thereby making ethical leadership one critical determinant of working conditions in a particular workplace (Cyert & March, 1963; Upchurch, 1998; Stratton-Lake, 1999). Again, in recognising the working conditions of labour, there is a need to understand the industrial, managerial, and political structures that they are embedded in (Hale & Will, 2005); that is why mainstream management concepts such as ethical leadership are worthy of studying in the labour geography scholarship.

The argument here is that although workers shape their own political and economic landscape, they do not always make it under the conditions of their own choosing (Herod, 1997) or their power to make structural changes of any kind is insignificant (Mitchell, 2011). Namely, workers' power to make decisions is limited by certain components or their decisions are influenced mainly by factors beyond their control (a topic that I will elaborate on later in this study). Thus, their choice of workplace and the working conditions under which they work are influenced partly by their geographic area and their employer's ethical leadership stance. Moreover, this has not been studied in the mainstream labour geography scholarship, where labour working conditions find their roots.

Therefore, there is a need to investigate how ethical leadership is exhibited across workplaces and to what extent it influences workers' working conditions. However, few studies on ethical leadership, working conditions and behaviour can be found within other mainstream scholarships like tourism and hospitality, management, nursing, and many others. (See Dimitriou & Schwepker, 2019; Wood, & Agag, 2021; Islam et al., n.d; Khokhar & Zia-ur-Rehman, 2017; Stouten et al., 2010)

### **Research questions**

1. How is ethical leadership demonstrated across two distinct tourism workplaces in Åre?
2. How do ethical leadership of employers influence the working conditions and management of employees in the workplaces under study?
3. How do employees influence structural changes in their working conditions at their workplace?
4. What were the ethical provisions made for the employees during the Covid-19 pandemic?

### **Objectives**

This research investigates how ethical leadership is demonstrated across the two workplaces or whether it exists at all, and the extent it influences working conditions within the two workplaces. Again, it seeks to analyse the structural powers of workers in influencing their working conditions at the workplace.

Ethical leadership is an essential component for workers satisfaction at the workplace. Notably, workers' satisfaction emerges from good working conditions; however, it is hypothesised that, in a situation where the supply of labour exceeds demand, the conditions necessary for excellent working conditions might not be appropriately considered. (The ramifications of excess labour will be subsequently discussed herein).

This study will help generate themes for further research on labour and their working conditions. Further, labour geography aims to enhance theoretical knowledge in the interest of labour, and as such, this research will contribute to that aim by demonstrating how ethical leadership varies across the two workspaces in relation to working conditions. The study will also investigate employees experience on how their employers demonstrate ethical leadership since they are at the receiving end of the decision-making cycle. Lastly, it will help explore the ethical provisions which were made for the employees during the Covid-19 pandemic. Moreover, this study will provide knowledge by exploring the potential loopholes in the provision of working conditions to assist policymakers in making labour policies related to working conditions.

## **Study Area**

Åre as a town was selected for this study; however, the population samples were gathered from tourism operators, namely: Holiday club Åre and Skistar Åre.

## **Overview of the tourism sector in Åre.**

In the Åre Municipality, tourism-related businesses occupy a significant percentage of the market share in the area. This is due to the high investment in tourism, particularly in sport tourism and its related businesses (ÅreMunicipality, 2020). We can find numerous hotels, restaurants, Ski centres, Ski shops, and many other tourism-related businesses in the area. Notably, the economic development in Åre can be associated with several businesses within the hospitality industry (Frederick, 1993). For this study, I will highlight more on the accommodation and Ski resorts in Åre because they are the largest labour employers in Åre.

The primary accommodation facilities in Åre are hotels and self-catering cottages or apartments found across the town. Some of these accommodation facilities have shops (both ski shops and mini grocery shops), restaurants, and bars that operate as a nightclub in the evenings. For example, Holiday Club Åre has an in-house ski shop/grocery shop and a restaurant. At the same time, a Hotel like Fjällgården operates a restaurant that offers “after ski” night activities during the winter. In total, there are 44 registered major accommodation brands in the Åre Municipality, according to hotels.com. The notable ones are Holiday Club Åre, Copperhill Mountain Lodge, Hotel Åregården, Hotel Fjällgården Ski-In Ski-out, Åre Torg Hotell, Granen Hotel & Restaurang and many more.

Among all the hotels in Åre, Holiday Club Åre is far the largest in terms of room number and owned accommodation properties. The hotel has 244 rooms in their central hotel and numerous condominiums, holiday and studio apartments under its ownership. Hence, due to its large property ownerships, they mostly

outsource companies to administer specific departments. For example, N-Clean AB has been contracted by Holiday Club Åre to provide housekeeping services to its central hotel, the holiday and studio apartments and all its condominium apartments, while O'Leary's Sweden has been contracted to administer the bar in the central hotel although holiday club Åre reserves the right to recruit managers for the O'Leary's bar. Mostly, outsourcing external companies to administer individual departments in the hotel is one significant cause of precarious working conditions (Cañada, 2018). Therefore, since Holiday Club Åre has outsourced few companies to administer specific vital roles in their enterprise, it is worth investigating how ethical leadership will be demonstrated in relation to the creation of working conditions in the workplace.

According to ÅreSweden (2020), Åre has been a destination for winter sports for over 100 years now, and it is also considered the largest ski resort in the Nordics. It has 99 runs serviced by 46 lifts and four parks that offer a great range of rails, jumps and pipes. Other than Alpine skiing, which Åre is commonly known for; one can also engage in:

- Ice driving on the frozen lake (Åresjön)
- Snowmobile tours
- Cross Country Skiing
- Dog Sledding
- Paragliding from the top of Åreskutan down to the lake (Åresjön).
- Snow Kiting
- Ice Climbing
- Chocolate shopping from the Åre Chocolate Factory.

Of which Skistar engages in the services of most of the activities above. The numerous business activities managed by Skistar makes outsourcing of external companies' a necessity to them. For instance, N-Clean AB has also been contracted by Skistar to provide housekeeping services in their accommodation department. Moreover, considering their vast entity, other external companies are likely to be outsourced by them, taking into context its numerous business activities. This outsourcing action will definitely create precarious working conditions for the workers (Dube & Kaplan, 2010; Warhurst et al., 2012).

Åre as a town together with the study location: **Holiday club Åre and Skistar Åre** were selected for the reasons below. Firstly, Åre can be considered a growth pole with polarised economic activities, especially in the winter season, where labour commutes to work or move there temporally or permanently because of the available work opportunities (Lundmark, 2006; Domański & Gwosdz, 2010). In as much as labour shape its economic geography as Herod (1997) has conceptualised, geographical incongruity, which arises as a result of spatial skills mismatch, economic shifts between the labour markets and other factors which can incapacitate workers, contribute to the mobility decision of these workers (Lundmark, 2005). Although, in one other literature, it was ascertained that workers in the Swedish labour market are more likely not to migrate to a different location because they are spatially "embedded" and "embodied" because of social and economic ties (Zampoukos, 2018). However, in the context where they are out of employment options, these components are likely not be restraining migration factors.

The migration of tourism labour to the polarised region (Åre) has a high chance of creating a situation where labour supply exceeds demand. This situation is likely because of the enormous influx of tourism labour against permanent residents in mountainous destinations due to many tourism-related businesses (Lundmark, 2005). Such occurrences make a pool of labour available to employers. Hence proper working conditions emerging from ethical leadership may not be put in place, considering that new desperate employees can be sourced at any point in time. Therefore, Åre, as a polarised region with numerous tourism businesses and labour migration, was preferred for this study over others because of the reasons outlined above.

Again, Holiday club Åre and Ski star Åre is considered the most extensive tourism agent in Åre, with numerous business activities expanding across the town. Due to its business capacity, outsourcing is ubiquitous in its business operations in bids to reduce the workload in various departments, especially in their accommodation or lodging departments. Notably, outsourcing is one significant cause of precarious working conditions, which can be explained in terms of ethical leadership, as it has already been elucidated.

## **Thesis Structure**

This thesis is divided into seven chapters, with each chapter detailing a core component of the study. The first chapter gives a general introduction of this thesis, though to problem statement, research questions, objectives, and the study area. The study area section also explains the tourism labour market in

Åre. More specifically, a micro exploration was made on Holiday Club Åre and Ski Star Åre, where our interview subjects were sampled using a purposive sampling technique. Again, the second chapter reviews relevant literature pertaining to the study. The reviewed literature begins from an overview of working conditions in the Swedish context to theorising Åre as a growth pole through to digesting aspects of working conditions and the social divisions in the tourism labour market. Further, the study proceeds with exploring precarious working conditions in the tourism market, ethical leadership and finalizing that section with a conceptual framework that bridges the connection between the theoretical framework, research problem and findings. While reviewing the literature, the focus was placed on the nexus between the strands of literatures and their relationship to the research problem, aims and objectives. Indeed, the literature gives a tentative overview of themes used in the results section. Also, chapter 3 describes the methodology used for this study. For this study, an explanatory case study was used to investigate the research questions. The same chapter also describes the research design, strategy, and the sampling technique.

Moreover, chapter 4 deconstructs the study results while chapters 5, 6 and 7 discuss, conclude and outline limitations and recommendations respectively. Finally, the references and the appendix to this study which gives an overview of Åre Municipality were also delineated.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Literature Review**

#### **Overview of working conditions in the Swedish context**

Labour in Sweden is collectively represented through their Trade unions. In all, there are currently 14 trade union confederations in Sweden that represents the interest of different working groups (Kjellberg, 2017). However, for the purpose of this study, the union body representing cleaners, hotel and restaurant workers will be discussed. Namely, Swedish Hotel and Restaurant Workers' Union (Hotell och Restaurang Facket, HRF) and The Building Maintenance Workers' Union (Fastighetsanställdas Förbund, Faf) are the responsible union bodies that represent the interests of the above workgroups (Kjellberg, 2017). The Union helps to bargain salary and working conditions, educate members, engage in international dialogues, and communicate the views and interests of its members to authorities at the local and national level.

Mostly, tourism-related businesses prefer to have a collective agreement with HRF while cleaning businesses have their agreement with the Faf. Particularly, Holiday Club and Ski Star Åre have their collective agreement with HRF while the housekeeping department has their agreement with Faf respectively. The collective agreement are the agreements with the employers on which rules and working conditions should apply at work and it centres around working hours, overtime pay, holiday pay, insurance, salaries, working environment and other

working conditions. The basic aim of the collective agreement is that workers should not be forced to take low salaries or work under worse working conditions thereby stipulating minimum rules and regulations to help workers gain the best working conditions possible (Fastighets, n.d; HRF, n.d). Further, workers also receive support and negotiation assistance on their salaries, working hours, benefits such as odd hours compensation (Obekväm Arbetstid-OB) and insurance. Currently, both HRF and Faf have the following core requirements for employers:

- Increase the wage of employees in line with the other labour market wage.
- Salary system should take into consideration knowledge, professional experience, roles, and education.
- Predictable working hours and schedules for the employees.
- Salary specification should state provisions for contractual pension.
- Better protection of workers against sexual harassment from third parties such as guests and visitors
- Longer employment period for workers to increase work security
- Employment rates should correspond to their working time
- Intermittent working period should cease.
- Change in working time or placement by an employer should proceed with a written notice together with justification and consultation with the worker.
- Basic Insurance premium for workers should be paid
- Compensations for illness and work-related accidents.

However, they also have other specific requirements and regulations for employers depending on the regional office agreement they have signed. For example, the Faf have regional office agreements like Almega ServiceFöretagen-

The window cleaning agreement, Al Almaga ServiceFöretagen- Cleaning in house, employers alliance Sports etc. while HRF have agreements like Almaga Tjänsteföretagen Spel's, Almaga Service companies and Almaga Tjänsteföretagen -regarding Bingo Halls (Fastighets, n.d; HRF, n.d). Thereby, employers are obliged to provide workers with the working conditions they signed under their agreement with the trade union.

