

SERVANT LEADERSHIP AND EMPLOYEE CREATIVITY: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF HARMONIOUS PASSION AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY

Abstract

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Purpose - This paper examines simultaneously mediating mechanisms through which servant leadership (SL) affects employee creativity (EC). Specifically, the authors test harmonious passion (HP) and psychological safety (PS) as the mediating paths through which servant leadership predicts employee creativity.

Design/Methodology/Approach - Data were collected from 274 employees in seven four- and five-star hotels in Indonesia. A partial least squares structural equation modelling technique was used to estimate the measurement and structural models.

Findings -The findings of this study indicate that managers should adopt servant leadership behaviors, which can improve employees' psychological resources, such as harmonious creativity, passion, and psychological safety.

Originality of the research - This study offers original insights into the emerging body of hospitality literature by presenting the initial empirical proof of the combined impact of harmonious passion and psychological safety in facilitating the influence of servant leadership on frontline employees' creativity.

Keywords Servant Leadership, Harmonious Passion, Psychological Safety, Frontline Employee, Creativity.

Original scientific paper

Received 11 January 2024

Revised 21 April 2024

Accepted 21 May 2024

<https://doi.org/10.20867/thm.30.4.9>

INTRODUCTION

The dynamic changes in the hospitality industry have emphasized the significant role of creativity. Hotels are increasingly motivated to innovate and provide unique services and products due to emerging problems, primarily influenced by technological improvements (Kabangire & Korir, 2023). The focus on creativity extends beyond improving guest pleasure, encompassing the increasing importance of guest satisfaction. Within the above framework, it is evident that hotel personnel in Indonesia assume a prominent role in engaging with customers and attending to their daily needs. This frontline position affords individuals a distinct advantage in generating novel ideas that can effectively enhance the quality of hotel services. The current market conditions in Indonesia present several obstacles that require the hotel sector to employ creative strategies consistently. Due to their direct interaction with clients and ability to cater to their requirements, hotel staff are crucial in fostering and promoting creativity within the hotel industry (Hassi, 2019).

Creativity, the cognitive process of producing novel and potentially valuable concepts, is widely acknowledged as a pivotal determinant for businesses, specifically within the hospitality sector, to attain enduring competitive advantage (Anning-Dorson & Nyamekye, 2020). The cultivation of creativity relies upon both the personal aptitudes of individuals and the contextual elements present in the professional setting, encompassing job attributes, accessible resources, objectives, and the general work milieu. As a key element within the given environment, leadership is pivotal in influencing circumstances favorable for personal creativity. The significance of leadership in the hotel sector becomes apparent as a crucial contextual factor that predicts individual creativity, exerting influence over the creative processes of employees (Bavik & Kuo, 2022). The impact of leadership on individual creativity is frequently based on the fulfillment of followers' need for autonomy and substantial backing when presenting ideas and participating in unconventional thinking. The significance of this matter is particularly evident within the hotel business, where the prioritization of high-quality service has continually been emphasized as substantial for meeting and exceeding customers' expectations, ultimately playing a pivotal role in the profitability of hotels. When applied to employee creativity, servant leadership entails leaders embracing a mentality in which they prioritize the needs of their team members by offering essential resources, support, and a work atmosphere that fosters creative thinking. This particular leadership style acknowledges that the presence of an environment where employees feel appreciated and encouraged to share their unique ideas fosters the growth and development of creativity (Ruiz-Palomino & Zoghbi-Manrique-de-Lara, 2020). Servant leaders demonstrate proactive involvement in their employees' concerns, actively listening to their viewpoints and recognizing their distinct abilities and valuable opinions. Servant leaders establish an environment that promotes employee creativity by prioritizing the growth and development of each team member, hence encouraging risk-taking and experimentation (Bavik, 2020). Several empirical investigations have demonstrated that servant leadership positively influences employee creativity (Aboramadan, 2021; Chen et al., 2022). Research into how servant leadership affects employee creativity has started in response to the evidence supporting its efficacy.

Although further research into other job-focused motivational variables is needed to fully understand the relationship between servant leadership and creativity within an individual's work role, the results of these studies are encouraging from a leadership theory perspective. Human resource managers can use this study's anticipated results to drive their work design research, which

can help them develop successful strategies and tools to reimagine the responsibilities of frontline staff in the workplace to encourage employee creativity. Servant leaders place a high priority on addressing the holistic needs of their employees and emphasize the importance of enhancing their capacities. Further, a servant leader prioritizes the growth of others and leads with integrity. Researchers have praised servant leadership for its central premise, which is that it prioritizes the development of subordinates over the leaders' self-interest. Hence, servant leadership is characterized by acknowledging leaders' reliance on their followers and a propensity to prioritize serving the best interests of their subordinates. We anticipated that servant leaders would establish a conducive atmosphere for employees, enabling them to emulate leadership characteristics effectively.

