



**UNIVERSIDAD
DE GRANADA**

**Facultad de Ciencias Económicas y Empresariales
Departamento de Organización de Empresas
Programa Oficial de Doctorado en Ciencias Económicas y Empresariales**

TESIS DOCTORAL

**ANTECEDENTS AND OUTCOMES OF PSYCHOLOGICAL
EMPOWERMENT IN HOSPITALITY EMPLOYEES**

MENCIÓN DE DOCTORADO INTERNACIONAL

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GRANADA, 2017

Editor: Universidad de Granada. Tesis Doctorales
Autor: Irene Huertas Valdivia
ISBN: 978-84-9163-347-1
URI: <http://hdl.handle.net/10481/62212>



AGRADECIMIENTOS

Aprovecho estas líneas para, en primer lugar, agradecer a mi director de tesis, el Dr. Fco. Javier Lloréns, su orientación y apoyo durante las etapas más cruciales de la realización de esta tesis doctoral. Le estaré siempre agradecida por sus sabias ideas, consejos y sugerencias, que han sido claves para la finalización de este proyecto.

En segundo lugar, quiero manifestar un profundo agradecimiento al Dr. Francisco Díaz Bretones por su inspiración y continuo aliento. Francisco comenzó siendo mi mentor académico, allá por 2003, y con el paso de los años se ha convertido en un gran amigo. Gracias por estar siempre ahí para mí.

También quiero agradecer al Dr. Carlos Albacete Sáez su apoyo durante las primeras etapas de este proyecto; y a la Dra. Antonia Ruiz Moreno, sus pacientes explicaciones sobre la validación de escalas. Igualmente, muchas gracias a mis compañeras del departamento de Organización de Empresas de la Universidad de Granada: Araceli Rojo Gallego-Burín y Jéssica Braojos, por su valioso conocimiento sobre ecuaciones estructurales y su disposición a compartirlo conmigo.

También estoy agradecida a la Dra. Anne Dewey por su gran profesionalidad y ayuda inmediata con mis escritos en inglés. Gracias también a todas las personas que

intervinieron desinteresadamente en los procesos de traducción y traducción inversa del instrumento de medición: Diego González, Sixto Hernández, Chuck Arundel, y las doctoras Deborah Kukielka y María Luján J. Pranteda.

Ha habido varios profesionales del sector turístico que verdaderamente me han ayudado con el trabajo de campo. Estaré siempre en deuda con Javier Solís, Fátima Pelegrina, Verónica Ferrer, Julia Castillo, Inma Guzmán, Rocío Solís, Almudena Garófano, Ana Ambel y Rocío L. Bolívar por todo su tiempo y apoyo, y por su valiosa retroalimentación con la encuesta piloto. Igualmente, gracias a la Federación Provincial de Empresas de Hostelería y Turismo de Granada, y a la Asociación Skål, por su excelente predisposición a ayudarme con este proyecto.

También quiero dar las gracias a todo el personal de la División de Gestión Empresarial y del Departamento de Turismo, Recreación y Servicio de la Universidad de Guadalajara (México), así como a mis estudiantes de CUCEA, por convertirse en mi familia durante dos años y medio. Mi experiencia allí fue, sin duda, la que me más me motivó a dar un giro a mi carrera profesional y dedicarme a la enseñanza. Nunca olvidaré todo el cariño recibido mientras impartía clase en la UDG. Asimismo, gracias a todos mis compañeros del departamento de A.D.O. de la Universidad Rey Juan Carlos, Madrid, por una acogida tan cálida este año en el campus de Vicálvaro.

Igualmente, quiero extender un agradecimiento muy especial a todos los trabajadores del hotel AC Palacio de Santa Paula (Granada): gracias por ser unos compañeros de 5 estrellas durante esos 9 años juntos. En especial, mil gracias a su director, Paco Ruiz Muñoz, por todas las facilidades que me brindó en su día para poder compatibilizar mi puesto como jefa de recepción con mis estudios de posgrado. Durante esa etapa profesional aprendí mucho sobre *empowerment*, *engagement* y liderazgo; de hecho, mi experiencia laboral allí ha sido la inspiración para la temática de esta tesis

Mi mayor agradecimiento va sin duda para esos 340 trabajadores anónimos que me ayudaron de una forma sincera y desinteresada en el trabajo de campo, completando mi pesado cuestionario. Espero que los resultados de esta tesis ayuden a aumentar la conciencia de la importancia de cuidar de *vosotros*: el activo más importante y valioso de la estructura hotelera.

Por último, quisiera agradecer sinceramente a mi familia su constante aliento, apoyo y el creer en mí en los momentos más complicados: gracias, Paco, Mari y Yeni. Gracias

a mi padre, por tanto esfuerzo y sacrificio por esta familia numerosa: ¡estarías tan orgulloso hoy! Y a **mi madre**, sobre todo a ella: GRACIAS por tus eternos ánimos, gracias por todo, por siempre.

Gracias también a mis tíos: Águeda, Andrés, Joaquín, Encarna y Mari Carmen, así como a mis tíos políticos y primos, por mostrarse siempre tan orgullosos de mis logros, por pequeños que estos sean; y a mis abuelos, por su infinito cariño, que aún hoy sigo sintiendo pese a las ausencias.

También quiero dar las gracias a José Luis e Isabel, por ser unos suegros de matrícula de honor.

Mi agradecimiento más especial para mi querido compañero de vida, José Luis Gastón, por ser un gran ejemplo para mí de excelencia, inteligencia, persistencia y éxito: gracias por todo tu amor, paciencia y comprensión, y por tantas risas juntos durante este maratón de estudio.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am sincerely indebted to Professor Javier Lloréns Montes, my supervisor, for his guidance and for his effective advising during the later stages of my doctoral study. The scholarly expertise and experience that he generously shared have been invaluable to the completion of this thesis, and my gratitude to him is deep and lasting.

Others' contributions have also been essential to this project. First, I would like to thank Dr. Francisco Díaz Bretones for his inspiration and continuous encouragement. Francisco has been a valuable friend and mentor since my undergraduate days. Thanks for always being there for me!

Thanks to Dr. Carlos Albacete Sáez for his support during the early stages of this project, and to Dr. Antonia Ruiz Moreno for her explanations of scale validation. I also owe much to my colleagues in the Business Management Department Araceli Rojo Gallego-Burín and Jéssica Braojos for their invaluable equation modelling expertise and their willingness to share it with me.

I am grateful to Dr. Anne Dewey for her tremendous professionalism and ready assistance with my English. Thanks also to Diego González, Sixto Hernández, Chuck Arundel, Dr. Deborah Kukielka, and Dr. María Luján J. Pranteda for their generous contribution with back translation of the scales.

Several tourism professionals were tremendously helpful in constructing the questionnaire and gathering the data. I am forever indebted to Javier Solís, Fátima Pelegrina, Julia Castillo, Verónica Ferrer, Inma Guzmán, Rocío Solís, Almudena Garófano, Ana Ambel, and Rocío L. Bolívar for their time and support, and for their valuable feedback on the pilot survey. Many thanks also to the Hospitality Association of Granada and to Skål International for their kind willingness to help with this project.

I wish to thank the entire staff of the “Turismo, Recreación y Servicio” Department of the University of Guadalajara (México), and my CUCEA students for being my family for two and a half years. I will never forget all the love you gave me during my time there; my experience as a professor in Mexico redirected my career profoundly to pursue teaching. Recognition is also due to all my fellow professors of University Rey Juan Carlos in Vicálvaro, Madrid, for such a warm welcome this year.

A big “Thank You” to all my former colleagues at Hotel AC Palacio de Santa Paula for being truly 5-star-mates! Most of my ideas on empowerment, engagement, and leadership come from those nine intense years we shared. I also wish to recognize my former hotel manager, Paco Ruiz Muñoz, for granting me flexibility in my schedule as front desk manager so that I could pursue my postgraduate studies.