Besides the trade unions that represent the interests of workers, The Swedish Work Environment Authority also have the task to ensure that laws about the work environment and working hours are carefully followed by companies and organisations (Riksdag, 2021; Swedish Work Environment Authority, n.d). Further, their main objective is to minimize occupational hazards and improve the work environment from a holistic perspective per the work environment act which stipulates that all employees in Sweden have the basic right to a good working environment. Within the work environment act, it is the employer's responsibility to ensure a safe working environment and follow rules and regulations relating to systematic work environment management. However, some workplaces in Sweden have safety representatives who represent the interests of employees, make demands on the work environment, and puts the employer in check if there are any shortcomings (Swedish Work Environment Authority, n.d)

The existence of the unions and the organisation above which are also examples of "the agency of labour" in the Swedish work environment are necessary because they help promote safe working environment, good working conditions and employment security for workers. Thus, it will lead to work satisfaction at

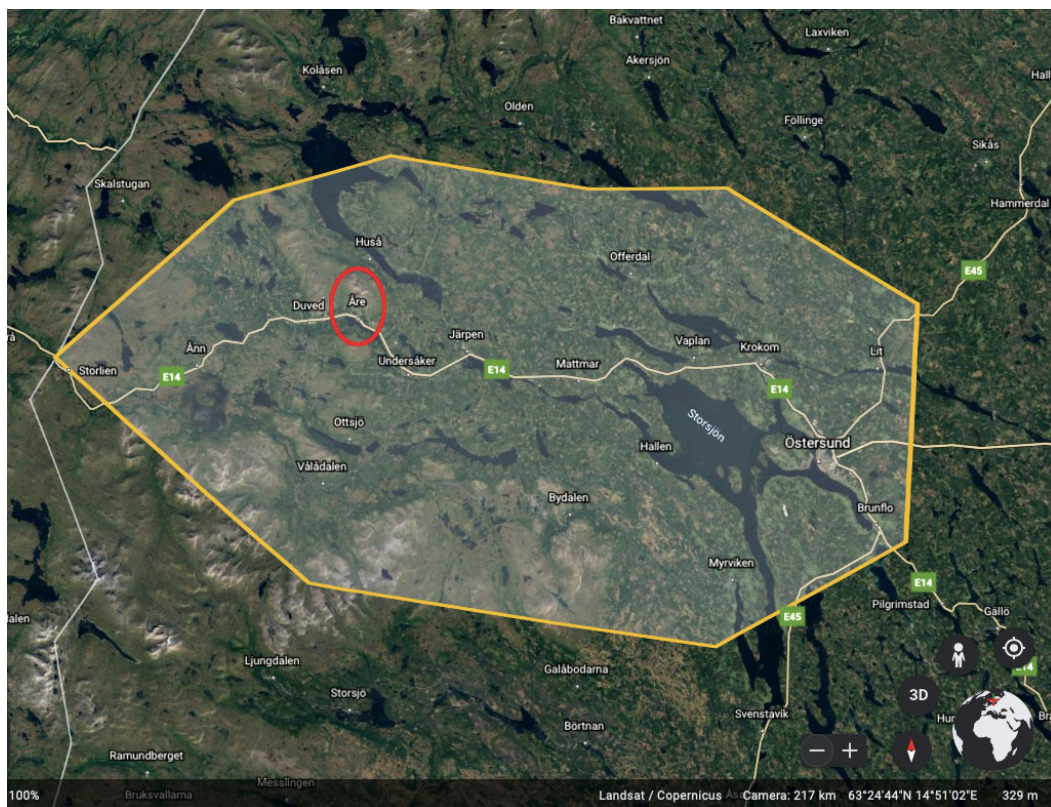
the workplace. In the following sections I will explain Åre in the context of growth pole together with the social and economic forces that are likely to push employers in providing working conditions contrary to the union agreements or the Swedish Work environment Authority's regulations.

### **Åre as a growth pole**

"Growth pole" is an economic development strategy that Francois Perroux propagated in 1955. It is described as a development paradigm that is executed to revitalise areas in the context of local or regional planning, resource allocation, and community exposure (Lee, 2016). Commonly, the growth pole concept is purposely opted because of its "trickle-down benefits" to its surrounding areas (Scott & Storper, 2005). As a result of these multiplier effects, the surrounding areas will also experience enormous economic growth in the long run. In many cases, tourism is also seen as a straightforward economic development tool that also has numerous multiplier effects (Wall & Mathieson, 2006). That is why most countries/regions and local areas opt for this industry whenever they plan on venturing into a sector that can help revamp their economy in a short period. "The central idea of the growth poles theory is that economic development, or growth, is not uniform over an entire region, but instead takes place around a specific pole (or cluster). This pole is often characterised by core (key) industries around which linked industries develop, mainly through direct and indirect effects" (Mukherjee, n.d, p.4). In the case of Åre, tourism is the core industry. Through tourism, the hospitality industry in the area purchases goods, services and employs workers from the surrounding

areas. The goods may include food crops from the local farms, and services may also include laundry services for hotels from local businesses, and so on. The above can be termed as the direct effects of growth pole from the core region, whereas for the indirect effects, we can argue about the goods and services consumed by the people employed at the core region. Growth pole strategy is one of the highly debatable geographical development strategies as far as economic growth is concerned, and the below diagram gives a graphical explanation of the growth pole phenomena.

Figure 1



*In figure 1: when a region is identified as a growth point (within the red boundary), linked industries (industries whose services and products maybe be demanded) and labour from immediate peripheral areas (Duved, Undersåker, Järpen, Östersund etc. -*

within the yellow boundary) and beyond (Sundsvall, Stockholm, Gothenburg etc.) start agglomerating around the pole. As a result, workers start to migrate to the pole in search of a job, thereby creating a cluster around the pole due to the polarisation of economic activities around it. Hence, employers will have access to a pool of labour.

Figure 2

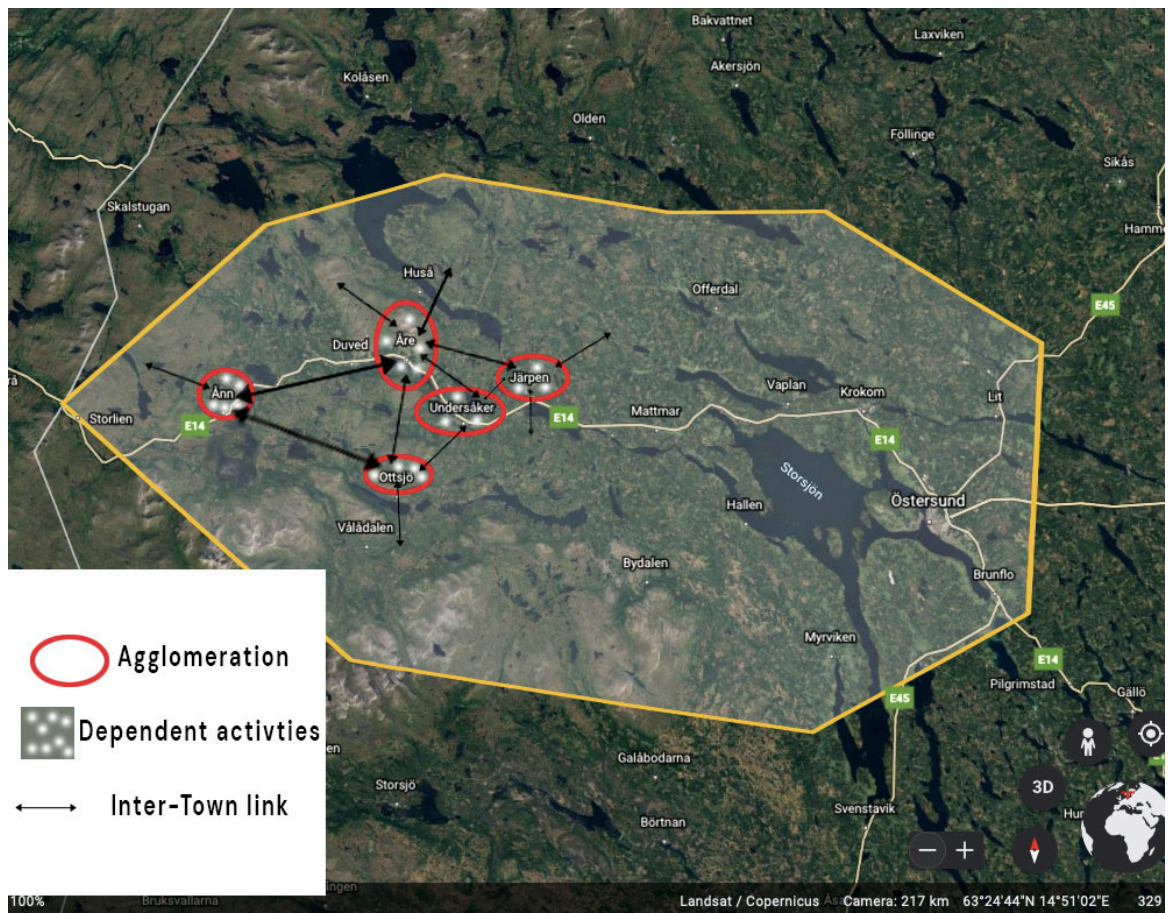


Figure 2: The primary Growth pole, in the long run, triggers the development of a secondary growth point within the same region. Thus, the secondary growth point may connect with the primary growth pole and grow together to become one big pole. In the

*case of Åre, its nearby towns and industries are assumed to grow and join it to become one big tourist zone in the long run.*

Tourism in Åre was developed, taking into advantage the towns favourable climate and the mountains. In fact, the town's economic development can be linked to several features or businesses within the hospitality industry, just like any tourism-dependent area (Frederick, 1993). This is similar to what He et al. (2012) described as a town practising a "resource-dependent development" strategy. With this kind of development strategy, a particular town capitalises on its natural resources and other peculiar physical conditions to create a vibrant economic climate where to some extent, industries and labour from the surrounding areas can also benefit extensively from the town.

Åre is surrounded by nearby towns like Duved, Undersåker, Brattland and Järpen and most of the people living in these areas commute daily to work in Åre (Lundmark, 2006) which is known for its sports tourism worldwide. Although the town itself is not the seat of the Åre Municipality, Järpen is; however, its geographical qualities supersede its nearby areas, making it one of the leading ski destinations in Europe and a destination for economic activities for businesses and labour found within its immediate periphery and beyond. For example, before the winter season, labour can be sourced as far as from the southern parts of Sweden or even from abroad.

The development of growth poles mostly results in agglomeration of diseconomies, economic pressures, and underdevelopment in its peripheral regions (Hermansen, 1969). This, in principle, results in corruption, high

competition, and economic inequalities such as low wages and occupational segregation (Castells-Quintana & Royuela, 2014; Naghmana et al.,). Thus, it will create social classes in the long run at the core region. Although the localization of businesses in the core area leads to economic growth and high productivity which should cause stronger competition to obtain workers (Giuliano et al., 2019) resulting in higher wages and other good working conditions for the workers, however, it can be assumed that, this is not always the case when fewer leading firms are found in that area and the supply of labour exceeds its demands (In the case of Åre, Holiday Club and Ski Star). In a situation where there are fewer major businesses employing greater percentage of the labour force, one will be inclined to agree that the viability of social divisions and segmentation in the labour market in that area is a possibility. Hence it will not be uncommon to witness structural inequalities and lagging working conditions. This is because of the economic and social stress created by the labour surplus which pushes managers in ethical dilemmas.

In the following section, I will delve into working conditions, the social division of labour and segmentation within the tourism labour market to demonstrate how the workers that moves to tourism destinations are stratified and the conditions that they are likely to work in.

### **Aspects of working conditions, social divisions of labour and segmentations within the tourism labour market.**

According to Porta (2014), working conditions can be described as factors or situations which could be good or bad that workers are susceptible to at the workplace. This could range from physical conditions, economic through to psychosocial and social conditions. Similarly, International Labour Organization (n.d) describes working conditions as fundamental components to every paid work and employment relationship, which also covers issues ranging from working period to remuneration as well as mental demands and physical conditions that exist in the workplace.

In the capitalistic production processes, workers are seen as co-creators of workplace processes and the relationship between them and their employees (Castree et al., 2004). This illuminates why workers, and their employers are placed in different categories in reference to their working aims and objectives in accordance with the rules of capitalism. Further, firms operating in a competitive market mostly implement workplace strategies that are barely in the interest of the employees. Such strategies include replacing labour with machines, salary reduction, outsourcing workers outside the firm, and many other major strategies (Castree et al., 2004). Although there could be room for negotiations between employers and employees on certain work conditions such as wage cuts, however, there is a threshold to these negotiations, and workers can be powerless in that regard.

Meanwhile, the tourism industry is widely known to employ mostly low skilled or semi-skilled workers to form most of its workforce (Baum, 1996). Unarguably, these workers' low skills mix accentuates the industry's capacity to provide its workers with low salaries and other working conditions (Wood,1992). Further, it is worth noting that these working classes constitute most of the working percentage while the skilled workers take a small percentage. The semi-skilled or low skilled workers occupy housekeeping roles, food service, reception and other areas which mostly requires physical skills. In contrast, the skilled workers occupy the marketing, management, maintenance, and other areas which might also require training or educational competency. In geographical terms, this concept of labour classifications is not subjected to only the labour market in a mountainous tourism destination. However, it is a general situation in all geographical tourism landscapes due to the usual "human social/skills differences" (Wood,1992). Paradoxically, according to Castree et al. (2004), it is the spatial division of labour that creates the social differences in the different labour markets because labour in a particular geographical area may share similar social qualities (skills, gender, education, etc.), which may be divergent to the others in a different geographical area. In other words, "the fact that workers all share a local existence is something that differentiates them geographically" (p.8).

In other job classifications, employees in the tourism industry can also take up either indoor or outdoor job roles or both, which could range from lift operation, Ski instructing through to roles such as snow vehicle driving, attendants in restaurants, receptionists in hotels and many more (Ainsworth & Purss, 2009).

Concurrently, among others in this new economy, the tourism labour market has been experiencing persistent "structural inequalities", and as such, gender, race and nationality or tribe remains core employment criteria (Carnoy 2000; Tilly, 1998; Waldinger & Lichter 2003).