Consequently, when employees work for a servant leader, they are more likely to autonomously internalize creative activities into their own identity, by which these employees can better think of new ways to meet customers' needs. To date, limited studies have examined the influence of such a follower-centered and moral virtue of leadership on frontline employees' creativity. The current study proposes a theoretical model based on social learning theory (SLT) (Bandura et al., 2003), which suggests that Harmonious Passion and a psychological safety climate will mediate the influence of servant leadership on employee creativity. Servant leaders create an environment where employees feel valued, supported, and empowered to express themselves without fear of negative consequences. Through their actions and behaviors, servant leaders demonstrate the importance of collaboration, trust, and open communication, allowing psychological safety among team members to flourish. When employees feel psychologically safe, they are more likely to express their creativity, experiment with new approaches, and contribute innovative solutions to organizational challenges. Harmonious passion is crucial in enhancing individuals' intrinsic motivation and commitment to their work. When employees experience harmonious passion towards their tasks, they are more likely to engage in their work thoroughly, persist in the face of obstacles, and seek individual creativity growth and development opportunities. Thus, we examine whether the mediation variable can strengthen the link between servant leadership and employee creativity.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

Servant leadership and employee creativity

Servant leadership is widely acknowledged as a substantial element that inspires and motivates individuals to participate in creative endeavors. In contrast to transformational leadership, servant leadership is distinguished by attributes including humility, compassion, and a commitment to fulfilling the requirements of others (Greenleaf, 1998). Interpersonal acceptance, dedication to the development of others, empowerment, community building, and empathy are other defining attributes of servant leadership (Wilson, 1999).

Within the context of servant leadership, leaders place the welfare and growth of their adherents as their highest priority. They demonstrate attentiveness to their concerns and empathy toward their needs and establish a setting that nurtures personal and professional development. Additionally, servant leaders demonstrate dedication to fostering a sense of community and integrating their followers' varied abilities and perspectives. According to Chen et al., (2022), it is probable that these servant leadership behaviors will act as catalysts to augment creativity. In particular, when leaders prioritize listening and empathy, they may encourage followers to share creative thoughts without apprehension of criticism. The emphasis on personal and professional development is consistent with the notion that risk-taking and creative thinking are characteristics of individuals who feel valued and supported. Furthermore, the dedication of the servant leader to fostering a sense of community and appreciating a range of viewpoints can positively impact an environment conducive to facilitating creativity among frontline employees. Subsequently, they are inclined to offer inventive resolutions to obstacles when they perceive their distinct perspectives as valued and incorporated into the creative workflow.

To conclude, we postulate a positive correlation between servant leadership and employee creativity based on the tenets of servant leadership. It is expected that the servant leader's focus on empathy, active listening, personal development, and fostering a sense of community will produce an atmosphere that promotes and improves the innovative aptitudes of subordinates.

H1. Servant leadership is positively related to Frontline Employee creativity.

The Mediating Roles of Harmonious Passion

The concept of servant leadership is believed to influence employee creativity substantially. Harmonious passion further influences this relationship, which acts as a mediator. The social learning theory posits that individuals acquire and modify their behaviors through the process of observing the actions and experiences of others, with a particular emphasis on prominent personalities such as leaders within an organization (Chen et al, 2022). Leaders emphasize their subordinates' welfare, self-governance, and individual growth within the servant leadership framework. When these behaviors are consistently exhibited, they provide influential role-modeling signals for individuals who follow. The social learning process includes employees observing servant leaders committed to valuing and supporting autonomy, cultivating a culture of trust, and establishing a collaborative and inclusive work environment. When employees observe these servant leadership actions, they will probably absorb and emulate them, cultivating a favorable and encouraging work environment that facilitates creativity. The alignment between the autonomy-supportive characteristics of servant leadership and the principles of social learning theory is evident, as it is observed that employees acquire knowledge that autonomy and the opportunity to explore ideas result in favorable consequences (Aboramadan, 2021)

Furthermore, the facilitation of harmonious passion contributes to the complexity of this partnership. The development of harmonious passion, which entails a self-determined and internalized attachment to one's work, is expected to occur when employees witness servant leaders who prioritize and endorse individual autonomy. The study literature extensively recognizes the beneficial impact of harmonious passion on creativity. For example, a study by St-Louis & Vallerand (2015) and Appu & Sia (2017) found that individuals who reported experiencing harmonious passion towards their work were likelier to engage in creative problem-solving tasks and generate novel ideas than those who lacked this passion. This research suggests that harmonious passion plays a crucial role in fostering creativity. It is commonly accepted that passion is a motivational force that drives individuals to participate in their work with greater depth and persistence (Jan & Zainal, 2020).