My sincerest gratitude goes to those anonymous front-line workers and middle-managers who completed my long questionnaire with such care and kindness, and for their genuine willingness to help throughout the process. I hope the results of this thesis help to raise awareness of the importance of taking care of *you*, the most valuable asset of your hospitality corporations.

Finally, I wish to express my heartfelt thanks to my family for their continuous encouragement and for believing in me in the hardest moments: Thanks Paco, Mari, and Yeni! Thanks to my father, who labored and sacrificed himself with such devotion for his family: you would be very proud today! And especially to **my mother**, THANK YOU for your indefatigable spirit, always and forever.

Thanks also to my aunts and uncles – Águeda, Andrés, Joaquín, Encarna, and Mari Carmen –as well as to my aunts- and uncles-in-law and my cousins, for always being so proud of my achievements, however small; and to my grandparents, for their boundless affection.

And finally, thank you to José Luis and Isabel for being “A+” parents-in-law.

My deepest gratitude is to my beloved partner, José Luis Gastón, for being a daily example of excellence, intelligence, persistence, and success: thanks for all your love, patience, and understanding—and for so many laughs together during this scholarly marathon.

ÍTACA

*“Cuando emprendas tu viaje a Ítaca
pide que el camino sea largo,
lleno de aventuras, lleno de experiencias.
No temas a los Lestrigones ni a los Cíclopes,
ni al colérico Poseidón,
seres tales jamás hallarás en tu camino
si tu pensar es elevado, si selecta
es la emoción que toca tu espíritu y tu cuerpo.
Ni a los Lestrigones ni a los Cíclopes
ni al salvaje Poseidón encontrarás
si no lo llevas dentro de tu alma,
si no los yergue tu alma ante ti.*

*Pide que el camino sea largo.
Que sean muchas las mañanas de verano
en que llegues -¡con qué placer y alegría!-
a puertos antes nunca vistos.
Detente en los emporios de Fenicia
y hazte con hermosas mercancías,
nácar y coral, ámbar y ébano
y toda suerte de perfumes voluptuosos,
cuantos más abundantes perfumes voluptuosos puedas.
Ve a muchas ciudades egipcias
a aprender de sus sabios.*

*Ten siempre a Ítaca en tu pensamiento.
Tu llegada allí es tu destino.
Mas no apresures nunca el viaje,
mejor que dure muchos años
y atracar, viejo ya, en la isla,
enriquecido de cuanto ganaste en el camino
sin aguardar a que Ítaca te enriquezca.
Ítaca te brindó tan hermoso viaje.
Sin ella no habrías emprendido el camino,
pero no tiene ya nada que darte.*

*Aunque la halles pobre, Ítaca no te ha engañado.
Así, sabio como te has vuelto, con tanta experiencia,
entenderás ya qué significan las Ítacas”.*

Constantine Cavafy (1863-1933)
(extraído de <http://ciudadseva.com/texto/itaca/>)

*A mis padres,
a quienes siempre estaré agradecida
por todo lo que me han dado.*

*To my parents,
with enduring gratitude
for all they have given me.*

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1

INTRODUCCIÓN

1. INTRODUCCIÓN

Introducción

El turismo en general, y la industria hotelera en particular, son sectores económicos muy distintos del resto de los servicios. Se trata de actividades basadas en una constante interacción entre personas, en las que determinados elementos intangibles pueden ser determinantes para lograr “marcar la diferencia” durante la prestación del servicio. De hecho, como afirman Dawson et al. (2011), en las empresas de hospedaje es la *forma* en la que el trabajador presta el servicio -más que el servicio en sí mismo- el elemento crítico para la satisfacción general del cliente respecto al producto o experiencia por los que ha pagado. Tal es así, que la clave del éxito o fracaso de muchas organizaciones turísticas radica no tanto en sus instalaciones y equipamientos sino en las actitudes y comportamientos de sus trabajadores (Robison, 2006). Por este motivo, las investigaciones académicas en los últimos años han puesto el foco de atención en cómo potenciar ese *capital psicológico* (Paek et al., 2015) del recurso humano.

Dentro del sector turístico, la hotelería es, además, una industria con unas particularidades propias. Se trata de un sector intensivo en capital humano, con turnos

de trabajo cambiantes y un ritmo de trabajo marcado por una fuerte estacionalidad, con sobrecarga de trabajo en periodos de alta ocupación. Al tratarse de un sector caracterizado por *personas atendiendo a personas*, cada prestación del servicio es diferente - fruto de la heterogeneidad inherente a las necesidades de cada cliente, y de las propias características personales de los individuos que interactúan en el momento del servicio-. De hecho, a diferencia de una fábrica, por ejemplo, el trabajo en un hotel no es algo uniforme; tampoco las interacciones con el cliente pueden estandarizarse, ni todas las posibles contingencias del día a día podrían preverse en modo alguno en un manual. Por ello, se hace necesario contar con empleados resolutivos, entusiastas, diligentes y capaces de brindar un servicio de calidad con eficacia y eficiencia.

El fundador y presidente de la prestigiosa cadena hotelera *Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts*, Isadore Sharp (2009), afirma la imposibilidad de mecanizar el servicio hotelero a través de reglas, o de controlarlo mediante supervisión. Y añade que en hotelería se necesitan *empleados capaces y deseosos de responder por sí mismos a cualquier cosa que ocurra, empleados que puedan identificar, resolver e incluso prever los problemas*. Esto implica delegar autoridad y recursos, así como responsabilidad.

Sin embargo, paradójicamente, la industria hotelera siempre ha estado marcada por una clara estructura piramidal con fuertes líneas jerárquicas y modelos de autoridad y control centralizados. Según Øgaard et al. (2008), en el sector turístico siguen predominando estructuras organizativas altamente burocratizadas con estilos de liderazgo tradicionales y autocráticos, donde el empleado base no está autorizado para tomar decisiones. Tal es así que, ante cualquier imprevisto, reclamación, o queja en un hotel, es frecuente que el cliente tenga que esperar a que se localice al correspondiente jefe, ya que solo los superiores tienen la autoridad para solventar dicha situación -firmando la autorización de descuento o aprobando determinada concesión (*upgrades*, *amenities* especiales o permiso para un *late check-out*)-. La ralentización del servicio debido a estas cuestiones formales puede derivar en la insatisfacción del cliente, puesto que en un hotel producción y consumo se realizan de manera simultánea. Es más, esta manera de proceder parece contrastar con la necesidad de flexibilidad, personalización e inmediatez en la respuesta que demandan los clientes actualmente. Este liderazgo autoritario predominante aún en muchas empresas turísticas puede ser tal vez un obstáculo a la hora de ofrecer un servicio eficaz y de calidad.

En los últimos años, nuevas filosofías de gestión con una mayor tendencia a la delegación de autoridad y al empoderamiento del trabajador parecen estar cobrando fuerza. Jha y Nair (2008) afirman que muchas organizaciones, con vistas a aumentar la competitividad empresarial, han empezado a sustituir sus estructuras tradicionales jerarquizadas por otras más planas con equipos autogestionados y dotados de poder. En estos nuevos modelos organizativos supervisor y subordinado comparten responsabilidades y autoridad en el proceso de toma de decisiones.

El **empoderamiento**¹ surge así como respuesta a la necesidad de las organizaciones de involucrar a todos los empleados en la toma de decisiones y la resolución de problemas, utilizando para ello el potencial de los trabajadores, y favoreciendo una cultura organizacional basada en la satisfacción del *cliente interno* para mejorar la calidad proporcionada en el servicio al *cliente externo* (Geralis y Terziovski, 2003).

1.1. Marco general de la tesis doctoral

El siglo XX fue testigo de una vertiginosa evolución en la gestión del personal: el trabajador pasó de ser una pieza más del engranaje productivo -del que se esperaba exclusivamente que realizara su tarea correctamente y en el tiempo establecido- a constituir el centro de atención de la organización y verse como el recurso más valioso de la misma.