We can again witness different calibre of people who work with different educational credentials and skills in the industry. Hitherto, migrant workers mostly occupy "secondary jobs" such as cleaning, which are poorly paid, mostly precarious, and short-termed as opposed to the "primary jobs" in the tourism labour market with good salaries (Agustin, 2003; Rosewarne, 2001). This can be attributed somehow to their poor language skills, racial background, low educational level, and low union representation for secondary jobs (Milkman, 2000). Hence poor working conditions become the order of the day. To some extent, the service labour market could also be said to be polarised, with more female workers than male workers denoting a gender-segregated industry (Waldinger & Lichter, 2003; McDowell, 2009). In the following section, I will delve into precarious working conditions demonstrated in the tourism labour market to explain unfavourable working conditions that diminish workers' satisfaction in a tourism destination.

### **Precarious working conditions in the tourism labour market.**

In the "tourism labour conundrum", as underlined by Zampoukos & Ioannides (2011), when cross-examining the superficiality in the geography of tourism

worker and workers, it was emphasised that most tourism employees work under unfavourable working conditions. Such as low wages, precarious working contracts and not many opportunities for training are given to them at the workplace, thereby lowering their chances of any professional career development. This is because other than most of these workers taking the jobs based on their attraction to the “lifestyle” and “party culture” aspects of it, (Ainsworth & Purss, 2009) majority of them do not have sufficient professional or educational qualifications coupled with the fact that most of the workers especially those in the housekeeping department are immigrants from the global south desperately in need of a job to survive and/ or having difficulties adapting into their host countries or communities (Aguilar & Herod, 2006). Therefore, they accept any kind of job even though the working conditions might not be favourable without them moving to a different location with promising working conditions. Not only do tourism workers accept their working conditions because they are out of choice, as in the case of the immigrants from the global south. However, according to Zampoukos (2018), workers in the Swedish context are spatially "embedded" (family ties, locality, and labour market) and "embodied" (education level, marital status etc.). Thus, the combination of these two components is susceptible to their mobility decisions.

Meanwhile, employment in the tourism industry, especially in the hotel sector, is mostly precarious because of its seasonal nature and as such, employers adopt adjustable recruitment strategies (Adler& Adler, 2003). In addition, the seasonal demand of tourism workers makes employment in the industry recurring and can sometimes prolong over several months or years while being short-termed and precarious (Gallagher & McLean Parks, 2001; Lautsch, 2002). The adjustable

recruitment strategies that come about due to the seasonal nature of the tourism industry imply that employers are liable to providing their workers with short-term working contracts and other working conditions that might not be unfavourable to the workers. The flexibility of the recruitment strategies in the tourism labour market makes the quality of employment questionable.

According to Castellanos & Pedreño (2006), such flexible recruitment strategies adversely affect employment quality in the tourism industry. Such strategies perpetuate the provision of precarious and part-time employment; outsourcing employees to reduce labour/business costs and increased work schedules beyond regular hours is the new norm in tourism labour employment (Puech, 2004). On that account, the working conditions of workers especially, their work-life balance, has been significantly impacted (Seifert & Messing, 2006)

In the context of flexible recruitment mechanisms used by service managers in recent times, it is worth noting that outsourcing has become a common strategy for most of these managers (Donada & Nogatchewsky, 2009). This preference primarily seeks to avoid the complexities that come with the administration of various departments in the hotel or other sectors (Crichton. & Edgar, 1995). In the service industry, outsourcing employees from third-party companies to administer critical departments in the industry is quite common and has been identified as one primary source of precarious working conditions in the tourism labour employment (Cañada, 2016). This practice is more peculiar to the hotel industry than others because they mainly seek external cleaning companies, laundry services, restaurant services, and others to help reduce their workload. According to Cañada (2018), outsourcing is beneficial to most

businesses because it is regarded as an effective cost elimination strategy while adversely affecting working conditions.

Further, "The spread of this model of outsourcing in housekeeping departments in many hotels has had multiple consequences for a 'labour group' that was already experiencing a substantial deterioration in their working conditions. To a certain extent, it has contributed to making these conditions even more precarious. Many workers describe this change as a traumatic process that has degraded their work and hence their living conditions" (p.661).

Outsourcing can be linked to low salaries, social benefits, and minimal union representation of workers regardless of their "skills mix" (Dube & Kaplan, 2010). Nevertheless, salaries and other work benefits tend to be higher for in house employees than those outsourced to work in different departments (Abraham, 1990). This denotes that outsourcing, which is associated with flexible recruitment strategies used in the service industry to help curb volatility caused by the industry's seasonal nature (Lamminmaki, 2009), has done more harm than good to the working conditions of tourism workers. It has done that by diminishing the quality of working conditions and services provided across the hospitality industry (Warhurst et al., 2012). To this effect, as the findings of this study will demonstrate, outsourcing has a substantial impact on the creation of precarious working conditions in the tourism industry. Then again, industry leaders can also classify precarious working conditions as an ethical or unethical decision depending on the instances or ethical climate under which it was formulated. The following section explores the aspects of ethical leadership to explain ethical dilemmas that can lead to the creation of social divisions, precarious working conditions, and other unfavourable working conditions.

## **Ethical leadership in the workplace**

It has been well established in various urban geography literatures that spatial concentration of businesses and people promote economic growth, starting from the core and spreading to its neighbouring regions. While this is true and it also has other numerous economic advantages, its disadvantages both at the core area and its peripheries cannot be disregarded. The disadvantages primarily include diseconomies of agglomeration and high economic pressure because of the rapid growth in the core area as well as economic stagnation in its neighbouring areas. This gives venue for economic and social problems such as corruption, pressure on social amenities, long waiting times and economic inequality (Castells-Quintana & Royuela, 2014; Pandit et al., 2018; Račarević, 2019; Naghmana et al., 2021; Richardson, 1995) leading to social divisions in labour and the provision of precarious working conditions. These problems are eminent as far as economic growth at the core areas is concern and the impacts can be witnessed in the workplace as well. Thus, managers and business leaders tackle these problems differently depending on their ethical stance and their actions and policies framed in response to counter the negative impacts of the agglomeration of businesses and people partly depends on their kind of leadership style in the workplace.

In the workplace, the decision-making process is affected chiefly by individual components. These components are (a) the stakeholders consisting of the management, supervisors, and proprietor's ethical stance (b) company's code of

ethics, values, and societal norms (Upchurch, 1998). For that matter, decisions in any organisation can be impacted by both internal and external components that interrelate to create individualistic ethical values and preferences, which affects the organisation's decision-making climate and the economic geography (Cyert & March, 1963). Not only the stakeholders can be said to have the sole power in shaping the decision-making climate of an enterprise or the economic geography of a place, however, according to Herod (1997), workers can also shape the economic geography of a particular place in a manner that assists their self-reproduction. Further from Herod, although it does so not under its preferred conditions- structures that could be political, managerial; geography, history, ethical systems, and other components beyond their control influence such actions. Therefore, geographical, and other themes must be factored in as part of the components that help workers shape their economic landscapes. In decision-making at the workplace, ethical components cannot be ruled out, especially when deciding on issues such as working conditions, which can generate an ethical dilemma.

The prominent ethical predicaments are mostly identified when stakeholders are dealing with employees (Crane et al., 2016). The issues of interest could range from sexual harassment and right working conditions to fair treatment of disabled workers. Unethical decisions could lead to unsatisfied employees at the workplace, mostly if made on the grounds of "personal gains" or "out of duty". According to Stratton-Lake (1999) on the work of Kant ethics, our decision cannot be formulated on ethical or moral grounds if it was made "out of duty", for sympathy or personal benefits.

Ethics in business or at the workplace can be explained as "the study of business situations, activities, and decisions where issues of right and wrong are addressed" (Crane et al., 2016, p5). On the other hand, according to Oxford languages, leadership can be described as "the action of leading a group of people or an organisation" (Lecico, n.d). As simple as the definition may sound, leaders other than leading are also obliged with creating necessary working conditions under which their followers can live and again, effective leadership at the workplace also thrives on ethical or moral decisions (Burns, 1978; Brown & Treviño, 2006). Working conditions obliged to be created by leaders can be satisfactory or unsatisfactory depending on the ethical decision climate under which it was made. Also, it is possible that workers can be satisfied with certain aspects of their working conditions and unsatisfied with others. In order to satisfy workers at the workplace, the decisions of leaders or stakeholders should be based on ethical grounds. This, in turn, will lead to higher productivity levels or economic success in the company through trust in the stakeholder's leadership (Brown & Treviño, 2006). "Ethics" must be critically considered when leadership of any style is in focus (Hackman et al., 2013). This is because leaders are the makers of organisation decisions, and any plans or decisions made on an unethical ground could have an undesirable or unsatisfactory result on the followers. The author further added that "If you consider, for example, the negative impact of leaders such as Adolph Hitler and Joseph Stalin, you begin to appreciate the importance of the relationship between leadership and ethics. Whether a leader is guiding a problem-solving group, a small business, a multimillion-dollar organisation, or a national government, they exert significant influence. Leaders must weigh the impact they have on their followers as well as on others external to the group, organisation, or society"

(p336). Although when it comes to a workers-related ethical dilemma where one must choose between being ethical or unethical, the decision is mostly hard because manoeuvring around personal interest and company policies without being biased is uncommon. However, since a company's economic success on a larger scale depends on employees, treating workers fairly through excellent working conditions can amount to the company's economic success (Avey et al., 2012).

Ethical leadership, which can be described as a leadership style involving fair treatment of followers, can be explained under four components according to Hackman et al. (2013), drawing on Rest's work (1994). Ethical decisions do not happen unitarily, but they undergo specific psychological processes before any moral action occurs. He explains how people move around ethical dilemmas by identifying the issue at hand and further applying their moral judgment. After that, the individual deploys moral motivation and finally demonstrates or carries out an ethical behaviour based on moral intentions. Each of these components is necessary for any ethical decision. Whenever any of these components is absent, it might result in unethical decisions or behaviour when they find themselves in an ethical dilemma. The four components are believed to have been produced from 4 "intrapersonal and interpersonal communication processes" (p356). The components drawn from Rest's (1994) model are Moral sensitivity, moral judgement, moral motivation, and moral character:

### **Moral Sensitivity**

According to Hackman et al. (2013), this is the first step of the psychological processes that lead to moral action. Here, an individual recognises an ethical issue by acknowledging the effects on others, the possible cause of action, and each plausible strategy's impact. If one fails to recognise a moral issue and its effects on other people, it will be hard to make decisions based on moral grounds. For example, suppose an employer fails to recognise that not providing safety equipment for workers during this pandemic is a moral issue. In that case, it will be hard for him to find a solution to that or make some safety tools available for the workers. In this case, we could say that empathy and perspective thinking skills were not employed because such actions denote that the workplace's safety is not considered in the company's safety agenda or plans. It will be hard to solve an ethical issue if we become silent about it and ignore its impacts on other people. While some people might demonstrate this action to save money, i.e., they might find it expensive to buy face masks, hand sanitisers and others for all their employees, others might not want to discuss any ethical actions perhaps to avoid ethical conflicts or to prove that they are in control. Therefore, to employ moral recognition, managers ought to extricate themselves from their usual "mental models" and further assess a situation from a neutral ground to devise possible options and formulate possible solutions.

### **Moral Judgment**

Once an ethical problem has been recognised, one must formulate a creative solution or the best options suitable for the problem Hackman et al., (2013). This brings into question "what is the right or wrong approach" in dealing with the ethical dilemma. Here the possible cause of actions identified during the "moral

sensitivity or recognition stage" aids in making the right decision. Moral judgement has been studied by numerous researchers, which makes much information on it available. However, considering the focus on ethical leadership, this review was narrowed down to studies involving the use of the "Defining Issue Test" as an instrument of measurement. According to the results from these measurements from Hackman et al. (2013) on the work from Rest (1994) model, ethical reasoning aids in making ethical judgements, and it emerges from solid principles like fairness, cooperation, and respect for others. Further, the ability to reason ethically can be higher with an increase in education level; however, a strong ego, self-indulgence, and other qualities that develop with an increase in one's educational level can disrupt their ethical reasoning process. Moral judgments can also be increased by undertaking practical ethics courses that involve real-life scenarios and how one can approach or manoeuvre around them. For example, employers can increase their moral judgments in the workplace by taking practical courses in ethics to harness their ethical decision-making skills. Again, to increase moral judgements, decisions should be made, considering reality other than impractical assumptions, and people should hold employers accountable for their actions or decisions if possible.

### **Moral Motivation**

Again, from Hackman et al. (2013); Rest (1994) model, at this point, the moral motivation to act is partly dependent on important values or components like social approval, job security, career development and one's wealth. Internal conflict may arise when these values go against moral values. For an ethical

decision to be made, moral values must outweigh other values that can sway one from making ethical decisions. On the other hand, "emotions and rewards" also play an important role in moral motivation. For example, moral actions at the workplace that are rewarded are likely to be emulated.

Conversely, actions that are not rewarded might not be repeated. This shows that even if moral action is not rewarded for a long time, its emulation could decline. Similarly, if any inappropriate behaviour is rewarded, moral motivation could decline because most people will practice immoral values instead of moral ones.

Moral motivation can be increased by rewarding appropriate behaviours at the workplace. This could be done by creating a reward system where adherence to moral values is compensated through bonuses, public appraisal, etc. However, if the wrong values are compensated because of their benefits to a company, it can significantly affect the workers' moral values. For example, if workers are made to lie or cheat just to the company's advantage, they might be rewarded for adhering to wrong values. Therefore, reward systems should be based on moral processes and results.