Hence, the suggested mediation posits that servant leadership facilitates the development of harmonious passion by modeling actions that enhance autonomy. Consequently, the presence of harmonious passion serves as a stimulus for fostering employee creativity. The convergence of leadership that promotes autonomy and the internalization of these values, as guided by the principles of social learning theory, establishes the foundation for a work environment that fosters innovation and creativity. In summary, applying servant leadership, guided by the principles of social learning theory, is anticipated to impact employee creativity by cultivating harmonious passion. The behaviors exhibited by servant leaders are regarded as a model for employees to absorb notions of autonomy and passion, thereby fostering a workplace culture characterized by positivity and innovation.

H2: Harmonious passion will mediate the relationship between servant leadership and Employee Creativity

The Mediating Roles of Psychological Safety

Jit et al. (2017) proposed that Servant Leadership emphasizes leaders' dedication to meeting their followers' needs, promoting individual development, and establishing a nurturing work atmosphere. Edmondson (1999) defines psychological safety as being of utmost importance in fostering an environment wherein individuals feel confident in voicing their thoughts and engaging in interpersonal endeavors without apprehension of adverse outcomes. As posited by the Servant Leadership philosophy, leaders prioritizing team members' well-being and growth fosters an environment conducive to cultivating creativity. Servant leaders foster an environment that facilitates creative thinking by advocating for transparent communication, fostering cooperation, and offering assistance. Hence, leaders are more likely to build a trustworthy workplace and foster a sense of psychological safety when they demonstrate empathy for their followers, prioritize interpersonal connections, and solicit feedback from subordinates (Khan et al., 2023).

To enhance comprehension of how servant leadership impacts creativity, we posit that psychological safety is a vital mediating factor. Psychological safety is a mediating factor between servant leadership and employee creativity. Within a psychologically safe context, individuals experience a sense of freedom to express their viewpoints, exchange varied perspectives, and undertake innovative endeavors. This statement is consistent with the tenets of Servant Leadership, wherein leaders foster an environment characterized by trust, transparency, and assistance.

According to existing research, evidence supports that psychological safety within a workplace environment positively impacts employees' inclination to actively participate by sharing ideas and engaging in creative problem-solving activities. When employees have a sense of psychological safety, they are inclined to engage in behaviors such as exploring alternative solutions, questioning established norms, and undertaking risks connected with creative pursuits.

H3: Psychological Safety will mediate the relationship between servant leadership and Employee Creativity.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This quantitative study focused on the research methodology that entailed initiating communication with the manager of each hotel to solicit their voluntary participation as subjects for the study. Cover letters were written to the hotels after receiving interest and approval from their management. Subsequently, meetings were conducted with HR managers to engage in discussions regarding the study's goals and objectives. The study only received consent from 7 of the 12 HR managers approached. Cover letters were distributed after receiving approval and interest from the hotel's management. Subsequently, HR managers were invited to meetings to discuss the study's aims and objectives. A full explanation of the study's objectives and advantages was provided in the cover letter. This study further guaranteed their anonymity by promising to utilize participants' answers exclusively for research.

Similarly, the human resources managers were informed. In the first part of the survey, we asked about demographics like age, education level, gender, and years of work experience. Consequently, the surveys were to be sent to a wide variety of frontline staff who had substantial contact with consumers by HR managers or their representatives.

Following the agreement of the hotel management to participate, many prospective frontline workers respondents indicated their interest in providing data. The investigation was subsequently advanced by contacting each respondent individually and requesting their agreement to partake in the survey. The hotel respondents were chosen from the Indonesian Hotels and Restaurants Association's (IHRA) directory. The official list also contained each hotel's address, phone number, and star rating. For this particular research project, only hotels with four and five stars were selected for the following three reasons: The primary rationale for selecting four and five-star hotels as the focus of this study was their notable emphasis on fostering a creative climate (Altememi et al., 2015). Second, different leadership styles could impact higher-profile hotels in Indonesia compared to smaller hotels with lesser ratings.

Furthermore, it has been highlighted that frontline staff at four- and five-star hotels are expected to go above and beyond to meet client expectations through creative conduct, in contrast to staff at lower-tier hotels. Therefore, this particular environment was deemed appropriate for examining the creativity of frontline employees (e.g., front desk, receptionists, and concierges). They were also provided adequate questionnaires and asked to detail the number of front-desk staff members who have been with the company for at least a year. Thirty days later, participants were asked to return the survey to their HR representatives or managers. The information was relayed to the researcher by the HR department, who instructed them to return the questionnaires in a sealed envelope. A distribution of 350 questionnaires was conducted among hotel personnel. In total, 277 responses were obtained. Three were deemed ineligible and hence excluded from the analysis.