Durante la primera mitad del siglo pasado en los entornos de trabajo existía una completa falta de poder por parte de los trabajadores, tanto en lo relativo a sus condiciones laborales como en los procesos organizativos y la toma de decisiones. Esa falta de autonomía y participación de los trabajadores fue interpretada por McGregor (1960) en su *Teoría X*, postulando que los empleados preferían evitar responsabilidades y deseaban ser dirigidos. Estas ideas estuvieron muy presentes en la mentalidad de los directivos durante las primeras décadas de 1900.

Sin embargo, en la segunda mitad del siglo XX, la *Teoría de la Motivación-Higiene* de Herzberg et al. (1959), y los postulados sobre el *enriquecimiento del puesto*

1 Aunque en el ámbito académico el anglicismo “empowerment” parece estar bastante afincado en las publicaciones en castellano, en esta tesis doctoral se ha preferido emplear la acepción de *empoderamiento*, aceptada por la Real Academia de la Lengua Española (R.A.E.).

(basados en el aumento del control y la toma de decisiones sobre el mismo por parte de los trabajadores), llegaron a conclusiones totalmente opuestas. En dichos trabajos se afirmaba que la existencia de responsabilidad y retos en el trabajo eran un prerrequisito para la satisfacción, motivación y buen desempeño del trabajador. Esta nueva corriente de pensamiento influyó de forma determinante en el desarrollo de la *Teoría Y* de McGregor, la cual afirmaba que la motivación, la productividad y la participación del empleado podían lograrse y mantenerse si el trabajo contenía elementos motivadores. McGregor añadía en su *Teoría Y* que la gestión empresarial basada en la dirección y el control no funcionaba en cualquier tipo de organización. Posteriormente, el modelo de Hackman y Oldham (1976) establecía que la autonomía en el trabajo, la variedad de tareas, la identificación y el significado de la tarea, y la retroalimentación eran características claves de un trabajo bien diseñado y motivador.

Progresivamente, se ha ido produciendo una transformación en la mentalidad empresarial tendiéndose hacia una mayor democratización en los entornos de trabajo; todo ello probablemente influenciado por determinados movimientos obreros y sociales organizados en los últimos tiempos, y por el avance de la investigación en el campo de la gestión de recursos humanos. Son numerosos los logros conseguidos en cuanto a la mayor valoración del componente humano en las organizaciones, así como en lo concerniente a unas adecuadas condiciones laborales.

En las décadas de los 80 y los 90 empiezan a cobrar importancia determinadas prácticas que fomentan la implicación de los trabajadores en las organizaciones con el objetivo de incrementar su compromiso con la empresa y mejorar su satisfacción laboral. En estos años comienza a apostarse por el desarrollo de técnicas y herramientas que ayuden a transformar las empresas basadas en estructuras de control en otras menos jerárquicas y más flexibles. Es en este periodo cuando surge el interés por el *empoderamiento* tanto en el ámbito académico como en el mundo empresarial, y cuando se realizan las primeras investigaciones con el constructo como principal tema objeto de estudio. Tal es el cambio de mentalidad producido en el seno de muchas organizaciones que diversos autores denominan esta etapa como “la era del *empowerment*” (Hardy y Leiba-O’Sullivan, 1998), al verse éste como un remedio muy prometedor para corregir ciertas deficiencias en el área de operaciones empresarial -especialmente en lo concerniente a la atención al cliente en el sector servicios-.

En líneas generales, podría decirse que existen dos grandes motivos que explican la aparición del empoderamiento en entornos laborales: en primer lugar, la corriente de Humanismo Democrático que surge como respuesta a los excesos de la Organización Científica del Trabajo y a los consecuentes problemas de alienación de los trabajadores bajo los modelos *tayloristas* o *fordistas*; y en segundo lugar, la aparición en la década de los 80 del paradigma de la Organización Flexible (Cunningham et al., 1996; Wilkinson, 1998). Dicho paradigma enfatiza el papel crucial de los trabajadores en los procesos productivos y la importancia de tener estructuras organizativas más planas en entornos de mercado cada vez más cambiantes; todo ello debido a la mayor capacidad de respuesta que se necesita en las empresas para poder adaptarse mejor a las características del nuevo consumidor. Así es como empieza a cobrar fuerza la creencia de que las organizaciones altamente jerarquizadas ya no parecen ser capaces de satisfacer las demandas de dinamismo y excelencia que exigen los nuevos mercados. Klidas et al. (2007) lo consideran un fenómeno en línea con la progresiva democratización experimentada tanto a nivel social como empresarial en las últimas décadas, ya que favorece cierto grado de autodeterminación de los trabajadores.

1.2. Delimitación del tema objeto de estudio

El *empoderamiento* es un tema objeto de estudio relativamente reciente ya que los primeros trabajos relacionados de alguna manera con éste se iniciaron en la década de los setenta. Muchos autores consideran a Bandura (1977) como precursor del mismo al introducir el concepto de *autoeficacia*, y por sus estudios sobre la vinculación entre el sentimiento de autoeficacia de los individuos y su buen desempeño laboral (Brymer, 1991; Ergeneli et al., 2006; Sparrowe, 1994). Otros apuntan hacia *el análisis de los flujos de poder* y el acceso a los recursos clave en las organizaciones realizado por Kanter (1989, 1977) como claro antecedente teórico del empoderamiento estructural² (McDermott et al., 1996).

No es hasta la década de los 90 cuando se empiezan a analizar en profundidad el constructo del empoderamiento y sus dimensiones, publicándose numerosos estudios

2 Es frecuente que el concepto de empoderamiento se emplee indistintamente en la literatura para referirse tanto al empoderamiento *estructural* (prácticas formales o acciones llevadas a cabo por la organización para dotar de poder al empleado) como al empoderamiento *psicológico* (percepción del trabajador al sentirse empoderado). Sin embargo, cuando en esta tesis se indica únicamente el término “empoderamiento”, sin añadir el adjetivo “psicológico”, se hace referencia exclusivamente al concepto de *empoderamiento psicológico* y no al estructural.

que apuestan por la potenciación de la capacidad de decisión del empleado como respuesta a determinados problemas de ineficiencia en el área de operaciones empresarial.

Tabla 1.1. Evolución del constructo empoderamiento: principales aportaciones

AUTORES	AÑO	DEFINICIÓN	DESCRIPTORES/ DIMENSIONES
CONGER Y KANUNGO	1988	<i>El proceso con el que se consigue potenciar el sentimiento de autoeficacia entre los miembros de la organización a través de la identificación y eliminación de las condiciones que ocasionan la falta de poder, mediante prácticas organizacionales formales y procesos de información informales.</i>	Autoeficacia
THOMAS Y VELTHOUSE	1990	<i>Es un estado psicológico interno del individuo que favorece el aumento de su motivación intrínseca hacia la tarea. Se manifiesta en un conjunto de cuatro cogniciones que reflejan la orientación individual hacia su rol laboral: impacto, competencia, significado y elección.</i>	Impacto Competencia Significado Elección
BRYMER	1991	<i>Proceso de descentralización de la toma de decisiones en una organización, donde los supervisores otorgan mayor autonomía a los empleados en contacto directo con los clientes. Supone cambios en la estructura jerárquica tradicional y en diversos procesos operativos.</i>	Descentralización Autonomía
BOWEN Y LAWLER	1992 1995	<i>Consiste en compartir 4 ingredientes organizacionales con los empleados en contacto directo con el cliente: poder en la toma de decisiones, información de la empresa, conocimiento y capacitación, y recompensas adecuadas.</i> <i>Empoderamiento = Poder x información x conocimiento x recompensas.</i> <i>(Si alguno de esos elementos es cero, el empoderamiento no podrá tener lugar)</i>	Poder Información Conocimiento Recompensas
KELLER Y DANSEREAU	1995	Empoderamiento organizacional: la efectividad de la organización se incrementa cuando el poder y el control son compartidos.	Poder Control
SPREITZER	1995	<i>El empoderamiento psicológico es un estado mental del empleado sobre su papel en la organización. Se trata de una variable continua solamente identificable en entornos laborales, compuesta por cuatro dimensiones: significado, competencia, autodeterminación e impacto.</i>	Significado Competencia Autodeterminación Impacto
MENON	2001	En el contexto laboral, el empoderamiento es un estado cognitivo caracterizado por un sentido de control percibido, competencia percibida e interiorización de los objetivos.	Control Competencia Internalización de objetivos

(Elaboración propia)

En esta época de los 90 comienzan a publicarse trabajos que defienden la aplicación del criterio del empleado en la realización de su trabajo (Kelley, 1993); así como investigaciones específicas sobre el empoderamiento como proceso cognitivo y motivacional -como las de Conger y Kanungo (1988), Thomas y Velthouse (1990), y Bowen y Lawler (1995). Antes de 1990 las referencias al empoderamiento sólo podían encontrarse de forma residual, al mencionarse sucintamente en publicaciones relacionadas con la gestión participativa, los círculos de calidad o la planificación estratégica, pero no existían investigaciones en las que este constructo fuera el tema principal o apareciera como descriptor clave (Honold, 1997).