### **Moral Character**

Moreover, from the Rest (1994) model, this is the stage where plans are executed by overcoming adversities through courage (Hackman et al., 2013).

Implementing plans requires a moral character that is not likely to submit to social pressures or biases. Individuals with weak moral character are likely not

to perform ethical tasks because they might succumb to internal opposition, fatigue and distractions. Conversely, as identified from Rest's model, people with strong ethical character are likely to adhere to ethical values when performing any actions or duties. Hence, they might prevail in their moral task despite pressures. Confidence and self-belief characterise a moral character. Individuals with strong self-belief in their abilities are likely to persist until they have concluded their tasks. Having such confidence to execute a task even though there are obstacles present requires one to have an "internal locus of control". With that, individuals take responsibility for their lives and what happens to them other than believing that what happens to them is beyond their control or happened because of external factors. Moral character can be increased at the workplace through introspection and devising self-improvement strategies geared towards ethical actions.

The above psychological processes are believed to underpin ethical decisions whenever leaders or managers find themselves in ethical dilemmas. It can be contested that; how these psychological processes can be explained in reference to geography? To be precise, the two workplaces are hypothesised to be located in a growth pole with the supply of labour exceeding demand due to the migration of workers to the pole, as we have already elucidated in the previous section. The stress created by the pool of labour is likely to push managers into ethical dilemmas. Hence, proper working might not be appropriately considered.

## **Conceptual Framework**

The diagram below is a graphical representation of the conceptual framework for this study. With this framework, an argument was made to illustrate the causation between the components with the arrows depicting as such. A logical understanding of the relationships between the theoretical components, which are also related to the research problem and findings, are made. This framework is based on previous literature, findings, and the assumption that some components of the literature and the finding are interrelated and relevant to this study. Therefore, representing them in the form of a framework or a model was needed to facilitate the logical connections between each other and the relevance of such connections to our research problem.

In the framework, Åre was theorised as a growth pole with polarised economic activities leading to people and businesses close and beyond migrating there for job opportunities. As a growth pole, its core industry is tourism, from which most of the business ventures were forged. The town's tourism involvement has made it a prominent sports tourism hub in the Nordics and beyond. This has seen people and businesses migrating there to capitalise on the business opportunities that the tourism development in the areas has produced. Such events create diseconomies of agglomeration and high economic pressure because of the rapid growth in the core area as well as economic stagnation in its peripheries. This gives rise to economic and social problems such as corruption, pressure on social amenities, long waiting times and economic inequality.

Economic inequality among others, creates social division of labour, provision of precarious employment and employers' uncommon practice of providing good working conditions. This assertion assumes that the supply of labour will exceeds demand and as a result workers can be sourced at any given time without much stress; therefore, there will be no need to provide quality working conditions taking into consideration the availability of a pool of workers. This impacts the labour geography of the area or how the workers are embedded in that geographical space and their spatial relation to that geographical space.

In these geographical spaces, workers have the power to choose their workplace and their working conditions, however, their structural powers of making changes of any kind are limited as it has already been established. Thus, their choice of workplace and the working conditions under which they work are influenced partly by their geographic area and their employer's ethical leadership stance. Therefore, workers are somehow powerless in the context of working conditions, and its formulation is far beyond their control because of their low bargaining power. Although they are active agents capable of shaping their economic geography, nevertheless, the formulation of their working conditions at the workplace is influenced by ethical leadership despite labour agency's structural powers which is mobilized through its associational powers.

While it is true that through the collective effort of labour agency in network and chains such as the trade unions, the structural powers of workers are enforced, however, in a situation where demand of labour exceeds supply, it creates economic and social stress which pushes managers in ethical dilemmas.

Hence proper working conditions might not be appropriately considered. In such a situation of labour surplus, workers can also be compelled to take up roles with working conditions which might not meet the minimum requirements of their Unions or might not be aware that their working conditions are not up to standard. Thus, since, labour might be desperate for work or might not be fully aware of their contradicting working conditions as against union regulations, this could leave room for exploitation on the path of employees or some employers ignoring to fully fulfil the needed requirements. As we have previously discussed herein, ethical leadership is what determines the stance of employers in a scenario like this.

In most cases, working conditions cannot be formulated without the interplay of the employer's values, morality, and interest, thereby making ethical leadership one of the prerequisites for good working conditions. Notably, ethical leadership and good working conditions lead to a higher level of job satisfaction and productivity, trust in leadership, behaviour emulation and reduction in counterproductive behaviours such as bullying, verbal abuse, harassment, and many others, which can also be a factor for workers staying on a job longer. Above all, the problems perceived to be created by Åre as a growth pole can be navigated around fairly with ethical leadership at the workplace. For example, ethical leadership will not give room for corruption, structural inequalities, and many others. Again, workers embeddedness in geographical spaces (in this context workplaces in Åre) and their relation to it can also be influenced by the ethical leadership in that workplace. For instance, good working conditions will enable workers to stay on a particular job for longer while less structural

inequalities in a particular geographical workplace can give fair chances of employment to potential workers.

Figure 3

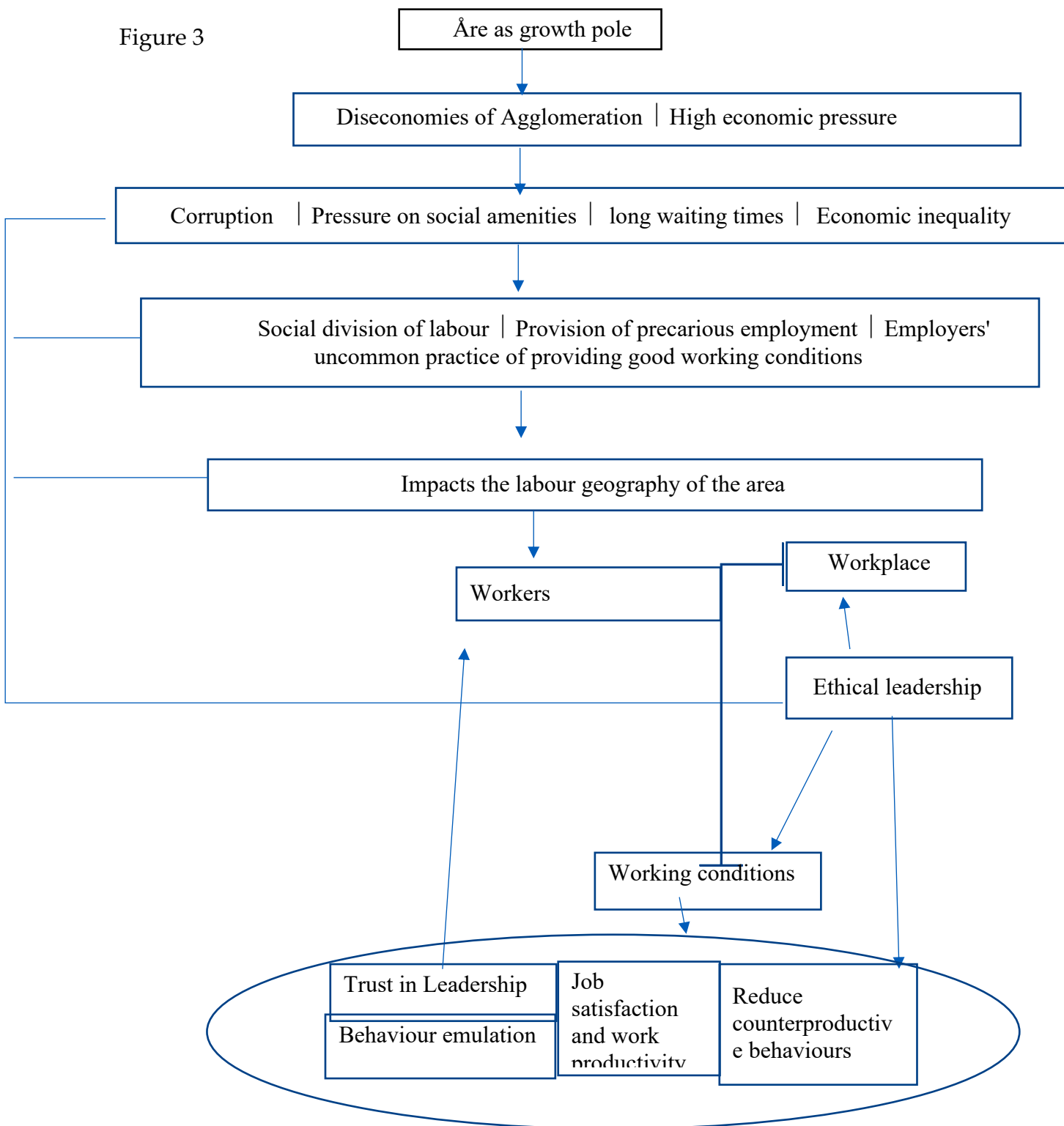


Figure 3: A conceptual framework showing the relationship and the interrelationships between the literature components used to support this study.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Methodology**

This chapter highlights the research process used, including the research design and strategy, data sources, sampling technique, data collection methods, and how the analysis & presentation were made.

#### **Research Design and strategy**

A case study design was appropriate for this research since this paper investigated a contemporary phenomenon, focusing on the dynamics in leadership, ethics, and working conditions within a real-life context (Yin, 2003; Meyer, 2001). This method is also appropriate when the researcher is particularly interested to know and understand the experience of the participants by investigating a case because of its uniqueness and commonality (Stake, 1995). Case study designs can be exploratory, descriptive or explanatory (Teegavarap et al., 2008; Hancock & Algozinne, 2011). However, based on the research objectives, explanatory case study design was used to explore answers to the research questions. Explanatory case study design is used to identify cause-effect- relationships, how events occurs and how it can influence certain outcomes (Hancock & Algozinne, 2011). Particularly, it helps to answer “How” and “why” questions (Yin, 2014) and since this study was about investigating the “How” and “why” of ethical leadership on working conditions, it was considered as the most appropriate design.

Concerning research strategy, a qualitative research method was used despite the tight schedules of the employees during the winter in the study area and the presence of a global pandemic with strict social distancing measures. Qualitative methods help understand the research participants' attitudes, interests, and humane experiences (Hay, 2010; Bogdan, 1997; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). It also allows the participants to express their opinions and concerns in a more intrinsic way (Azungah, 2018). This would have been different with quantitative methods, which are better at quantifying things (Black, 1999) and again, the participants would not have been able to explain their meaning of the questions that was asked of them (Carr, 1994). Thus, the research objectives would not have been met.

### **Sources of data and Sampling Technique**

For this study, only primary sources of data were used in collecting information for this study, and it was done through in-personal and Zoom interviews. The in-personal interviews were conducted at the convenience of the participants for their subjective views. Namely through a Fika (Swedish coffee break) at a restaurant. Subjective views of the participants are important when interviews are used as the sole source of data (Marshall and Rossman, 2006)

With the sampling technique, employees from Ski Star Åre and Holiday club Åre were selected through non-random methods such as purposive and snowball non-probability sampling techniques. The purposive non-probability sampling method was used to select some employees with experience and

knowledge about the research questions. Creswell (2007) explained "... this means that the inquirer selects individuals and sites for the study because they can purposefully inform and understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon in the study ..." (p. 125). At the same time, a snowball technique was also partly used to sample other respondents. This technique makes use of identifying an initial subject who then provide the names of other subjects (Lewis-Beck et. al., 2003; Tongco, 2007; Tansey, 2007). Moreover, in the end, the respondents then suggested other informants who have equal knowledge about the study, and they were also interviewed for their views.

### **Methods of data collection, data analysis and presentation.**

For this study, interviews were used as a primary instrument for data collection. The employees from both areas were interviewed. The interviews' questions were open-ended, and 10 employees from both Ski Star Åre and Holiday club Åre were interviewed in an in-depth manner to explore their views on the interview questions. The interview was structured, i.e., the interview was formal and similar across the participants, while it was guided by pre-codes. These pre-codes were important because they help to compare the answers among the respondents (Mathers et. al., 2000). This particularly was necessary since I interviewed two groups of people from two distinct tourism entities. This method guided the interview checklist and, at the same time, helped to obtain the necessary data. Eight of the interviews were done via zoom and two were done in-person while following social distancing measures. The interviews conducted via zoom were recorded using the recording function in zoom with

their consent. Similarly, a mobile phone was used to record the interview done in person with their consent. With all the employees' consent as already discussed, all interviews were recorded and later transcribed verbatim, and this helped to identify the patterns in the data (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Afterwards, they were then coded into major and sub-themes based on the theoretical framework. Among the major themes are Ethical leadership & precarious employment, aspects of working conditions, social divisions of labour & segmentation, perilous times, and the structural powers of workers, of which most of them contains subthemes. Moreover, the interview results were analysed based on contents for interpretation.