Consequently, 274 questionnaires were employed for further investigation, indicating a response rate of 78.2%. In addition, participants were duly notified that their responses would be subjected to anonymization. To mitigate the potential influence of social desirability bias, the researchers refrained from soliciting or documenting any identifiable details from the participants. Table 1 displays the results of the data tabulation, which offers a comprehensive summary of the discoveries. By adopting this methodology, an extensive investigation was conducted into the viewpoints and experiences of frontline staff members at the designated four and five-star hotels. As a result, significant insights were gained regarding the intricacies of their professional milieu and a more profound comprehension of the elements that impact their creativity in the workplace.

Measure

Brislin’s (1970) translation technique was utilized to convert all items into Bahasa Indonesia, considering that all of the scales we adopted were in the English edition.

Servant Leadership. We employed a 7-item unidimensional shortened version of the servant leadership scale created by Liden et al. (2015). The following is an example of a scale item: “My leader gives me the freedom to handle difficult situations in the way that I feel is best.”

Psychological Safety. A 3-item scale, based on the work of Carmeli et al. (2014) and adapted from Individual psychological safety, was evaluated utilizing Edmondson’s (1999) team psychological safety instrument (Chughtai, 2021). A sample item of psychological safety was “It is easy for me to ask other members of this organization for help.”

Harmonious Passion. We utilized the seven-item scale that Liu et al. (2011) developed to measure harmonious passion. A sample item of Harmonious Passion was “My job allows me to live various experiences.”

Frontline employee creativity. We used the 13-item Zhou & George (2001) scale to measure employee creativity. A sample item of “In the workplace, I am a reliable source of creative ideas.”

Control Variable. Maintaining alignment with previous research on employee creativity (Volmer et al. 2019), we included employees’ gender, age, and work experience as control variables to account for their potential impact on the outcomes of the postulated associations. Participants were asked to indicate their gender (0 for “male,” 1 for “female”), age (in years), and length of service to the company or organization in question on the questionnaire’s demographic page.

3. FINDINGS

3.1. Data Analysis

The responses were divided into various categories based on the considered demographic information. According to the reported data, around 55.8 % of respondents were male, while 44% were female. Most employees were between 31 and 34 (n = 26.2 %).

Table 1: Demographic Data (N: 274)

Category	Distribution	n	Frequency (%)
Gender	Male	153	55.8
	Female	121	44.1
Age	< 20	19	6.9
	20-24	45	16.4
	25 - 30	53	19.3
	31 - 34	72	26.2
	35 - 40	42	15.3
	>40	43	15.6

Category	Distribution	n	Frequency (%)
Education Level	Senior High School or below	174	63.5
	Undergraduate	88	32.1
	Master's degree	12	4.3
Work Experience	1-2 years	72	26.1
	3-5 years	85	30.9
	6-10 years	75	27.2
	More than 10 years	43	15.6

In terms of academic qualifications, the majority of employees had a Senior High School (n = 63.5 %), and in terms of the amount of work experience they had at their hotels, the majority of them had between three and five years of experience (n = 30.9 %). A profile of the employees involved in this study is presented in Table 1.

3.2. Common Method Variance

As suggested by prior research, we implemented procedural and statistical methods to mitigate the potential influence of common method variance (CMV). This technique was necessary because we relied on self-report measures to assess employee creativity. To avoid manipulative or dishonest answers, we took precautions to protect the participants' privacy and identity to implement a procedural remedy. Furthermore, extra factors not part of this study were inserted randomly into the survey to include study variables. This method removes respondents' ability to conceptualize a causal relationship between the constructs by establishing a psychological barrier. We used two assays to quantify the possibility of CMV in our data, taking statistical methodologies into account. Harman's single-factor test was our initial procedure (Harman, 1976). The total variance explained by a single factor was 35.5 percent, significantly less than the minimum threshold of 50 percent; therefore, CMV does not appear to be a significant problem in our research.

Furthermore, a comprehensive collinearity test was performed to produce variance inflated factors (VIF), a method that closely resembles the PLS-SEM data analysis approach that Kock (2015) suggested. This test shows VIF values of more than 3.3 indicate collinearity, confirming CMV's presence. Our investigation revealed VIF levels between 1.505 and 2.324, confirming that CMV does not pose a serious threat to our research.

4. ANALYTICAL APPROACH

4.1. Measurement model

Evaluation of the measurement model is the initial stage of PLS-SEM analysis with SmartPLS 3.0 software utilized for data processing and statistical analysis. Ensure that the structural path model incorporates constructs with strong validity and reliability. All constructions were tested for reliability using composite reliability (CR). The results showed that every number was higher than the threshold of 0.70. (Ringle et al. 2015). Convergent and discriminant validity were used in the validity analysis. The first step in determining convergent validity was to examine the item-level factor loadings. Hair et al. (2017) proposed a threshold of 0.5 as the significant value for item loading. This investigation included all items because their loadings exceeded the predetermined significance threshold. Subsequently, according to Hair et al. (2017), a minimum cut-off value of 0.50 was used to evaluate each construct's expected average variance extracted (AVE). The AVE values in this study varied from 0.505 for employee creativity to 0.663 for psychological safety. The values of each construct's factor loadings, CR, and AVE are displayed in Table 2.