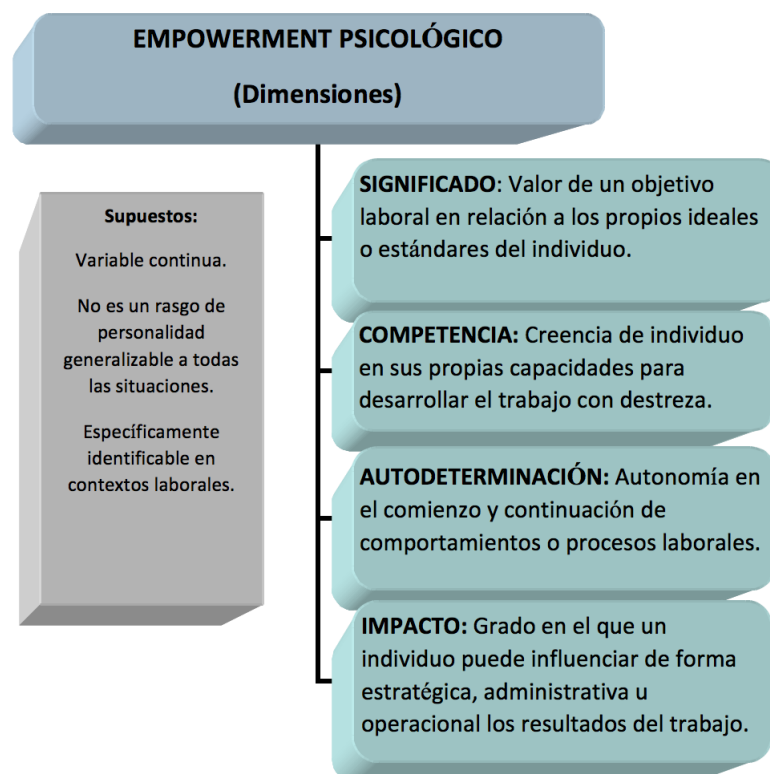
El empoderamiento se ha estudiado bajo dos grandes perspectivas: la relacional o estructural y la motivacional o psicológica (Conger y Kanungo, 1988). El *empoderamiento estructural* hace referencia al conjunto de características ambientales, actividades y prácticas, mediante las que los superiores ceden poder, control y autoridad a sus subordinados. Es, en definitiva, la presencia o ausencia de condiciones de trabajo y otros aspectos contextuales que favorecen el acceso a los distintos recursos, y que facilitan la autonomía y discrecionalidad del trabajador. Por otro lado, el empoderamiento como constructo motivacional está relacionado con la necesidad de autodeterminación del individuo y con el fomento de su sentimiento de autoeficacia. Desde este punto de vista cognitivo, el *empoderamiento psicológico* es, por tanto, un estado mental del trabajador fruto de su percepción sobre esa efectiva cesión de poder.

La mayor aportación al conocimiento del empoderamiento psicológico fue la realizada por la profesora Gretchen Spreitzer (1996, 1995), al definirlo como un estado psicológico propio de entornos laborales, resultado de una serie de factores personales y contextuales. Se trata de una variable continua (puede haber mayor o menor *grado de empoderamiento* en una unidad laboral), conceptualizada en cuatro dimensiones:

- **Significado:** es el valor de un objetivo laboral en relación a los propios ideales o estándares del individuo; es decir, la conexión personal del individuo con el trabajo mediante la congruencia entre los requisitos del puesto y los valores, creencias y comportamientos del trabajador. Este *significado* propicia el sentimiento entre los empleados de que lo que se está haciendo merece la pena el tiempo y el esfuerzo empleado; gracias a él los empleados sienten que su trabajo es importante y se esmeran por lo que están haciendo.

- **Competencia:** consiste en la creencia que cada individuo tiene sobre sus propias capacidades para desarrollar el trabajo con destreza; equivale a la percepción del grado de maestría personal. La *competencia* es, en definitiva, la confianza del individuo en su propia habilidad o capacidad para hacer bien el trabajo.
- **Autodeterminación:** es la autonomía en el comienzo y continuación de comportamientos o procesos laborales; los trabajadores se sienten con libertad para decidir cómo desempeñar su trabajo.
- **Impacto:** grado en el que un individuo siente que puede influenciar de forma estratégica, administrativa u operativa los resultados del trabajo. El *impacto* comprende el sentimiento de que la tarea se está efectuando correctamente, que tiene influencia en la unidad de trabajo y que se está con ella logrando algo para la organización.

Figura 1.1. Conceptualización del empoderamiento psicológico



(Adaptación de Spreitzer, 1995)

El concepto de empoderamiento psicológico hace referencia, por tanto, a un *sentimiento o percepción del trabajador* respecto a su nivel de independencia en la organización para emplear su propio criterio y tomar ciertas decisiones en su día a día. Así, el empoderamiento psicológico es aquel estado psicológico que experimenta el trabajador cuando *percibe* que se le ha facilitado el acceso a los recursos clave y cuenta con mayor autonomía para la realización de su trabajo, lo cual incide de forma diversa en diferentes aspectos de su desempeño laboral y en su comportamiento en la empresa. El empoderamiento, según Cunningham et al. (1996) es similar a *darle a un trabajador un coche de empresa e indicarle a dónde tiene que ir, pero dejando a su elección la ruta para llegar; en cualquier caso, esa persona sigue teniendo que cumplir un objetivo en un cierto espacio de tiempo.*

En la actualidad, el empoderamiento es un tema que sigue despertando un creciente interés en el mundo académico y empresarial. Según Spreitzer (2008), más del 70% de las empresas están interesadas en el empoderamiento de sus trabajadores; de hecho, muchas organizaciones afirman haber logrado una fuerza de trabajo más resolutiva, flexible y polivalente gracias a la mejora de las competencias de sus trabajadores como resultado del empoderamiento. Así, el empoderamiento del personal se percibe actualmente como una buena solución para dar respuesta a la necesidad de excelencia, innovación y rápida adaptación requerida en los nuevos contextos empresariales altamente competitivos. Diversas compañías de distintos sectores de actividad han centrado sus esfuerzos en construir estructuras y políticas organizativas que generen el contexto adecuado para que el empoderamiento fluya. Grandes corporaciones como la manufacturera SEMCO³ (Semler, 1989), o el gigante hotelero *Marriott International* (Marriott y Brown, 1997) -el mayor grupo hotelero del mundo⁴- coinciden en una misma idea: la clave del éxito de sus negocios radica en el *empoderamiento* de sus trabajadores base.

En el ámbito académico, autores como Albrecht y Andreetta (2011), Macsinga et al. (2015) y Namasivayam et al. (2014) ponen de manifiesto en sus recientes investigaciones la importancia de contar con una fuerza de trabajo empoderada. En línea con Keller y Dansereau (1995), defienden la utilidad del empoderamiento al afirmar que la efectividad global de la organización se incrementa cuando el poder y

3 <http://www.elmundo.es/mundodinero/2004/05/14/Noti20040514160207.html>

4 http://www.abc.es/economia/abci-marriott-convierte-primera-hotelera-mundo-tras-compra-starwood-201511182140_noticia.html

el control son compartidos; destacan también que son muchos los efectos positivos del empoderamiento psicológico en el bienestar psicológico del empleado y en su desempeño. El empoderamiento es un proceso vigorizante que potencia el sentimiento de autoconfianza y control en el trabajador, y conduce a la mejora de su autoeficacia y su rendimiento laboral (Çakar y Ertürk, 2010).