Below is a table with details of the interviewees:

Figure 4

<b>Interviewee number</b>	<b>Company</b>	<b>Department</b>	<b>Role</b>
<b>1</b>	Holiday Club Åre	Restaurant Department	Restaurant Assistant
<b>2</b>	Holiday Club Åre	Housekeeping Department	Caretaker
<b>3</b>	Holiday Club Åre	Housekeeping Department	Caretaker
<b>4</b>	Holiday Club Åre	Restaurant Department	Restaurant leader
<b>5</b>	Holiday Club Åre	Reception Department	Receptionist
<b>6</b>	Ski Star Åre	Rental Shop	Service Attendant

7	Ski Star Åre	Housekeeping Department	Caretaker
8	Ski Star Åre	SciTech workshop	Service Technician
9	Ski Star Åre	Housekeeping department	Caretaker
10	Ski Star Åre	Reception Department	Receptionist

Figure 4: Table showing profiles of informants for this study.

### **Ethical considerations and Positionality**

Ethical questions about the social role of research and how the researcher relates to the participants are commonly raised in all methods used in conducting research in the human geography scholarship (Dowling, 2009). In any case, the researcher should be concerned about anonymity, confidentiality, privacy, power relations and informed consent (Goodwin, et. al., 2019; Dowling, 2009). Regarding this study, employment conflict was the main concern and as a result it was taken into careful consideration to avoid controversies that might result from workers participating in this study. Particularly, since this study was much interested in ethical leadership, participants were assured of confidentiality, anonymity and again they had the chance to opt out during the interview in case they do not feel comfortable sharing their experiences. All the interviews started with the researcher introducing himself, the research topic, objectives, their

rights as participants as well as seeking their voluntary consent for the interview.

According to Stake (1995) describing a phenomenon can be shaped by our mood, experience, and prejudice. This could impact the credibility and transparency of the study. However, highlighting the researcher's positionality can help foster credibility and transparency of the study (Hill, 2017). Mainly, this research idea came into mind after working in the housekeeping role in Åre for a year. Concerns from myself and other workers were raised regarding working conditions and as to whether they conform to the Swedish Union rules or not. In as much as my experience working there was not excellent, I tried to minimise the biases that might come from my experience by interviewing people that I was not close to at the time of working there for their subjective view. Again, I tried to report the views of the participants rather than mine and this is described by Creswell (2017) to increase transparency and credibility of the study.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Results**

The findings from this study resulted in five major themes after the thematic coding. These themes are supported by sub-themes which further explain them in "micro terms". First, the themes were coded, taking into consideration the research questions, literature review and research objectives. However, theorizing Åre as a growth pole was merely used to explain the economic and social pressures that can push managers into ethical dilemmas. Thus, the growth pole theory was not overly used in the result and discussion section. In the subsequent sections, the significant themes together with its sub-themes are rigorously discussed:

#### **Ethical leadership and precarious working conditions**

Ethical leadership varies in its approach regarding geographical workplaces and the individualistic characteristics of the leader or manager-. The findings identified that good working conditions is associated with ethical leadership, whereas precarious working condition which can decrease work satisfaction can be associated with unethical leadership style at the workplace. Remarkably, the exhibition of ethical leadership significantly differed in the two tourism workplaces in Åre and in the following section, the variations will be discussed with reference to Ethical leadership and a particular facet of working conditions where precariousness is common, or situations facilitated by precarious working conditions.

## **Recruitment channels and the working contract conundrum**

As a requirement by most localities and governments, the employment of workers should be done through a fair channel. This is to ensure fair employment of workers. As the study reveals, most of the respondents applied for the job through an advertised link/post that was either available on the company's website or the Swedish public employment agency's website. Meanwhile, others went directly to the company to inquire about any vacant role, which they were lucky in the end. Mostly, previously employed workers use this approach; however, it was revealed that potential employees also use this approach to secure a job. Again, some of the workers are employed based on referrals from current employees, previous employees or acquaintances:

*Yeah, for the first time, I was recruited through their website because they put up an advert every winter season, so I applied through their online page. Then other times, including this season, I just called the manager that I had and see if they had any job offers. So, I just talked to him, and yeah, I started working this season. But sometimes, they call back the reliable people from the previous season. (Interviewee 8, Ski Star Åre)*

*Okay, someone told me about Åre, and he requested for CV so that he could give it to the manager, so I gave him my CV but later on, he gave me the manager's email to forward my CV, which I did and later I was called to come to Åre for an interview so some weeks later I was called for work, yeah. (Interviewee 2, Holiday Club Åre)*

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Working contracts are offered to workers whenever they are successful in their interviews before they are recruited. They decide to either accept or reject based on their preferences and whether the terms and conditions can grant them job satisfaction. Sometimes workers could ask for changes in their employment conditions where necessary. In this study, most of the contract types were fair, and some conditions were based on collective agreement.

Employment contracts vary with respect to job roles, seasons, skills and needs. Namely, the contract terms and conditions of most of the job roles across the workplaces are similar with few glitches. It was demonstrated that the employers fulfil the contract conditions of most of the job roles; however, there are few employers or managers who barely adhere fully to the contract conditions:

*Actually, it is a bit hard to explain this because I have had three different managers at work since I started working. They all have different characters and different ways of management, so it is tough to generalise...the second manager I had, did not respect the type of contract one has, or the time mentioned in the contract. For instance, if the contract states that you are worth 50% let's say supposed you are working 25 hours a week, with him, you can even work 5 or 10 hours in a week, and you have no say in that to me it was really a worse and worst experience. And I remember one day, I was not put on timetable to work for almost three weeks so I decided to go there and find out if there was anything wrong*

*with me or in the ground going on because I was really blank about so I went, and he was like we are really sorry I have nothing to do with it, we don't have so much work here, I see your level of language is still low that's why we only put in people who can speak the language. (Interviewee 1, Holiday Club Åre)*

This can be attributed to their ethical standards, morals, and personal motivation. The study also reveals how some managers slightly disregard contract terms and conditions while others honour every bit of the contract terms given to workers. Mostly, the managers who keep their end of the bargain regarding the contract terms provide a straightforward contract with clear terms and conditions:

*Yeah. Everything was in my contract; they did fulfil it. (Interviewee 3, Holifday Club Åre)*

*They were pretty straightforward with the contract terms, and nothing changed when I started working. (Interviewee 10, Ski Star Åre)*

Although there were primarily positive experiences from most of the workers interviewed regarding the fulfilment of contract terms and conditions, a minority of the interviewed workers expressed a negative experience that affected their job satisfaction. It will be absurd to generalise that contract terms and conditions given to the workers in the workplaces under study are not mostly fulfilled; likewise, will it be absurd also to generalise that the terms and conditions are mostly fulfilled. However, we could attribute the cause for these

experiences to the individualistic personal characteristics of the managers. These personal characteristics are formed from their morals, values, and motivation.

### **The salary system**

The study shows that workers are typically paid the same hourly rate even if they work overtime or on odd hours. Nevertheless, inhouse employees such as those at the reception receives higher pay rate and other good working conditions as compared to workers from the housing keeping department. Notably, the housekeeping department is a third-party entity outsourced to administer the cleaning section of the hotel or the property. Although whenever some of them work overtime and the number of hours exceeds an average, they are given a document to sign to show they are satisfied with the workload; however, the hourly rate does not increase any higher for all the workers:

*I saw the job online, wrote to them, and they responded. They gave me 5 months contract with hourly payment. The hourly rate was SEK 127.00, and sometimes you get 6 hours, 6.5 hours or 7 hours a day. In case you do overtime, you are being paid at the same rate. You also have 30 minutes break. The management of the company are good people. The staff also do not bother anyone, since it is hotel work, so we dress our best and change when we get to work. (Interviewee 1, Holiday Club Åre)*

Again, travel expenses were not reimbursed yet; they were offered a discount to use the hotel rooms, nevertheless, this option was only available to inhouse

workers, sidelining workers from outsourced departments such as the housekeeping department. With regards to a rest break, flexible time was allocated for that; however, whether you will be paid or not depends on the type of contract you have or the nature of your work. In many ways, they consider it as an industry practice:

*We really did not have travels expenses, and we get paid when we work beyond our schedules; all of this is because SkiStar goes under hotels and restaurants union, and as an industry practice, you do not usually get your hourly rate increased because you worked overtime. So, I will say we were not paid overtime, only the standard rate. (Interviewee 9)*

*Yeah, in the restaurant, they made a deal with the workers that they can go and eat, but the management will not take away 30 minutes because they never know when there will be many customers, and maybe the workers cannot sit down for 30 minutes, so they did not want to take away a break of 30 minutes from their pay. So now you sit down for 10- 15 minutes to eat and then get back to work. Nevertheless, that also depends on whom you are talking to because some of the breakfast and the lunch personnel only works for 5 hours don't get 30 minutes, and if you work in the evening, you get half an hour, but they don't take that away. That is also if it is okay with us. Like, before we sign the papers, we are informed; that is how they do it here because usually, we don't have time to sit down for 30 minutes. They cannot count; the restaurant manager cannot be looking at everybody and say, have you been sitting down for exactly 30 minutes;*

*good, not for 40 minutes; are you sure? Good, or it 20 minutes. But what for those who sat down for 20 minutes. That was really good. Usually, it's the other way round, you eat for 10 minutes, and they take away the break 30 minutes and the money on it, but these days, they don't do that. So again, that also depends on which deal you have with them. If you have the deal that you eat and after eating you come back to service, then they wouldn't take away 30 minutes, but if you want to sit down every day for 30 minutes, then you sit down, and they take away 30 minutes from your pay. Most people don't want that, and they say what I am going to do with 30 minutes. It's just like sitting down for 5 minutes. You can't do anything, so that's how restaurant people are. (Interviewee 4)*

Outsourcing is beneficial for companies; however, its effects on working conditions were evident from this study. Even though the pay rate does not rise any higher for all the workers regardless of the time or condition, inhouse workers receive higher pay rates and other benefits like subsidies on using hotel facilities, Ski passes and others.

### **Stress and flexible working schedules**

During the winter seasons, more people travel to Åre for different tourism activities leading to more people in the area. However, In the year 2020, due to the travel restriction resulting from the Corona crisis, there was a tourism surge in the summer and winter. Such a surge was because more locals chose domestic tourism over international due to the travel restrictions that the government laid out. The increase in tourism in Åre led to more work roles and schedules, and as

a result, some workers needed to work extra more. This could cause stress, especially if the working period is mostly extended than usual and was not communicated to the workers beforehand:

*So, it's like when you are on a 9-hour schedule, 1 hour is for a break which they do not pay for. So, you work for 4 hours and take a break for an hour; then you continue for 4 hours more. But if there is more to be done sometimes, you work for 5 hours before you go on break and if there is not much work you can take it earlier. So, it is very stressful whenever I have to take a late break because we have a lot of customers to take care of.  
(Interviewee 5, Holiday Club Åre)*

*During the winter season, around February/March. There were a lot of rooms to be cleaned and sometimes we had to work until evening. When this happens, we have to wait and take the last bus home. You get home very hungry, eat, sleep and go to work the next day for the same schedule. It was very hectic. (Interviewee 7, Ski Star Åre)*

*So, when I worked in the ski tech, we started working at 7 am or 8 am, but then during the day, ski equipment is from our rental shops are sent to us because during the winter season, all the skis need to be checked and prepped and there are many skis, and on top of that, there are times that we get some from customers and this could take more time because sometimes there are faults that need to be fixed. So most often, we had to work till 11 pm or more prolonged. (Interviewee 8, Ski Star Åre)*

Despite how stressful the work can be during certain times within the year, the working schedule was very flexible. If one works more than the maximum hours according to the collective agreement regulations, the employees would have to sign a contract to show that they are comfortable with the work schedule. Although not all employees got the opportunity to sign such agreements, some of the workers did not:

*Yeah, per intervals like after 6 pm they add on to your pay, then after 7 pm, they add another one and so on. Moreover, if, let us say, you work for 200 hours a month, you have to sign a waiver like you are okay with it. (Interviewee 10, Ski Star Åre)*

While some received extra Kroner/hour after 6 pm or for odd hours, others got a flat hourly rate regardless of whether it is an odd day or hours:

*... In case you do overtime, you are being paid the same regular rate. You also have 30 minutes break. The management of the company are good people, and the staff do not bother anyone. Since it's hotel work, we dress neatly in our uniforms, and the work starts at 9 am, then there are 30 minutes for a break. (Interviewee 3, Holiday Club Åre)*

### **On-the-Job training / Future career**

Training in the form of orientation is needed before work can mainly be started. Similarly, on-the-job training is needed for advancements and to refresh knowledge and skills. In some circumstances, on-the-job training is provided to

workers to further sharpen their skills and they are awarded a certificate as proof of competency. This study reveals that on-the-job training was not a norm for some departments, whereas some departments update their workers with new knowledge. Furthermore, it was noted that the two tourism entities generally do not care about the employees' future. Notably, workers who are provided with on job training are likely to be satisfied with their work and can decide to plan their future career around their current role:

*Yeah, it was to deepen our understanding and learn more about the job that we had. In our department, a few people were planning to develop a career in the field they were working within. I know just a few who achieved their goals. They managed to study courses related to what they did at SkiStar. (Interviewee 10, Ski Star Åre)*

*No, not in Holiday Club. There are courses for waiters and waitresses so you can actually get a diploma. Saying I am a waitress, I know this, this and that. But it's a little bit costly, and it's not very common, unlike for hairdressers. For them, they have to go through that. Otherwise, they can't have a license, but it's not like that for a waitress or a waiter. But it's really good if you have it, but it's also not that easy to get a hold of. It is very common in Stockholm. And then there are a few restaurants in Sweden where you can do it because there needs to be someone really good, who teaches them and looks at them and everything. (Interviewee 5, Holiday Club Åre)*

Most workers from the tourism industry strive to study courses related to tourism, engineering and other programs depending on their role and as to whether they enjoyed the work as well as its working conditions:

*Before I started school, I was thinking about what jobs I had done and which I liked the most and where I liked the most fun. Then I ended up with tourism and destination development. (Interviewee 8, Ski Star Åre)*

### **Ethical leadership and aspects of working conditions**

Working conditions significantly impact the satisfaction of employees at the workplace. This is because they are considered the environment or the terms that govern the workplace's working conduct. The workplace's working conduct consists of regulations that centre around work schedules, work environment and other working conditions. These are mostly outlined in the employee's employment agreement. Notably, the hotel, restaurants, cleaning, and other industries under the Hotell och Restaurang Facket-HRF and, Fastighetsanställdas Förbund-Faf mostly have regulations concerning minimum working conditions under their collective bargaining agreement at the workplace. It also covers salaries, working environment, working hours, overtime pay, holiday pay, insurance, and other working conditions. In some cases, the union representatives assist both employees and employers with regards to negotiations of working conditions.