Table 2: Results of Measurement Model Assessment

Items	Outer Loading	VIF	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extract
Servant Leadership			0.905	0.577
SL1	The manager can tell if something work-related is going wrong	0.787	2.162	
SL2	My leader makes my career development a priority.	0.785	2.153	
SL3	I would seek help from my leader if I had a personal problem	0.795	1.988	

	Items	Outer Loading	VIF	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extract
SL4	My leader emphasizes the importance of giving back to the community	0.784	1.913		
SL5	My leader puts my best interests ahead of his/her own.	0.747	1.727		
SL6	My leader gives me the freedom to handle difficult situations in the way that I feel is best.	0.734	1.656		
SL7	My leader would not compromise ethical principles in order to achieve success.	0.678	1.505		
Harmonious Passion				0.895	0.549
HP 1	This activity allows me to live a variety of experiences	0.756	1.873		
HP 2	The new things that I discover with this activity allow me to appreciate it even more	0.786	1.944		
HP 3	This activity allows me to live memorable experiences	0.778	1.968		
HP 4	This activity reflects the qualities I like about myself	0.748	1.898		
HP 5	This activity is in harmony with the other activities in my life	0.731	1.784		
HP 6	For me, it is a passion, that I still manage to control	0.706	1.554		
HP 7	I am completely taken with this activity	0.673	1.553		
Psychological Safety				0.838	0.663
PS 1	It is easy for me to ask other members of this organization for help	0.762	1.392		
PS 2	No one in this organization would deliberately act in a way that undermines my effort	0.818	1.417		
PS 3	Members of my organization are able to bring up problems and tough issues	0.807	1.371		
Employee Creativity				0.930	0.505
EC 1	I suggest new ways to achieve goals or objectives	0.783	2.324		
EC 2	I come up with new and practical ideas to improve service performance.	0.742	2.156		
EC 3	I search out new technologies, processes, techniques, and/or product/service ideas.	0.731	1.971		
EC 4	I suggest new ways to increase quality of service.	0.723	2.085		
EC 5	I am a good source of creative ideas	0.716	2.043		
EC 6	I am not afraid to take risks.	0.710	2.047		
EC 7	I promote and champion ideas to others.	0.699	2.001		
EC 8	I exhibit creativity on the job when given the opportunity to	0.694	2.127		
EC 9	I develop adequate plans and schedules for the implementation of new ideas.	0.691	2.134		
EC 10	I often have new and innovative ideas	0.691	2.077		
EC 11	I come up with creative solutions to problems.	0.689	2.089		
EC 12	I often have a fresh approach to problems	0.681	2.162		
EC 13	I suggest new ways of performing work tasks	0.675	2.195		

Table 3: Results of Fornier-Larker Criterion

Variable	EC	HP	PS	SL
1 Employee Creativity	0.710			
2 Harmonious Passion	0.440	0.741		
3 Psychological Safety	0.700	0.360	0.796	
4 Servant Leadership	0.415	0.413	0.313	0.760

Note*: The square root of AVE of every multi-item construct is shown on the main diagonal.

Subsequently, the discriminant validity of the measures was evaluated. Discriminant validity is “the degree to which the measures do not reflect certain other variables.” Discriminant validity is characterized by weak correlations between the measured construct and other variables’ measures (Hair et al,2017). Table 2 shows that each construct’s discriminant validity meets the requirements when its square root of the AVE (diagonal values) exceeds its related correlation coefficients, as Fornell & Larcker (1981) stated. Hence, the measurement model adequately demonstrated acceptable discriminant validity.

Table 4: Results of HTMT

Variable	EC	HP	PS	SL
1 Employee Creativity				
2 Harmonious Passion	0.481			
3 Psychological Safety	0.823	0.438		
4 Servant Leadership	0.451	0.463	0.389	

Henseler et al., (2015) suggested the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) as an additional method for dealing with discriminant validity problems in variance-based structural equation modeling. The exact HTMT cut-off value is debatable, while some scholars have put 0.85 forth as a possible cut-off (Kline, 2005). However, some have suggested 0.90 as a more appropriate figure (Gold et al., 2001). Table 4 indicates that all the HTMT values are less than the cut-off of 0.90, indicating that the discriminant validity has been proven. In addition, confidence intervals for the HTMT ratio can be constructed using the bootstrapping process. The top 97.5% and bottom 2.5% columns represent the 95% confidence interval’s boundaries, respectively. The link between SL and EC has HTMT lower and upper bounds of 0.057 and 0.260, HP and EC of 0.057 and 0.272, and PS and EC of 0.490 and 0.678. The criteria for HTMT have bootstrap confidence interval values that are all smaller than 1, lending credence to the notion that the constructs possess discriminant validity. The assessment of the measurement model is shown in Tables 2,3 and 4.