Las investigaciones clásicas sobre empoderamiento estudian cómo otorgando poder y autoridad a los empleados se incrementa su satisfacción laboral, su compromiso y su productividad, e identifican una serie de rasgos personales y factores contextuales que contribuyen al fenómeno, como se presenta en la Figura 1.2.

Figura 1.2. Algunos antecedentes y consecuencias del empoderamiento destacados identificados en la literatura



Diversos estudios han demostrado las bondades del empoderamiento para las organizaciones, tanto por su impacto positivo en el bienestar de los empleados y el servicio que se presta al cliente, como por sus efectos beneficiosos en los resultados organizacionales (tal y como ilustra la Tabla 1.2). Sin embargo, sigue existiendo una **necesidad de conocer en profundidad los antecedentes y consecuencias del empoderamiento en el sector turístico** -especialmente en la industria hotelera, donde el empoderamiento del trabajador puede ser de gran ayuda para brindar excelencia en el servicio (Biron y Bamberger, 2011)-.

Tabla 1.2. Beneficios del empoderamiento en las organizaciones

EFFECTOS POSITIVOS DEL EMPOWERMENT PARA EL CLIENTE EXTERNO E INTERNO	BENEFICIOS A NIVEL ORGANIZACIONAL	AUTOR/ES	AÑO
Aumento del control del trabajador sobre su trabajo. Mayor capacidad de actuación e inmediatez en la respuesta.	Ahorro de tiempo. Rapidez en la resolución de problemas por la descentralización del poder.	Bowen y Lawler Brymer Chen y Chen Lashley	1992-95 1991 2008 1995
Mejora en el trato al cliente y en la satisfacción de sus necesidades y expectativas. Mejoras en la percepción del cliente sobre el servicio/ atención recibida	Disminución de quejas y mayor calidad. Fidelización del cliente gracias a su mayor satisfacción.	Bowen y Lawler Geralis y Terziovski Hardy y Leiba-O. Lashley Yukl y Becker	1992-95 2003 1998 1995 2006
Mejora en la comunicación interna y externa , y en la retroalimentación.	La empresa cuenta con más información inmediata sobre necesidades y expectativas del cliente. Se detectan y se solucionan problemas más rápidamente.	Bowen y Lawler Silver et al.	1992 2006
Mayor satisfacción laboral de los empleados, tanto a nivel grupal como a nivel individual. Sensación de que están contribuyendo a los fines de la organización.	Menor absentismo y rotación = menores costes. Empleados más contentos y con mayor energía y entusiasmo.	Carless Gkorezis y Petridou Koberg et al. Lashley Silver et al. Sparrowe Yukl y Becker	2004 2008 1999 1995 2006 1994 2006
Mejora en la opinión de los empleados sobre ellos mismos y por parte de sus compañeros. Los empleados perciben que su trabajo es útil para la organización, y se sienten responsables.	Aumento del significado del trabajo. Empleados más eficientes y motivados. Mejor clima laboral.	Chen y Chen Quinn y Spreitzer Yukl y Becker	2008 1997 2006
Mayor autonomía y control sobre el puesto. Aumento del significado de ciertas tareas. Mayor confianza del trabajador en sí mismo.	Mejoras en el diseño y rediseño de puestos.	Chen y Chen Gkorezis y Petridou	2008 2008
Descentralización y mejor distribución de poder y control.	Aumento en la efectividad de la organización.	Keller y Dansereau Conger y Kanguno	1995 1988

Tabla 1.2. Beneficios del empoderamiento en las organizaciones (continuación)

EFFECTOS POSITIVOS DEL EMPOWERMENT PARA EL CLIENTE EXTERNO E INTERNO	BENEFICIOS A NIVEL ORGANIZACIONAL	AUTOR/ES	AÑO
Menor interrupción a los superiores en sus tareas y liberación de ciertas funciones. Los jefes tienen más tiempo para aspectos más estratégicos.	Mayor productividad tanto de subordinados como de superiores.	Brymer Hardy y Leiba-O. Koberg et al. Spreitzer	1991 1998 1999 1995-96
Los empleados se sienten más libres para exponer sus ideas y propuestas de mejora y para la elección entre diversas formas de realizar el trabajo. Espontaneidad, iniciativa. Empleados más creativos.	Creatividad: surgimiento de nuevas ideas respecto a procesos internos organizacionales, prestación de servicios, etc. Innovación.	Bowen y Lawler Kanter Quinn y Spreitzer Thomas y Velthouse Zhang y Bartol	1992-95 1989 1997 1990 2010
Fortalecimiento del compromiso de los empleados hacia la organización.	Posibilidad de retener más fácilmente empleados valiosos.	Avolio et al. Yukl y Becker Chen y Chen Wooddell	2004 2006 2008 2009
Mayor participación, involucración y adaptación a los cambios organizacionales y ambientales. Mayor lealtad a la empresa y actitud positiva por parte de los trabajadores ante cambios organizacionales dramáticos.	Mayor flexibilidad. Consecución de mayores cambios organizacionales. Menor resistencia al cambio.	Chen y Chen Conger y Kanguno Ergeneli <i>et al.</i> Lashley Mishra y Spreitzer Wooddell	2008 1988 2006 1995 1998 2009
Efectos positivos en la salud y bienestar psicológico de los empleados.	Favorece el desarrollo de “Organizaciones Saludables”.	Geralis y Terziovski Jáimez y Bretones	2003 2011
Mayor sentimiento de equipo entre superiores y trabajadores. Mejores relaciones con superiores.	Mayor cohesión grupal y mejores relaciones entre subordinados y superiores. Cooperación interdepartamental.	Brymer Conger y Kanguno Siegall y Gardner Sparrowe	1991 1988 1999 1994
Aumenta la percepción de la variedad de su trabajo. Mayor desarrollo y crecimiento profesional.	Los trabajadores desarrollan o usan habilidades y competencias adicionales. Descubrimiento de potencialidades en los empleados para su futura carrera en la organización.	Brymer Chen y Chen Kanter	1991 2008 1989

(Elaboración propia)

1.3. Objetivos de la investigación

La delimitación del objeto de estudio realizada en el apartado anterior permite identificar una serie de necesidades de investigación que el presente trabajo pretende satisfacer. El principal propósito de esta tesis doctoral es el de ahondar en el conocimiento del empoderamiento psicológico en la realidad hotelera española. Para ello, se identifican una serie de factores contextuales que lo favorecen, y se explora su vinculación con la mejora del bienestar laboral del trabajador hotelero.

Así, una vez acotado el objeto de estudio, se formulan los objetivos generales y específicos de esta tesis doctoral. En líneas generales, esta investigación pretende principalmente dar respuesta a dos interrogantes:

- *¿Qué mecanismos organizacionales son necesarios para que el empleado se sienta empoderado en la industria hotelera?*
- *¿Es posible generar entusiasmo laboral y contrarrestar problemas laborales -como el ostracismo- a través del empoderamiento psicológico?*

Respondiendo a ambas preguntas de investigación se logra un mayor conocimiento del empoderamiento psicológico en el *sector hotelero*, una industria de gran relevancia para la economía española que empleó a una media de unas 300.000 personas mensuales durante 2016⁵ -y que registró más de 330 millones de pernoctaciones⁶ durante ese mismo año, con una facturación media diaria de 82.30€ por cada habitación ocupada⁷-.