Although the collective agreement is supposed to protect employees from inadequate wages, exploitations and ensure that employers pay insurance and benefits in case of illness and accidents, however, most workers are not fully informed on these agreements, which could leave room for exploitation on the path of employees or some employers ignoring to fulfil the collective agreement fully. As we have previously discussed herein, ethical leadership is what determines the stance of employers in a scenario of this nature. Typically, ethical leaders are likely to fully fulfil the collective agreement or provide working conditions that are satisfying to the workers and at the same time prevents counterproductive behaviours at the workplace. Therefore, in the following section, the working conditions of the participants will be discussed to explain how their employers react to different working conditions which may have or not been stipulated in their employment agreement.

### **Safety protocols, rules, and regulation**

Safety protocols, as well as rules and regulations, are requirements at the workplace. It guides work conduct, protects workers, and reduces counterproductive behaviours that could have affected workplace productivity. Safety protocols are safety measures that are mostly developed from risk assessments. These safety measures are made known to the workers to understand the workplace's risks, hazards, and safeguarding measures. At the same time, the rules and regulations are measures put in place to direct workers' conduct. They are mostly put in place so the people can adhere to a specific code of conduct. It was observed that workers were oriented on these protocols other

than their work duties. While some employers oriented their employees during their first in-person interview or session, others were provided with a link to an online portal for them to abreast themselves with the protocols:

*Yeah, she mentioned all the company rules. She mentioned that you have to respect everyone, including your colleagues, staff and even the guest. You have to unite with everyone and not be naughty to any. Again, you should do what you're told and not use your discretion to do things. (Interviewee 2, Holiday Club Åre)*

*I think they're pretty good at their routines. They have work safety routines, like fire drills. It's really good. I think the only negative side of it is that, if people weren't working at the reception, they would not know about it. (Interviewee 5, Holiday Club Åre)*

*They have a standard that they follow and the machinery that we use to prep the skis, everything you need to work with, the services that we need to follow and stuff like that. So, I never thought I was doing something risky because all the time, you are working with something plastics and driving skis with the bolt driving machine. Of course, and we had like an introductory course for that, so I was not too worried about that. (Interviewee 8, Ski Star Åre)*

Putting safety protocols in place helps to protect workers while emplacing a code of conduct and ensuring that workers follow them helps prevent any behaviour from the workers that could subvert the company's goals and

objectives. Such behaviour can include sexual harassment, theft, fraud, workplace bullying, workplace aggression, sabotage, substance abuse, etc. Although the participants in this study did not recount many incidences of counterproductive behaviours at their workplace, the employers are believed to have reacted strongly towards such action. Presumably, even if such incidence happens, there were protocols in place to help resolve such counterproductive behaviours:

*There are certain protocols to follow as well. At first, we try to solve it between colleagues; if it does not work, then it is sent to the manager; if that does not also work, then it will be forwarded to higher managers, then to the HR departments until it is resolved. (Interviewee 4, Holiday Club Åre)*

### **Commanding respect with presence/ influence of behaviour/ behaviour emulation**

Ethical leaders at the workplace influence positively the behaviours of their subordinates, and their behaviours are emulated by the workers. From the study, it was demonstrated that workers observe and learn behaviours exhibited by their managers. They consider such behaviours as positive and worthy of emulation:

*Yeah, you can work more. Because if the employer is not worrying you and you have your freedom to work, then it motivates you to work efficiently. Also, if you are working with someone and like how you're being treated,*

*you learn from the person and do the same to others. She has motivated me to treat others equally regardless of their situation. (Interviewee 2, Holiday Club Åre)*

This depicts those positive behaviours of managers or employees at the workplace can significantly influence the behaviour of workers. Conversely, workers are likely not to emulate behaviours from the employers or managers that they consider to be not reasonably or positive. Again, the presence of the managers at the workplace was identified to command respect at the workplace. Not only do their positive behaviours influence the behaviour of the workers, however, their physical presence also does the same as well:

*...the employer is not around when they do that. But, of course, everyone comports themselves when the employer is around, but they just do anything when he is not round or not passing by. (Interviewee 9, Ski Star Åre)*

### **Ethical principles versus working duties orientation**

Ethical principles and work roles are two different components that are crucial to orient new workers on and even further provide on-job training from time to time. The result from this study shows that managers barely orient new employees on ethical principles; however, they focus much on the work duties:

*No, she just told me about my roles and how I can go about them and nothing about code of conduct or whatsoever. (Interviewee 4, Holiday Club Åre)*

*Before I started working, I was given a document that explained how to use the cleaning materials, where to put them after use, how to handle the working materials, how and which parts of the rooms to thoroughly clean and things like that. Anything like code of conduct. Naa! (Interviewee 9, Ski Star Åre)*

Although some do as part of the orientation of new workers, only a few parts of ethical principles are touched. Namely, the ones related to work conduct that is aimed to give satisfaction to their customers while the ones capable of guiding the decision making of the employees or giving them work satisfaction are absent in their orientation:

*Yeah, before the season started, they had to do a course, like an online thing. So, in the video, there were like, this is how you should dress, interact with the guest and things like that. They just wanted us to be good examples. It was like a 10-hour course. (Interviewee 5, Holiday Club Åre)*

The managers consider work roles far more critical than ethical principles. Meanwhile, orientation on ethical principles is one of the best ways for workers to align their characteristics with the companies' ethical standards so that they would be able to better navigate around ethical dilemmas. During regular working periods, issues related to ethics and others are inevitable and ethical principles are there to guide their decision-making process. Ethical principles serve as a moral navigator that helps workers manoeuvre around unethical behaviours once an ethical dilemma arises. The ethical principles herein include, among other things, a code of ethics, a mission statement, internal controls for

counterproductive behaviours and many more. Ethical principles benefit workers; nevertheless, it guides the decision making of employers as well. It provides an ethical framework that can be used as a reference tool for decision making, and it again helps to convey the company's fundamental values.

While some companies or departments within the company may have them in place but have not set it to priority, others seem not to have them at all, or they disregard the importance of such principles.

### **Performance appraisal/objective or constructive criticism**

At the workplace, performance appraisal is necessary for the professional and personal development of workers. During performance appraisal, workers are assessed for their strengths and weaknesses. In case any weaknesses are identified, employers and the worker can find possible solutions to counter that weakness. During the study, it was identified that whenever a worker is not performing well on the job. There are numbers of protocols to be followed depending on the manager. Sometimes it passes through tiers of command, while other times, it is resolved by only the manager or the employer. Whenever workers fail to improve after a couple of attempts to help them grow, there are actions which the employers take; the worker will not be called for work if the worker is on an open contract, further training can be provided, or the worker can be reshuffled to another department their skills fit:

*If they keep on correcting you on something and you keep on doing it, then they will not call you again for work. Mostly this happens to people on open contracts who are not doing their job well. (Interviewee 6, Ski Star Åre)*

*Yeah, training, but that depends on the manager. They give us feedback. Moreover, it is like, hey, come on. Let us sit down for like half an hour. You are working on this very well, but not on this one. I need you to be better. I don't want you to be in the kitchen, talking to the chefs all the time. I need you to be out serving our guests. I need you to arrange the tables when they are done, and then you can clean them. So, it's like they are talking to themselves during the feedback. They don't put workers on a course for a wage if they are not performing well in a particular area. They feedback us all the time, so they expect you to listen and come tomorrow remembering it and not to come and repeat the same mistakes over and over again for several weeks. Because then, they get mad and move the worker to another position because they do not want to have them where they are not performing well. If the workers still do not want to get better after reshuffling, then they would not want to work with them again. (Interviewee 4, Holiday Club Åre)*

During the feedback process, employers were found to be constructive in their submissions. Due to this gentle approach, some employees tend to develop the skills that can help them overcome those weaknesses. Nevertheless, mostly, serious workers are the ones that tend to get the needed help from the employers:

*She will ask you two questions: are you not interested in the work or you do not want to work at all? It is different if the person is interested and severe for the work and makes a mistake. If that is the case, then you can teach the individual a thing or two. But someone who is feeling lazy to even learn or correct his mistakes shows that the person is not serious. Because if you are serious, she will help you learn and develop whenever you are lagging behind. And the thing is that the more you work, the more you get the experience. But the unserious ones will know the right thing and not do it. So, she helps the serious ones, pushes them to develop, and maybe sack or reprimand the unserious ones. (Interviewee 1, Holiday Club Åre)*

### **Fairness, respect, disorganised management, and dishonesty**

The satisfaction of employees at the workplace is a crucial component of work productivity. Quiet often how workers are treated influence their satisfaction at the workplace. Perhaps, how people treat others could be attributed to the influence of the individual's core values. This is because core values act as an internal compass that guides or dictates how people live or behave. From the study, it was revealed that some managers are fair and respectful in their treatment while others act the opposite:

*...I discovered that they had customers at the restaurant and that everything that he was talking about was just a lie. So, I talked to my colleagues and asked whether it is true that they do not have many*

*customers at the restaurant and they said there is even too much work, so the manager made it look like there is not much and he will call me when there is a need. So, I was like; this is not fair, it is really not fair. I could also just ignore his messages at some point because I remember I sent around 8 messages that he never replied for so long, so I also got pissed off and tried to pay him back. (Interviewee 1, Holiday Club Åre)*

*The manager that I had who was responsible for the workshop was very fair and honest with everything, and again He could disclose everything from every angle, but in terms of us doing our job, he was candid with what we needed to work with like if we requested certain things to work with, he made sure we got them on time. (Interviewee 8, Ski Star Åre)*

Good management practices are signs of ethical leadership. It gives satisfaction to the employees at the workplace. It is a practice that includes cultural cohesiveness, holding regular meetings, consistency, openness, engaging workers and many more. For example, when managers give ears to their employees, it will help them better understand their concerns and perspectives. Once this becomes a practice, it will make the employees feel welcomed and cared for, and this will, in the long run, lower their stress level and increase their work satisfaction. In this study, it was demonstrated that some employees occasionally have problems with their working conditions, however, when they raise concerns, the managers feel reluctant in solving them, and this does not make the workers feel like a valuable asset at the workplace. Issues relating to practices that made workers feel less in control and disturbed at the workplace can be described as a product of disorganised management:

*Yeah, of course, I had to write to a top manager on this, and some changes were made. Before some changes were made, he had to call and apologise on this, and he added.; can you come with your contract tomorrow for me to study your contract? I had to check to see what conditions needed to be changed, and again, he was like, I know you are studying and working simultaneously; do you want me to reduce your work hours? So, I was saying in my head: you should not ask for my contract, you are the manager you have all the details about every employer you have here in the company. That appears that their management system is disorganised.*  
(Interviewee 1)

Workers are likely to be more productive at the workplace when their concerns are resolved amicably without any hesitation. This will give them a safe and conducive environment to fully harness their skills and potentials. On the other hand, in a situation where activities constantly stress workers at the workplace, their concentration and productivity can be significantly affected, which might propel them to leave their role if they have the choice and the capacity to do so.

### **Ethical leadership, social divisions of labour and segmentations.**

This section identifies work related conundrums that leads to social divisions in labour and segmentations. It was observed that structural inequalities at the workplace such as bullying, discrimination are likely to facilitate employees'

dissatisfaction at the workplace. Mainly ethical leadership helps reduce the above negative work behaviour at the workplace.