4.2. Structural Inner Model Evaluation

The study’s hypotheses were tested utilizing a structural equation analysis. The primary objective is to focus on how effectively the model can explain and forecast the consequence variable variation due to the predictor variable. Regarding model validity, Chin et al. (2020) categorized endogenous latent variables as either strong, moderate, or weak, depending on the R2 values of 0.67, 0.33, or 0.19, respectively. The endogenous variable (Harmonious passion and Psychological Safety) has an R2 value of 0.171; psychological safety explains 9.8 % of employee creativity (R2 = 0.098). Hence, the model validity can be characterized as weak. According to Farooq and Salam (2018), it is important to exercise caution when endorsing a model purely based on the R2 measurement. As a result, in this investigation, we computed the model’s predictive power by employing the predictive relevance (Q2) proposed by Stone (1974) and Geisser (1974) structural model. Blindfolding examination shows that employee creativity values (0.230) were greater than zero in the Stone-Geisser Q2 calculation, suggesting that the structural model had sufficient predictive power. As shown in Table 5, the Root Mean Square Theta (RMS) value is 0.122, greater than 0.120, and the NFI value is 0.752, less than 0.9. Therefore, the model fit requirement cannot be achieved according to these two model evaluations. Based on the SRMR (Standardized Root Mean Square) value, which is 0.080, we can conclude that the model is fit since it is less than the threshold of 0.10 (Henseler et al., 2014).

Table 5: Goodness of Fit Index

Endogenous Latent Factors	AVE	R2
Harmonious passion	0.549	0.167
Psychological Safety	0.663	0.095
Employee Creativity		
Average Score	0.606	0.131
AVE*R2	0.079	
(GOF = $\sqrt{(AVE \times R2)}$)	0.281	
RMS Theta	0.122	
NFI	0.752	
SRMR	0.080	

In order to evaluate the outcomes of the GoF study, Tenenhaus et al. (2005) provided the following threshold values: Whereas GoFlarge is 0.36, GoFmedium is 0.25, and GoFsmall is 0.1. A GoF value of 0.281 was computed for the model utilized in this study (Table 5), indicating a medium model fit. Finally, a bootstrapping procedure was performed in smart PLS 3.2.7 to establish the route coefficient and its related t-value for both the direct and mediated associations. The current research proposed seven hypotheses, five of which are direct relationships and two of which are indirect. To test our hypotheses, we used the bootstrapping method with 5.000 samples, the “no sign changes” option, and confidence intervals that were 95% free of bias. Since all t-values were more than 1.96 and all p-values were smaller than 0.05, we may accept all direct hypotheses.

The outcomes of the hypothesis testing are documented in Table 6. Our findings showed that servant leadership had a direct and significant impact on employee creativity. The beta coefficient was 0.165, the t-value was 3.260, and the p-value was less than 0.01, supporting H1. However, the main objective of this study was to investigate how harmonious passion and psychological safety mediate the relationship between servant leadership and EC. To examine the effects of mediation, we applied the criteria outlined by Hayes (2013) using SmartPLS 3.0. Results of the direct effects of transformational leadership on the two mediating variables (harmonious passion: $\gamma = 0.413$, $p = 0.01$ and psychological safety; $\gamma = 0.313$, $p = 0.01$) were all significant. Similarly, the relationship between harmonious passion and EC ($\beta = 0.159$, $p = 0.01$) and psychological safety and EC ($\beta = 0.519$, $p = 0.01$) was significant. Hence, it was determined that the second requirement for testing mediation was fulfilled.

Table 6: Results of Structural Model Evaluation

Relationship	Path Coefficient	Standard Error	t-Statistic	Decision
SL → EC	0.165	0.051	3.260**	Accepted
SL → HP	0.413	0.049	8.456**	Accepted
HP → EC	0.159	0.054	2.958**	Accepted
SL → PS	0.313	0.062	5.088**	Accepted
PS. → EC	0.519	0.048	12.397**	Accepted
SL → HP → EC	0.066	0.023	2.819**	Accepted
SL → PS → EC	0.185	0.037	4.997**	Accepted

Note: Critical t-values. **2.58 (P<0.01); * 1.96 (P<0.05)

Based on Hypotheses 2 and 3, this study investigated the role of harmonious passion and psychological safety as intervening variables between servant leadership and employee creativity. Our method for producing targeted indirect effects in this dual mediation study was based on that of Preacher & Hayes (2008) and Nitzl et al. (2017). The mediation test results reported in Table 6 confirmed all of the predicted indirect associations. The findings indicate a mediating effect of HP on the connection between SL and EC (H4: $\beta = 0.066$, $p < .001$). Moreover, the data show that PS mediates the connection between SL and EC ($\beta = 0.185$, $p < .001$). Effect size (F Square) mediation ν or ν statistics (ν) was also used to measure the relative size of the indirect impact and the overall effect (Lachowicz et al. 2018). According to Cohen’s proposed statistical interpretation in Ogbeibu et al. (2020), an ν mediating effect of 0.02 is considered low, 0.075 is considered moderate, and 0.175 is considered large.