Por lo tanto, los resultados de esta tesis doctoral contribuyen a la literatura académica específica de las áreas de recursos humanos y gestión hotelera, ya que se realiza una nueva aproximación al fenómeno del empoderamiento psicológico, analizando algunos de sus antecedentes y consecuencias en una muestra española de trabajadores de hotel. En definitiva, esta tesis doctoral investiga: *cómo generar empoderamiento psicológico en trabajadores hoteleros, y cuáles son las principales consecuencias de ello.*

5 292.840 trabajadores afiliados de media en el sector de alojamiento español durante 2016 según datos del Índice de afiliación a la Seguridad Social (<http://www.empleo.gob.es/estadisticas/bel/AFI/index.htm>) consultados en Junio de 2017.

6 Según datos del Instituto Nacional de Estadística de España (INE). Esta cifra va en aumento cada año, como ilustra el reciente Informe de Coyuntura Turística Hotelera del mes de Abril de 2017: <http://www.ine.es/daco/daco42/prechote/cth0417.pdf>

7 Fuente: Informe de la Actividad Turística y el Empleo 2016, elaborado por Comisiones Obreras (CCOO) y publicado en Hosteltur: https://static.hosteltur.com/web/uploads/2017/02/2016_Informe_propuestas_Industria_turificas_al_nivel_nacional_final.pdf

Para responder a la primera de las cuestiones de investigación se analiza el papel de dos variables organizacionales importantes en la orientación estructural de la compañía hacia el empoderamiento: las prácticas de recursos humanos y el estilo de liderazgo de los jefes.

1.3.1. Análisis de las prácticas de recursos humanos de alto desempeño como antecedente del empoderamiento psicológico

Las prácticas de recursos humanos (RH) de alto desempeño son una combinación de distintas prácticas de gestión de personal complementarias cuyo efecto conjunto tiene mayor alcance en el rendimiento laboral que determinadas prácticas de gestión de RH implementadas de forma aislada. Aparte del efecto global en la productividad organizacional general, diversos autores han demostrado que las prácticas de RH de alto desempeño tienen una clara influencia positiva a nivel intermedio: concretamente, en los resultados operativos de los trabajadores, así como en sus actitudes y comportamientos (Aït Razouk, 2011; Takeuchi et al., 2009).

Este tipo de política de gestión del personal resulta especialmente idónea en el sector servicios puesto que se caracteriza por la búsqueda de un compromiso recíproco entre individuo y organización (Tsui et al., 1997); es decir, la empresa persigue el bienestar del trabajador (incrementando su seguridad laboral, participación, capacitación, etc.) y éste a cambio corresponde con un mayor y mejor desempeño – en línea con la idea de reciprocidad que postula la Teoría del Intercambio Social (Blau, 1986) –.

De acuerdo con Sun et al. (2007), la gestión de RH mediante prácticas de alto rendimiento se caracteriza por: una selección de personal minuciosa que apuesta por el desarrollo del potencial del empleado a largo plazo; formación continua e intensiva para todos los trabajadores; ciertas garantías de estabilidad y seguridad laboral; una descripción precisa de puestos y competencias, detallada y en permanente actualización; la evaluación objetiva del desempeño basada en resultados cuantificables, tanto individuales como grupales; un adecuado sistema de incentivos y recompensas; así como el fomento de la participación y la toma de decisiones de los trabajadores, estableciéndose para ello canales de comunicación abiertos entre superiores y subordinados. Estos autores también afirman que dicha combinación de prácticas fortalece un clima de participación dentro de la organización que motiva la

iniciativa y la aplicación del criterio individual. Así, los empleados se sienten apoyados por su entorno laboral y tienden a mostrar comportamientos discrecionales favorables, lo cual desemboca, en última instancia, en la mejora del desempeño organizativo.

La apuesta por las prácticas de RH de alto desempeño por parte de la organización transmite, por lo tanto, un potente mensaje a todos sus miembros sobre cuál es la postura de la compañía respecto a la implicación y participación de los empleados en la vida de la empresa. Esta inversión en el bienestar del trabajador genera un adecuado clima de “seguridad psicológica” (Kahn, 1990), ideal para que los trabajadores se sientan cómodos y predispuestos para el trabajo autónomo. Por consiguiente, uno de los primeros objetivos de esta tesis es identificar si este tipo de política de gestión del personal, centrado en prácticas de RH de alto desempeño, genera las condiciones adecuadas en el seno de la empresa para que el empleado experimente empoderamiento psicológico.

Igualmente, este tipo de política de personal parece ser un marco ideal para transmitir a los superiores la importancia de empoderar a los trabajadores a su cargo, dado que esta agrupación de prácticas de RH de alto desempeño fomenta la competencia, la autogestión e impulsa la autoeficacia del trabajador. En estos contextos, el papel de los jefes debe ser más participativo y democrático ya que la atmósfera organizacional que configuran las prácticas de RH de alto desempeño favorece la implicación, la seguridad laboral y la participación de todos trabajadores.

1.3.2. Identificación del estilo de liderazgo más adecuado para que el trabajador experimente empoderamiento psicológico

Recientes estudios, como el informe *Tendencias en el Capital Humano Global* elaborado por Deloitte (2014), evidencian la necesidad de revitalizar el liderazgo en los entornos empresariales. Igualmente, recomiendan un cambio de mentalidad en los jefes del siglo XXI si estos quieren gestionar adecuadamente la nueva fuerza laboral que se está integrando en sus equipos. Los estilos de liderazgo tradicionales que siguen esquemas burocráticos o autoritarios dejan poca cabida a la expresión y creatividad de los trabajadores, además de limitar su acceso a recursos clave, por lo que despiertan un creciente rechazo entre los “*millennials*” (Kong et al., 2016). De hecho, estos modelos de gestión altamente piramidales cada vez encajan menos en las estructuras organizativas modernas, mucho más planas, dinámicas y flexibles. Por

este motivo, nuevas formas de liderar personas han entrado en escena en los últimos años; tal es el caso del liderazgo facilitador⁸, el servicial y el paradójico.

Desde un punto de vista teórico, estos nuevos estilos de liderazgo parecen ser especialmente idóneos para su aplicación en la realidad hotelera puesto que están, en cierto modo, más orientados a la autonomía y la autorrealización de los trabajadores que otros estilos tradicionales. Los nuevos líderes dotan de mayor poder y recursos a sus subordinados (liderazgo facilitador), anteponiendo sus intereses (liderazgo servicial), y permitiéndoles cierto grado de autonomía y autogestión en tareas del día a día, pero manteniendo la supervisión y el control en temas clave (liderazgo paradójico). Esta investigación arroja luz sobre estos tres estilos de liderazgo actuales explorando en qué medida están asociados con el empoderamiento psicológico que experimentan los subordinados, en un contexto hotelero.

El liderazgo facilitador (Ahearne et al., 2005) guarda una estrecha vinculación teórica con el empoderamiento psicológico ya que implica la cesión de poder, recursos, responsabilidades y libertad de elección a los trabajadores. Los objetivos que persiguen los líderes facilitadores son: aumentar la competencia de sus trabajadores y el significado de su trabajo, ayudarles a que comprendan su impacto en el engranaje organizacional, y potenciar su autonomía. Los líderes facilitadores estimulan la toma de decisiones de sus trabajadores y demuestran que confían en las capacidades de estos para desempeñar su trabajo con maestría, reforzando así los sentimientos de valía y autoeficacia del personal a su cargo. Establecen objetivos de una forma participativa y generan un ambiente laboral que favorece la autogestión y el trabajo autónomo. Esta tesis doctoral persigue demostrar empíricamente la relación existente entre liderazgo facilitador y empoderamiento psicológico.

El liderazgo servicial (Liden et al., 2015) es un estilo de liderazgo inspirador, ya que el jefe antepone los intereses de los empleados incluso a los suyos propios en un afán de servir a los demás y contribuir a su bienestar. El líder servicial tiene un comportamiento ético y colaborador, actuando de una forma ejemplarizante. Se explora en el presente trabajo como posible antecedente del empoderamiento psicológico porque los líderes serviciales apoyan las acciones de sus subordinados y tienen una filosofía democrática y participativa.