### **Discrimination (Discrimination- familiarity)**

Discrimination at the workplace can be uncomfortable and can also affect workers satisfaction and mental health. Discrimination can be in different forms. It can be based on race, skills, level of education, and many different factors. This study identified that some workers were discriminated against based on particularly their skills and their language proficiency. Although their job roles might not require them to be fluent in Swedish and English can be a substitute; however, they were discriminated against based on their ability to speak Swedish at a proficient level. In a way I call it “discrimination- familiarity” and language unproficiency was seen to be a significant cause of this familiarity:

*That aspect of discrimination could come when we worked in the restaurant/bar, and we might say yes to it because there are certain activities which everyone can do, it does not need language, but we realised that those kinds of jobs and tasks more often would be pushed to us, for example in the restaurant if you see people drink and get drunk, and even puke, probably I'm not at where the action took place, but they will need to send someone to look for me wherever I am to come and do that task, something which the person present there could just do it. Yes! you would need to come and do it because that's somehow a nasty job, so in some way, that is some kind of discrimination. (Interviewee 4, Holiday Club Åre)*

This kind of discrimination is based on familiarity because the employee is recognised to do specific stuff, mostly the uncomfortable ones, despite the availability of other employees who could possibly do the same job. In other words, this can also be explained as when a particular employee(s) is targeted to do a specific task which does not mean that they have peculiar skills required for that task, but it is because they are the familiar face. A typical example is when one is called to clean a specific waste when others are available and could do the same task. Although the others available are employed for the same role as the one specifically called to perform the role yet, because of "discrimination-familiarity" based on language proficiency, a particular employee is called every time a specific task arises regardless of the other tasks they are performing at a specific point in time. For example, a customer can puke while other employees are there; however, a certain employee would have to be called to clean it while others available have the same job roles as that employee and could possibly clean the waste.

### **Structural powers of workers**

Workers are considered to create their working atmosphere as postulated by several economic geography scholars. They do this through their structural powers, which they obtain from their workplace, marketplace bargaining power and their labour agency. In this study, the power of workers to make structural changes of any kind were also observed. More specifically, how they bargain their working conditions and what factors affect their bargaining power. In many countries, trade unions act as a collective force that defends the interest of

both employees and their employers; however, employees solely have the power to defend their interest and their rights without the collective force of their respective trade unions. They do it by appealing unfavourable working terms, quitting their roles and strikes. However, this study demonstrated that most workers have a low bargaining power on their working conditions. This is due to the fact that not many job roles are available as against the number of workers available. As a result, it makes it hard for the workers to exercise strong bargaining power even if the working conditions are unsatisfactory.

Again, most of the workers, especially those in the housekeeping and the restaurant areas, do not typically possess high qualifications and exceptional skills that they can leverage in bargaining at the workplace. Unlike other workers in specific professional fields like medicine, engineering and many others who can bargain with their skills and qualifications for a change in their working conditions. In addition, the fluctuation in the service industry pushes employers to provide temporary contracts and possibly other working conditions which might not be satisfactory to the workers:

*No, it is not. They either do not know what they are doing or want to give you a long-time contract like Holiday club. They do not want to give long term contracts because they do not know what it looks like going forward. Our manager wanted to hire like 5 more workers and put them on full time because she was basically doing everything on her own here, working off 24 hours a day. She needed to hire more staff, and the management were like yeah but don't put them on long term contract because we can't be stuck with them because we need to know what is happening with the*

*corona; we need to know what is happening if we need the staff after these six months, we need to know. That is why they don't hire people. They believe they might get stuck with the people. (Interviewee 1, Holiday Club Åre)*

Inasmuch as workers have the right to choose where they want to work and their roles, their structural powers are not supreme and are influenced by external factors, as previously discussed.

### **Ethical leadership in perilous times**

The 2019 pandemic caused significant economic loss to all businesses with an extra impact on the service industry. During the recent pandemic, many restrictions were laid down as a measure to curb the spread of the Coronavirus. Most of the restrictions had a direct impact on the service industry. For example, restaurants were supposed to be open for some hours & limited numbers of customers were allowed to use restaurants; a limited number of guests were also allowed into hotels and many other restrictions. In addition, restrictions were also placed on travel, so it was difficult for the service industry to benefit from international customers and such they had to depend solely on domestics' customers. Moreover, even on the domestic customers, unessential travels were recommended not to undertake; as a result, not many people were willing to travel for leisure or to visit places which can be crowded such as restaurants, cafeterias and many more.

In these perilous times, managers had to adapt to the circumstances created by the pandemic. In this study, measures related to their ethical leadership were highlighted. It was observed that most of the managers laid down measures and protocols to protect their workers. While some of them prioritised keeping workers safe, others did not wholly consider the importance of such protocols at the workplace. For example, in the restaurant section of the Holiday Club Åre, the manager acted as a Corona Police to ensure the protocols were followed both by the workers and guests:

*Oh God that is the only thing we talked about. Well, there was a lot of Corona information all the time. A lot of meetings all the time with the staff, and every day before we start working, we are given an overview on how the day is going to be, how the evening is going to be, and reminder is given on how to sanitise our hands with the disinfectant, wash our hands at all times, not touching our faces, keeping distances with the people. And especially for breakfast, we need to keep distance from the people, so they form a queue and stuff like that. So, it was like, we had a Corona manager when there are many people in the hotel, he will just walk around, looking everywhere, in the rest area, in the swimming area, in the restaurant, in the lobby, just to remind people of keeping distance, and there was disinfectant with spirit everywhere. We also removed some of the tables and chairs from the restaurant just so that there would be a distance between people. Again, the manager was everywhere in the restaurant. She did put up warning notices everywhere so people would see them. There*

*were warning stickers on the floor and on the notice board where the guest could easily see and understand. She was there in the restaurant to make sure there was not a queue; she was like, "hello, thank you very much, welcome everybody, we need to keep distance in the bar, keep distance everywhere and you know why". So, she was like a corona police, absolutely. But I think that was needed to be done because people don't remember when they go on Holidays, it's like everything in their heads flies away. (Interviewee 5, Holiday Club Åre)*

Measures that protect the well-being of the workers at the workplace are deemed ethical. Therefore, workplaces that have good safety measures increases the satisfaction of the workers. In the above case, workers were given good safety protocols to help protect them from the Coronavirus. Whereas in the other areas within the hotel, safety protocols were not considered to be a priority. This made the workers express their health concerns and consequently not being satisfied with their working conditions. One major concern in the housekeeping division within the hotel was the provision of a safety mask. The workers felt that the employer needed to provide them with a safety mask because cleaning the rooms without that put them at risk of contracting the Coronavirus. Although some workers argue that nose masks should be the employee's responsibility, the majority believes otherwise. In their opinion, sometimes the rooms can be very smelly and coupled with the fact that the hotel receives quite several guests from different places. Therefore, the risk of contracting the virus is relatively high, and the employer needed to consider providing them with the safety masks:

*I would not consider it as being unfair, although the room can sometimes smell really bad. But I think it was just normal for any person to buy a nose mask. So, I do not think the company needed to give nose masks at least, that is something everyone can afford. (Interviewee 9, Ski Star Åre)*

Safety materials like face masks were very relevant to have at the workplace during the pandemic. Therefore, it was necessary for the employers to provide workers with one or try as much as possible to remind them to use it all the time. Other than Nose masks, other safety materials like disinfectants and measures like social distancing, regular washing of hands and wearing of gloves were also necessary actions that were needed to be recommended at the workplace for the safety of the workers. This will protect the well-being of the workers and increase job satisfaction in the long run.

## Chapter 5

### Discussion of results

Ethical leadership and its demonstration varied within the two workplaces, namely Holiday Club Åre and Skistar Åre. The most significant causes for such variation can be understood when the personal characteristics of the managers are taken into consideration. Different managers within the same departments can exhibit unique personal skills distinctive from each other at the same workplace. This gives credence to Upchurch, (1998) argument on decision making at the workplace which outlines that, decision making is chiefly affected by among others the company's code of ethics, personal values, and societal norms. Remarkably, even within the same department, managers are likely not to have similar personalistic characteristics. This variation influences the kind of working conditions offered to their employees. That is to say that working conditions directly connect with the personal values, morals, and beliefs of employers or managers. Recruitment channels used, working contracts provision, ethical principles, fairness, and respect at the workplace are all subjected to the personal characteristics of the employees. March, (1963) also found out that decisions at the workplace can be affected by internal and external components that interrelate to create individualistic ethical values and preferences, which affects the organisation's decision-making climate and the economic geography of the workplace.

In this study, ethical standards were considered less important to be oriented on as opposed to the working duties of the employees, and as a result, workers mainly were oriented on work duties, leaving out ethical standards. This makes it difficult for workers to navigate around ethical dilemmas. The concept of ethical standard is a guiding principle that helps workers in making good decisions once an ethical dilemma appears. (Li & Bao, 2020). It also guides them in making informed decisions when it comes to working conditions. Ethical standards are necessary for employees; similarly, effective leadership that can promote company growth at the workplace thrives also on ethical standards and moral decisions (Burns, 1978; Brown & Treviño, 2006). As a framework at the workplace, ethical standards can be used as a reference point for various decisions and can also help convey the company's fundamental values. While some workplaces can consider work roles more important than ethical standards, without ethical standards in place, employees will find it difficult to align themselves with the company's values when an ethical dilemma arises. The absence of ethical standards at the workplace can affect productivity at the workplace in the long run. This is because workers are likely to lend in to counterproductive behaviours (Khokhar & Zia-ur-Rehman, 2017; Islam et al., n.d). Such behaviours affect the productivity of other workers and can also impact their quality of work at the workplace. Although some employers mostly do pre-assessments to identify the likelihood of counterproductivity of their employees before employment, performance appraisal is mostly also carried out while on the job in response to a report of counterproductivity or to assess the productivity level of the employees.

Performance appraisal is essential in identifying workers strengths and weaknesses at the workplace and there is also a positive relationship between performance appraisal, leadership style and personal development (Riego de Dios & Lapuz, 2020). Whenever weaknesses are identified, workers can be criticised constructively to enable them to improve. The results show that employers are seen as enemies whenever they criticise some behaviours or low productivity on the path of the workers. Notably, employers have several protocols to follow to check and resolve low performance or counterproductivity at the workplace. Mostly when it cannot be resolved at the lower levels of management, it moves through the tiers of leadership, and consequently, training is provided for their betterment or reshuffle is made to other roles that the employee could potentially perform very well or fits. When the employee fails to change or learn, they are laid off from work or are not called for work if their contract is not fixed but based on needs or when they work as substitutes.

Meanwhile, non-fixed term contracts are common in the tourism industry due to their seasonality, as noted by Gallagher & McLean Parks (2001); Lautsch (2002). The seasonal nature of most tourism entities makes employees adopt flexible recruitment strategies (Adler& Adler, 2003), including short-term contracts. In this study, it was noted that employers mostly like to offer short term contracts because they are mostly not aware of how the season will play out, and again, short terms contracts help them to lay off workers as soon as they can whenever the season is low, and their services are not highly patronised. For example, during the initial Corona outbreak, the employers could easily lay off workers because most were not on fixed-term contracts denoting a precarious

employment. The flexible contracts also help employers lay off workers whenever they perform poorly on the job. Employers who are also ethical leaders provide structures at the workplace that can help improve the workers' performance even if their skills are not up to standard for the task required or whenever they are prone to counterproductive behaviours.

To sharpen the skills of workers for their regular jobs and to meet changes in demand by customers. It is, therefore, necessary to provide on-job training as well for the employees. Providing on-job training helps to harness their skills and increases their satisfaction at the workplace. However, the study reveals no on-job training for the workers, and as a result, development opportunities were limited. Nevertheless, some workers did choose to study university programs because of the motivation received from their jobs.

Moreover, they did choose to study programs either directly related or similar to their job role. Even though not many people wanted to choose their current roles as their future career, it still would have been considered a possible future career if further training had been provided to them. Particularly, one other reason for not considering their current roles as their future career was because they felt their financial gains from the job were not overly sufficient, and they also performed the same task continuously without much personal development or diversity in their roles. Mainly, satisfaction at the workplace is essential for a worker to stay on their job. Therefore, managers ought to be ethical in their approach by putting structures in place to develop, sharpen the skills of the workers and promote productive work attitudes at the workplace (Addai et al., 2019).

Again, workers who feel discriminated or bullied at the workplace are likely not to be satisfied and might not contribute to the company's productivity, especially when there is "discrimination- familiarity" as observed from the results of this study. Language as a basis for discrimination can be uncomfortable for the employees and, at the same time, not fair and can lead to social divisions in labour. Ethical leadership most commonly refers to the fair and ethical treatment of others and this style of leadership has also been shown to decrease bullying through the provision of good working conditions and management structures (Stouten et. al., 2010). In a circumstance where workers are specifically targeted to do menial jobs, they do not have peculiar skills required for that task but are based on language familiarity; this could be classified as unethical and unsatisfactory working conditions for the workers. Discrimination at the workplace is also a form of structural inequality which can create social divisions in labour. Besides employment criteria based on gender, race and nationality or tribe remains a core problem in the tourism labour market (Carnoy 2000; Tilly,1998; Waldinger &Lichter 2003).

At the workplace, the satisfaction of workers is greatly affected by their working conditions. This is because these regulations affect the way employees behave and work. For example, most establishments under HRF and Faf have regulations regarding the minimum working conditions. However, the union's rules are not fully adhered as can be identified from this study. In such situations, employees' satisfaction is likely to be impacted because there might be excluded from getting even the basic conditions at work. Therefore,

productivity at the workplace can be highly affected. This observation is in consonance with Brown & Treviño (2006) assertion that ethical decisions at the workplace are necessary for workers satisfaction. Again, the satisfaction of employees at the workplace were also observed to result in stress reduction.