Figure 1: Results of the hypothesized relationships

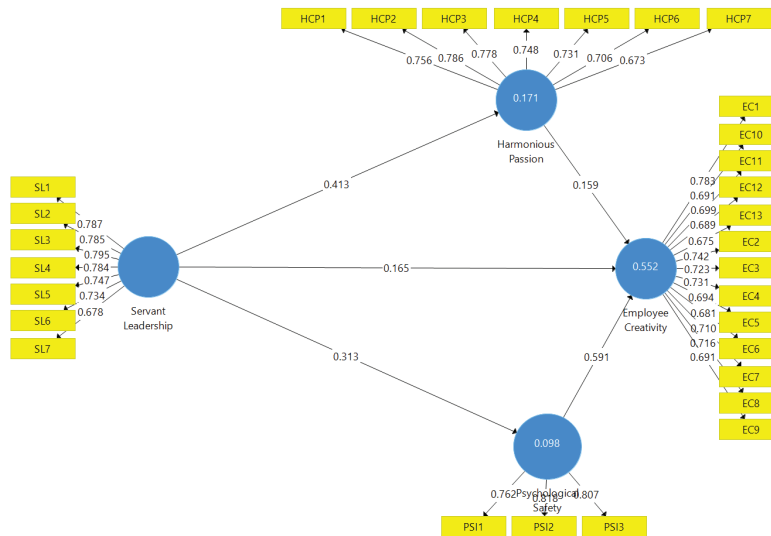


Table 7: Upsilon Mediation Effect Size (v) or Upsilon Statistics (v)

Statistical Path	Upsilon Statistics (v)	Information
SL (X1) → HP (M) → EC (Y)	$[0.413]^2 \times [0.199]^2 = 0.002$	Low Influence
SL (X1) → PS (M) → EC (Y)	$[0.313]^2 \times [0.591]^2 = 0.034$	Low Influence

Based on the calculations in Table 7, the role of HP (M) and PS (M) in mediating the indirect influence of SL (X1) on EC (Y) at the structural level is classified as low.

5. DISCUSSION

Long-term competitiveness and survival are enhanced by encouraging creative behavior among frontline personnel in the hospitality industry. Hence, acknowledging the significant impact of leadership styles that are more effective at eliciting creative performance among frontline staff, specifically within the hotel industry, is an interesting topic to research. Drawing on social learning theory (SLT) and the componential theory of creativity, this paper attempts to add to the existing body of knowledge on the connection between servant leadership and employee creativity and analyze how psychological safety and Harmonious passion mediate the relationship. The following parts emphasize the study's theoretical contributions and practical implications.

6. THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTION

The research has significant theoretical contributions to the fields of leadership and frontline employees' creativity in the hospitality context. First, the paper contributes to the research on employees' creativity by examining the role of servant leadership, harmonious passion, and psychological safety. The current study clarified the psychological process that connects SL with frontline employee creativity. Leaders who display servant characteristics will provide influential role-modeling signals for individuals and motivate them by giving individuals greater personal or psychological resources that may boost the creativity level of employees. It is worth mentioning that the authors could not find any prior empirical study that has examined these outcomes simultaneously in the hospitality business. On a second point, the research adds to the existing literature on hospitality, mainly how SL influences staff creativity via HP and PS. The theoretical basis for this influence is grounded in the Social Learning Theory (SLT) proposed by Bandura (2003). According to SLT, when employees believe that their leaders prioritize the well-being and growth of their team members, it fosters a pleasant and trustworthy work environment. This promotes a culture of open communication, the exchange of knowledge, and a feeling of psychological safety among the workforce.

Consequently, people are more inclined to participate in observational learning, taking inspiration from leaders who demonstrate servant behaviors. Moreover, employees are incentivized to undertake risks and engage in creative thinking when they realize their ideas are highly regarded and possess the independence to investigate and execute inventive solutions. The social learning dynamics within a servant leadership framework contribute to developing a culture that fosters and enhances employee creativity.