8 Dado que el vocablo “empoderante” no está aceptado por la Real Academia de la Lengua Española, a lo largo de esta tesis se empleará el término *liderazgo facilitador* como transcripción del anglicismo “*empowering leadership*”.

El liderazgo paradójico (Zhang et al., 2015) refleja las soluciones integradoras que dilucidan los jefes cuando satisfacen al mismo tiempo necesidades antagónicas o demandas aparentemente contradictorias. Pese a tratarse de un estilo de liderazgo aún inexplorado en el sector turístico, podría ser especialmente adecuado en contextos hoteleros, ya que supone encontrar el punto medio en ciertas decisiones, con vistas a resolver satisfactoriamente determinadas tensiones de opuestos. Los comportamientos propios de este liderazgo (que intenta velar tanto por los intereses del trabajador como por los de la organización al mismo tiempo) reflejan la complejidad de esa *gestión holística* que frecuentemente deben llevar a cabo los mandos intermedios en organizaciones hoteleras. Por ejemplo, podría decirse que el jefe de recepción de un hotel presenta *comportamientos paradójicos* al encontrar soluciones intermedias que responden favorablemente a dos posturas a veces enfrentadas: ser lo suficientemente próximo con sus subordinados, pero manteniendo cierta distancia; lograr que se cumplan todos los objetivos del trabajo, pero concediendo cierta flexibilidad; ostentar una posición destacada como líder, pero permitiendo que otros miembros de su equipo obtengan reconocimiento también. El liderazgo paradójico puede ser un antecedente del empoderamiento psicológico, puesto que, en líneas generales, bajo este estilo de gestión el jefe centraliza el control, pero descentraliza la toma de decisiones de cuestiones menores; también porque el líder paradójico favorece cierto grado de libertad en la actuación de sus trabajadores, redistribuyendo el trabajo de forma justa, pero atendiendo a las capacidades y posibilidades de cada individuo.

1.3.3. Estudio de la influencia del empoderamiento en el bienestar laboral

Respecto al análisis de las consecuencias del empoderamiento, esta tesis persigue descifrar, en primer lugar, si el empoderamiento del trabajador juega un papel importante en el entusiasmo laboral de los trabajadores del sector hotelero.

El entusiasmo laboral se ha conceptualizado como la antítesis del síndrome del trabajador quemado o *burnout* (Maslach et al., 2001; Schaufeli y Salanova, 2011); es ese sentimiento de plenitud y realización que destilan los trabajadores cuando se sienten orgullosos y satisfechos de la labor realizada. Se trata de un estado psicológico caracterizado por el vigor, la dedicación y la concentración que experimenta el trabajador cuando se siente bien en su trabajo (Schaufeli et al., 2006, 2002). Este entusiasmo laboral conduce a los individuos a volcarse por completo en sus tareas,

de forma que el tiempo “vuela” mientras están dedicados a ello. Los trabajadores entusiasmados se sienten llenos de energía y felices en sus actividades laborales, demostrando una mayor resiliencia mental y persistencia frente a retos difíciles (Menguc et al., 2013). Kahn (1990) define el entusiasmo laboral como esa consagración voluntaria del individuo a su trabajo, cognitiva, física y emocionalmente. Dado que el empoderamiento implica un incremento en el sentimiento de autoeficacia y competencia del trabajador, esta investigación explora su posible relación con el entusiasmo laboral.

Por otro lado, esta tesis doctoral también contribuye, en segundo lugar, a discernir cómo empoderando a los trabajadores se puede mejorar su bienestar en el trabajo. Específicamente, se plantea el rol moderador el empoderamiento psicológico como mitigador de los efectos negativos del ostracismo en la autoestima de los trabajadores. De acuerdo con la Teoría de la Autodeterminación de Ryan y Deci (2000), el empoderamiento satisface dos de las tres necesidades básicas del ser humano: la necesidad de *competencia* y de *autonomía*, lo cual podría tal vez compensar la falta de satisfacción de la tercera necesidad, la de *conexión* (que se ve afectada negativamente en situaciones de exclusión laboral). En esta tesis doctoral se investiga si el empoderamiento psicológico puede de alguna manera contrarrestar el debilitamiento de la autoestima del trabajador, experimentado como consecuencia de sufrir ostracismo laboral.

1.3.4. *Objetivos específicos*

Los objetivos específicos de la presente tesis doctoral son, por tanto, los siguientes:

- Analizar si existe una relación positiva entre empoderamiento psicológico y entusiasmo laboral.
- Determinar si las prácticas de recursos humanos de alto desempeño influyen en el grado de empoderamiento psicológico y en el entusiasmo de los trabajadores.
- Identificar qué estilo liderazgo deben seguir los jefes en el sector hotelero para que sus trabajadores se sientan empoderados.

- Comprobar si el liderazgo facilitador es un antecedente del empoderamiento psicológico en el sector hotelero.
- Analizar si el liderazgo facilitador influye de algún modo en el entusiasmo laboral de los trabajadores de hotel.
- Explorar las posibles asociaciones entre nuevos estilos de liderazgo, como el servicial y el paradójico, y el empoderamiento psicológico.
- Explorar, al mismo tiempo, la relación existente entre estilos de liderazgo emergentes, como el servicial y el paradójico, y el entusiasmo laboral.
- Identificar si el ostracismo laboral influye negativamente en la autoestima del trabajador, para así poder estudiar el papel del empoderamiento psicológico en dicha relación negativa.
- Asimismo, investigar la relación entre autoestima y desempeño laboral, medido en términos de comportamientos extra-rol.

1.4. Estructura del trabajo de investigación

La presente tesis doctoral está formada por cinco capítulos que se agrupan en tres grandes bloques: la introducción (Capítulo 1), el cuerpo central de la tesis o trabajos de investigación (Capítulos 2, 3 y 4) y las conclusiones finales (Capítulo 5).

En el Capítulo 1 se introduce el tema objeto de estudio: el empoderamiento psicológico. Para ello, se realiza un breve repaso sobre la evolución científica de determinados conceptos y teorías que han podido influir en el surgimiento y conceptualización del fenómeno tal y como se conoce hoy en día. Además de lo anterior, se delimitan teóricamente el constructo y sus dimensiones, detallando las aportaciones seminales más influyentes. También en esta parte se mencionan de forma sucinta diversos antecedentes y consecuencias del empoderamiento psicológico identificados en la literatura.

En este primer capítulo introductorio se pone de manifiesto el interés actual por un mayor conocimiento del empoderamiento psicológico y se destaca la necesidad de profundizar empíricamente en el constructo en sectores en los que se ha analizado

en menor medida, como es el caso de la industria hotelera. Consiguientemente, se plantea el principal propósito de la investigación, desgranado en una serie de objetivos generales y específicos. Para ello, se presenta de forma somera la posible relación del empoderamiento con una serie de variables bajo estudio. Finalmente, se justifica el interés académico y empresarial que pueden tener los resultados de esta investigación.

En el Capítulo 2 se analizan una serie de antecedentes contextuales y consecuencias positivas del empoderamiento en trabajadores hoteleros -tal y como describe el título del mismo: “*Antecedents and outcomes of psychological empowerment*”-. Para ello, se examina un modelo de doble mediación basado en regresiones con remuestreo (*bootstrapping*). Este proceso secuencial desvela una serie de mecanismos organizativos internos que generan empoderamiento psicológico en el trabajador y si, todo ello, favorece el entusiasmo laboral. Se desentraña así esa “caja negra” que revela cómo a través de las prácticas de RH se logra generar entusiasmo en empleados hoteleros, poniendo de relieve el importante papel del liderazgo facilitador y del empoderamiento psicológico en dicho proceso. Este enfoque de mediación serial no ha sido utilizado anteriormente para examinar interrelaciones entre las variables analizadas, por lo que supone una contribución al campo teórico de estudio. Por otro lado, se destacan también algunas implicaciones para la práctica empresarial que sugieren dichos resultados, los cuales pueden ser de utilidad para directivos hoteleros y responsables del área de RH interesados en lograr trabajadores empoderados y entusiastas.