Unethical and bad leadership at the workplace is the cause of stress and less productivity; however, as already elucidated, some employees start to see the employer or the manager as bad leaders when they try to correct their employees' counterproductive behaviours that may also lead to stress. Notably, the most common workplace stress causes are poor working conditions, ranging from working contracts and work hours to ethical and safety provisions.

Moreover, at the workplace, rules are also interpreted contrastingly by different managers; with that said, within the same company, different managers can react differently to employees. This can be attributed to their moral sensitivity, judgment, motivation, and character, as Hackman et al. (2013) described.

Safety protocols, rules and regulations are required at the workplace to prevent workplace violations. They help prevent employees from engaging in harmful activities and undermining the productivity of the organisation. Safety protocols are mainly composed of risk assessments. They are then made known to the workers to understand the various hazards and safety measures at the workplace. In contrast, rules and regulations are meant to ensure that things are done uniformly without any chaos. This not only protects the workers but also helps keep them in check to fulfil the company's goals and objectives. The study reveals a possible strong reaction of the employers to offensive or chaotic behaviours. Although there were protocols laid down to counter such actions, it was not a common occurrence at the workplace. Putting suitable protocols at the

workplace is ethical and can be considered a characteristic of an ethical leader that can amount to the company's economic success (Avey et al., 2012).

Ethical leadership positively influences the behaviour of employees. In workplaces where ethical leadership is exhibited, workers are likely to emulate the ethical behaviour of their managers. The study did reveal that some workers emulated some positive behaviours of the managers, and the presence of the managers commanded respect. This means that the ethical behaviour of the managers is copied by the employees, depicting the importance of ethical leadership at the workplace (Li & Bao, 2020; Stouten et al., 2010).

When it comes to the salary system, the service industry is seen to be characterized by low salaries (Wood, 1992). Perhaps, lower as compared to the trade industry. Notably, some participants relayed their displeasure with the low rate and the flat rate in odd days and times from the study. This is because their pay rate does not rise any higher with respect to a particular time or day. However, inhouse workers were identified to have good pay rate, work benefits and other working conditions as compared to employees working in outsourced departments, denoting a negative effect of outsourcing on working conditions. Generally, workers are given extra pay for working overtime, at odd hours, or on weekends. Nevertheless, the study results show otherwise. This makes the workers dissatisfied and affects their productivity at the workplace. This confirms Avey et al., (2012) position that excellent working conditions contribute to higher productivity or economic success. Therefore, managers need to consider the working time and period when determining the pay rate of their workers to increase their satisfaction, which will, in turn, impact the company's productivity.

According to Herod (2001), labour is an active agent who can shape their economic and political landscape; meanwhile, they do not do it under the conditions of their choosing (Herod, 1997) and their power to make structural changes of any kind is marginal (Mitchell, 2011). The study revealed that workers do not hold much bargaining power to make structural changes, unlike their colleagues in other industries, requiring unique skills and qualifications. Mainly, the structural powers of workers depend on their roles and importance in the company or industry, as postulated by Wright (2000). In this study, it was identified that the employee's workplace bargaining power is low, and as such, it can be hard for them to exercise bargaining power on their working conditions even if it is not favourable despite the support of their union representatives. Their impact would have been highly significant if they were in a high-productivity field, in a highly essential production service, or had special skills (Silver, 2003). This finding confirms Mitchell (2011) argument that workers' power in shaping their economic landscape has been overplayed, and as such, workers do not possess enough power to make significant structural changes, which might affect their political or economic landscape. In other words, they do not have significant structural powers in making bargains in their working conditions or choosing their workplaces.

In reference to the social relevance of academic research, this study also considered how ethical leadership was exhibited during the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic was a global health catastrophe that also affected the world financial market and the economy at large (Pak et al., 2020). Even though many governments underestimated the pandemic's velocity, they still managed to put down policies to curb the spread of it. Some of the policies include travel

restrictions, time and number restrictions for restaurants, public facilities, and other commercial faculties. Mainly, the COVID-19 restrictions directly affected the service industry, especially the travel and the time-limited restrictions. Since international travel was barely possible, the service industry in Sweden depended on only domestic users, and again, restaurants had to operate within some limited time, which reduced the number of customers they could get within the day. In the case of Holiday Club Åre, the number of customers reduced drastically because they mostly depended on international users who travel to Åre for sports tourism, ski, or other purposes. Similarly, in Skistar, the number of customers also reduced, and they had to end the ski season as early as possible because of less patronage and government recommendations relating to COVID-19 protocols.

During the pandemic, it became necessary for managers to put down safety and ethical measures to protect their employees. However, this study identified that some managers did not consider the need for safety protocols while some of them kept safety at the workplace their priority. This means that ethical leadership at the workplace were not overly exhibited at the two workplaces, and as such, employees will not get the maximum satisfaction and safety, they need at the workplace (Stouten et al., 2010; Gok et al., 2017)

## Chapter 6

### Conclusion

Ethical leadership exists within the two workplaces; nevertheless, it was not evenly demonstrated. Particularly, it was noted that even within the same department or company, managers with the same roles could have distinctive attitudes and characteristics towards their workers. This can be attributed to their personalistic individual qualities formed from societal values, morals, and other factors. These elements are the underlying reasons for their decisions pertaining to the provision of working conditions, treatment of workers, fairness, and many other behaviours at the workplace. Therefore, personalistic characteristics can be said to have a direct connection with the provision of working conditions. Personalistic characteristics of a leader such as fairness, ethical consideration, good morals, and the rest can amount to the provision of good working conditions and vice versa.

Leadership at the workplace was seen to influence satisfaction at the workplace. For example, stress and discrimination at the workplace, which makes workers unsatisfied, were associated with bad leadership. Therefore, ethical leadership is necessary to be exhibited for the satisfaction of the workers at the workplace. This kind of leadership considers the fair and ethical treatment of workers. Again, it is also a complex structure that involves a particular leadership style

and ethics that positively affect employers' decision-making process, which in turn can impact both where the employees work and live.

Diving in to find structures within which workers live and work as suggested by recent studies pertaining to the fourth strand of labour geography (Mitchell, 2011), it was identified from this study that ethical leadership is also a complex structure that affects workers' working conditions and their lives. Again, workers do not possess much structural powers in shaping their political and economic atmosphere because of their low bargaining power and as such they might exert less influence on their working conditions if not satisfactory despite union regulations and support.

Ethical leadership is needed at the workplace to promote fairness, ethical standards, and safety, leading to satisfaction, high productivity, trust in leadership, and reduction in counterproductive behaviours (Islam et al., n.d; Khokhar & Zia-ur-Rehman, 2017; Stouten et al., 2010). The observations from this study also show that, although the pandemic critically impacted the worlds' financial market and the economy with a direct effect on tourism and travel, however, despite such catastrophe, some managers were seen to exhibit ethical leadership. It was exhibited by providing safety materials, protocols, and other good working conditions.

Good working conditions were seen to be a product of ethical leadership at the workplace. Notably, workers with a good working condition were seen to be satisfied with their work and the probability of them leaving their role is reasonably low, unlike employees with unsatisfactory working conditions at the

workplace. However, the provision of working conditions has some loopholes despite union regulations, and the primary reason can be attributed to the excess supply of labour as against demand in the Åre. For example, workers were given a flat rate for working in odd hours and days. Although the workers were not satisfied with this condition, since they are easily replaceable, they continue working regardless of their circumstances.

## Chapter 7

### Limitation and Recommendations

Ethical leadership is a mainstream management concept; therefore, applying it within the scope of labour geography to explain the working conditions of workers was a daunting task. This involved using old human geography theories such as the growth pole in this current labour geography dispensation. Although not much research has been done which is directly related to the ethical leadership and working conditions of workers, the theories used helped to uncover inherent meanings and connections and their nuances of the concepts. Notably, it can be contested why ethical leadership is relevant to the scope of labour geography; nevertheless, this concept helped explain why and how employers behave at the workplace. Their behaviour ranges from the provision of working conditions, fairness, integrity and many more.

Further, due to the corona restriction, it was not easy reaching out to participants directly. However, I managed to get in contact with a few participants who provided information for this study. Although not many people were interviewed nevertheless, the research questions were successfully answered. I recommend further studies to investigate how ethical leadership can be identified within two distinctive sectors and why such differences if found. This study can factor in many participants. Again, further research can also investigate other management practices relevant to understanding labour in relation to geography.

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## Appendix

### Overview of Åre Municipality

Åre is a town found in Åre municipality, which is located in the middle of Sweden. The town is also part of Jämtland county which is the third-largest county in Sweden. The county is also located Östersund, which is equally known for its viability in producing tourism products. As a matter of fact, Östersund and Åre are known as one of the leading destinations for sports tourism in the Nordics and Europe at large.

Åre is inhabited by 15,500 people spread across 7,263 square kilometres, with most people living across the E14 road that leads to Norway (Åre Municipality, 2020). According to the Åre Municipality, the Åre village and Åredalen are considered the most expensive part of the town because of the high investment made in the tourism industry within that area. Åre is bordered by nearby towns

like Duved, Undersåker, Brattland, Järpen and others. Although Åre is far the largest in terms of inhabitant's population, however, Järpen, which has 1,700 inhabitants as of 2019, is the seat of Åre municipality.

The Åre Municipality keeps growing in population size every year despite its scant development, which is common in sparsely populated municipalities. For example, in 2019, their population increased by 287 as against 2018. The trend used not to be like this some years ago, roughly before the year 2002. Since then, the population of Åre has increased by 1,800 people (ÅreMunicipality, 2020). The municipality started experiencing an enormous population growth since the introduction of the Alpine World cup 2007, which was a collaborative initiative from the Municipality and business communities, both local and foreign. This initiative contributed massively to the increase in the population of the municipality. This increase was because most people moved to Åre to establish tourism-related businesses while others moved to look for a job because of the business opportunities the investment in the Alpine world cup created. Within the same context, the municipality "created value" with the Alpine world cup project by taking advantage of the initiative's opportunity. This initiative also exposed the municipality to the outside world and made it an attractive town to settle.

Figure 5



Source: (GoogleEarth, 2020)

Figure 5: A map showing the location of Åre on the map of Sweden

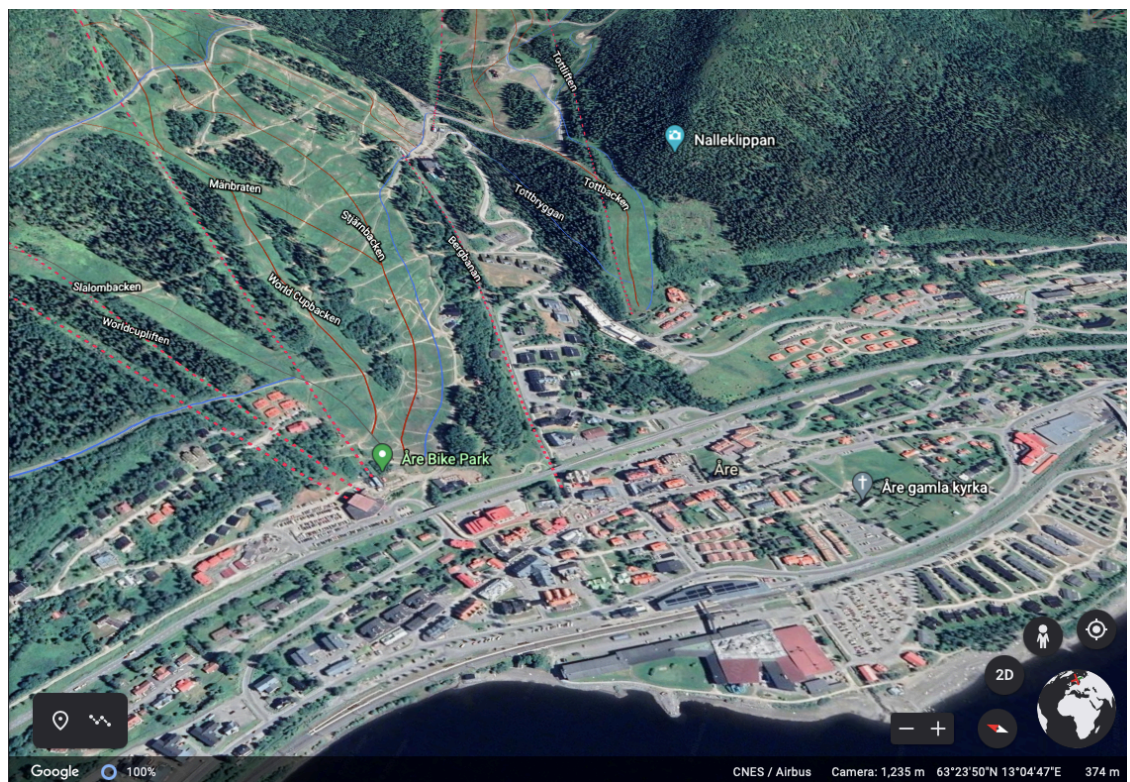
Figure 6



Source: (GoogleEarth, 2020)

Figure 6: Map showing Åre and its nearby towns.

Figure 7



Source: (GoogleEarth, 2020)

Figure 7: Map showing Åre and major areas within it.