Furthermore, previous studies on passion have provided valuable insights into employees' creative abilities (Ivcevic et al, 2021; Żywiołek et al., 2022). However, these studies have overlooked the aspect of creativity, specifically within the hotel business. The creativity of frontline employees plays a crucial role in enhancing the performance of hotel firms. This aspect is of great interest to both researchers and professionals in the hotel industry due to the positive impact of creativity on adapting to customer demands,

dealing with intense market competition, and enhancing the value of the services provided by existing firms. Therefore, this study expands the knowledge of passion within the service industry. While the connection between leadership and employee creativity has been extensively discussed in European and Western literature, a significant lack of attention has been given to investigating its implications and discussion in an Asian context. Scholars have advocated for Asian countries to cultivate the creative capacity of their workforce to contribute to a creative industry (Peng et al., 2023). The generalizability of findings from past research studies may be limited when applied to developing countries like Indonesia. Conducting a study on creativity among frontline staff in Indonesia, an emerging Asian environment, would undoubtedly contribute to expanding existing literature.

7. PRACTICAL CONTRIBUTION

This study has numerous relevant practical implications for managers and frontline workers in the hotel sector. Servant leadership's significance necessitates organizations to implement comprehensive human resource management practices that foster servant leadership. We proposed that implementing servant leadership, which prioritizes comprehending employees and fostering interpersonal acceptance, will enhance the recognition and comprehension of the various challenges employees encounter during the creative process. A servant-leader will be able to encourage and empathize with others while navigating through emotional ups and downs, which will ultimately result in the successful implementation of the original plan. A servant-leader will always create and sustain an inclusive workplace that complies with the (sometimes strange or unexpected) needs of the creative team to set the creative process in motion. Therefore, to maintain a high rate of creativity in a dynamic, fast-paced, and unpredictable hospitality industrial environment, companies should look for managers with amiable personalities, a strong desire to help others, and strong moral principles.

Furthermore, it is essential to provide training for managers to adopt servant leadership conduct. Additionally, they should be given ample resources to empower their followers and fulfill their wants and interests. By fostering harmonious and psychological safety, organizations can create a psychologically safe space where employees feel secure, empowering them to engage in creative behavior. In addition, organizations should foster staff passion and customer focus. Organizations can foster employee passion by creating work settings that reinforcing their value and interest in their occupations. Organizations may create positive, purposeful, and stimulating work. Providing autonomy and a supportive work environment where individuals may freely voice their requirements can help foster harmonious passion. Companies should also provide constructive feedback to help employees reach their goals and motivate them to work hard. In a similar vein, to inspire frontline staff creativity, organizations must actively promote psychological safety. The dynamic and customer-centric hotel sector relies on frontline personnel for client happiness and service innovation. These employees are likelier to express their ideas, give feedback, and solve problems in a psychologically safe setting. Create an open-communication culture, value varied opinions, and use feedback processes emphasizing improvement rather than blame. Hotels can tap into frontline employees' creativity by prioritizing psychological safety, improving client experiences, and staying competitive in the ever-changing hospitality industry.

8. LIMITATION

While our analysis has theoretical and practical consequences, it has constraints that propose future research areas. This study used self-report measures of employee creativity, which may cause CMV and impact the connections between study variables. Further study should replicate our findings using intermediate supervisor-rated and self-rated measures of creative behavior. Second, cross-sectional research design may hinder causality conclusions. While cross-sectional design is often criticized in organizational psychology and behavioral research due to its limitations, Spector (2019) recognizes its potential for significant insights. An Indonesian hotel employee sample was used to test the hypothesized study model. Research conducted in a single sector and country may not apply to other industries and countries.

Different cultural backgrounds react differently to servant leadership. In particular, Van Dierendonck (2011) suggested that followers with low power distance or strong humane orientation may be more susceptible to servant leadership. Indonesians can be less receptive to servant leadership due to their high-power distance. Future research may use a cross-industry and cross-cultural sample to understand hypothesized linkages better, apply the results, and have more relevant practical implications. Further, Previous research has suggested that creativity is inherent in individuals (Amabile, 1997; Runco and Jaeger, 2012). However, this perspective may inadvertently lead to the assumption that leadership does not significantly influence creativity, especially in individuals not naturally predisposed to creativity. Conversely, other studies have demonstrated the influential role of contextual factors, such as leadership, in stimulating creativity among individuals (Shalley and Gilson, 2004; Shin and Zhou, 2003). This apparent discrepancy between the belief in innate creativity and the demonstrated influence of leadership on creative potential presents a notable research gap. Further investigation is needed to reconcile these findings and explore the nuanced relationship between individual creativity and leadership styles.

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Please cite this article as:

Yulianeu, A. & Yusuf, M.N. (2024). Servant Leadership and Employee Creativity: The Mediating Role of Harmonious Passion and Psychological Safety. *Tourism and Hospitality Management*, 30(4), <https://doi.org/10.20867/thm.30.4.9>



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