En el Capítulo 3, titulado “*Empowering the service provider: effects of different leadership styles*”, se exploran, mediante un modelo de ecuaciones estructurales (con el programa EQS), las relaciones existentes entre distintos tipos de liderazgo de los superiores y el grado de empoderamiento psicológico y de entusiasmo laboral que experimentan los trabajadores. Este estudio contribuye a conocer mejor la percepción de los empleados sobre determinados comportamientos de sus jefes, así como a comprender qué estilo de liderazgo es más adecuado cuando se persigue que los trabajadores se sientan empoderados. En este estudio se analizan tres estilos de liderazgo emergentes -dos de ellos poco investigados en Europa, como el liderazgo servicial o el paradójico-; además se comprueba nuevamente la vinculación existente entre empoderamiento y entusiasmo. Finalmente, en este tercer capítulo, además de detallar las implicaciones de los resultados para la comunidad científica y empresarial, se destaca la utilidad del estudio para los educadores - al señalarse nuevas destrezas a desarrollar en los futuros líderes-.

El Capítulo 4 se denomina “*Counteracting ostracism with psychological empowerment*”. En él se analiza inicialmente la relación entre ostracismo y autoestima, así como la posible asociación entre el nivel de autoestima de un trabajador y su desempeño, medido éste en términos de comportamiento extra-rol. Posteriormente, se explora el papel mitigador del empoderamiento psicológico en la relación negativa existente entre ostracismo y autoestima. Se analiza así si, en presencia del empoderamiento psicológico, los efectos perniciosos del ostracismo laboral -que minan la autoestima de los trabajadores que sufren esta forma de exclusión- decrecen. Se examina en este cuarto capítulo un modelo complejo de mediación moderada mediante ecuaciones estructurales con la técnica de *partial least squares* o PLS, basada en varianzas. Al mismo tiempo, se explora la escala del empoderamiento psicológico bajo una nueva óptica: como constructo formativo o *composite*.

Finalmente, el Capítulo 5 resume las principales conclusiones extraídas de los resultados empíricos de este trabajo de investigación y destaca algunas posibles contribuciones teóricas relevantes de esta tesis doctoral. En dicho capítulo final también se señalan una serie de aplicaciones prácticas de lo expuesto a lo largo del trabajo, las cuales son de especial interés para los responsables de personal en la industria hotelera. Las limitaciones del estudio relativas al diseño de la investigación y la generalización de resultados son detalladas en este apartado. Por último, se plantean futuras líneas de investigación para próximos trabajos en el área. Finaliza el capítulo con una breve reflexión sobre el empoderamiento en el apartado “Consideraciones Finales”.

1.5. Justificación e interés de la investigación

1.5.1. Siguiendo el Paradigma de la Psicología Positiva

En las últimas décadas, el nuevo Paradigma de la Psicología Positiva (Seligman et al., 2011) aboga por un cambio de lente en la investigación académica; se persigue ahora comprender mejor esas “buenas prácticas” organizativas que contribuyen positivamente a la rentabilidad empresarial generando bienestar en los trabajadores. En lugar de analizar las causas y consecuencias de fenómenos negativos en el seno de las empresas -como el *burnout*, el absentismo, la rotación y los comportamientos laborales disfuncionales-, la apuesta actual en investigación se inclina hacia la búsqueda de respuestas al interrogante de cómo lograr *organizaciones más saludables* (Jáimez

y Bretones, 2011). Así, recientes trabajos destacados en el área de recursos humanos proponen descubrir qué factores generan emociones positivas en el trabajo; identifican para ello una serie de herramientas organizacionales que pueden influir positivamente en un mejor desempeño y en la potenciación de ese capital psicológico positivo (De Klerk y Stander, 2014; Karatepe y Karadas, 2015; Paek et al., 2015; Quiñones et al., 2013). Probablemente por este motivo, temas como el empoderamiento psicológico y el entusiasmo laboral han despertado un creciente interés en la literatura de gestión en los últimos años (Jose y Mampilly, 2014).

En línea con las directrices actuales en el ámbito de la investigación de RH, esta tesis doctoral persigue identificar una serie de factores clave que contribuyen al entusiasmo laboral. Para ello, se considera el empoderamiento psicológico como pieza clave, por lo que constituye el elemento central del presente trabajo de investigación. Esta tesis doctoral enfoca hacia el interior de los hoteles, centrándose en su personal base como fuente de datos primaria, y recogiendo mediante cuestionario sus percepciones, actitudes y comportamientos. Se pretende así descubrir alguno de los mecanismos internos que inciden directa o indirectamente en resultados favorables de la fuerza laboral. De este modo, se dilucida si las prácticas de recursos humanos de alto desempeño y nuevos estilos de liderazgo más participativos (facilitador, servicial y paradójico) están relacionados positivamente con el empoderamiento psicológico, así como la influencia de todo esto en sus niveles de entusiasmo. En resumen, se persigue con este trabajo poder contribuir a una mayor comprensión de ciertos aspectos del fenómeno del empoderamiento en la industria hotelera.

1.5.2. Medición de resultados a nivel intermedio

Para poder comprender mejor el impacto de determinados factores organizacionales, autores como Alfes et al. (2013) y Becker y Huselid (2006) animan a los investigadores a observar resultados intermedios a nivel organizativo. Estos autores defienden que, por ejemplo, en lugar de medir el impacto de las políticas de RH directamente sobre la rentabilidad empresarial, debiera antes considerarse un conjunto de *variables intermedias* más directamente afectadas en un nivel mucho más *próximo*; es decir, es importante realizar primero un análisis del tipo: *prácticas de RH-individuo*. Según estos académicos, el evaluar primeramente el impacto de las prácticas de RH a nivel individual permite comprender mejor los procesos internos que acaban

desencadenando una mejora de la rentabilidad global de la empresa en último término. Por este motivo, con la intención de descubrir esos mecanismos internos clave en el engranaje organizativo, las investigaciones más recientes en el ámbito de los recursos humanos suelen aludir al enfoque de “caja negra” (*black box*). Especialmente en el sector servicios, este prisma facilita el esclarecimiento de cómo determinada interacción de una serie de variables organizacionales e individuales constituye el entramado esencial para el buen funcionamiento de la empresa.

Este trabajo representa una aproximación a esos niveles intermedios al ser el individuo (sus percepciones, comportamientos y actitudes) el objeto de estudio. De esta forma, se han descubierto determinados mecanismos internos que favorecen ciertos sentimientos positivos en el trabajador en su ámbito laboral y que, consecuentemente, le llevan a actuar y comportarse de determinada forma -lo cual, en línea con los postulados de la *Cadena Servicio-Beneficio* (Heskett et al., 2014), acabará impactando indirectamente en la rentabilidad organizacional en algún momento-.

1.5.3. Interés para la industria hotelera

Determinados puestos de trabajo en el sector servicios se caracterizan por una continua y directa interacción entre empleado y cliente (por ejemplo: conserjes, agentes de reservas, camareros, recepcionistas, etc.). En ocasiones, para poder resolver adecuadamente determinadas situaciones es imprescindible proporcionar una solución de forma inmediata. De hecho, hay estudios que aseguran que un cliente descontento por una contingencia en el servicio se suele conformar con una compensación menor por parte de la empresa si ésta se le ofrece prontamente tras su queja (Hocutt y Stone, 1998). Por este motivo, para proporcionar un servicio excelente debe contarse con empleados profesionales, diligentes y entusiastas capaces de atender de forma ágil las peticiones de un cliente cada vez más exigente. Para ello, es necesario que el empleado que interactúa con el cliente tenga la suficiente autonomía, autoridad y recursos para poder tomar decisiones y solventar satisfactoriamente la gran variedad de situaciones a las que se enfrenta en su trabajo diario - siendo necesario a veces “salirse del guión” al hacer todo lo posible para satisfacer a la clientela (Bester et al., 2015; Karatepe, 2013)-.

El empoderamiento psicológico hace referencia a la propia percepción del trabajador sobre sí mismo cuando se ve capacitado y autorizado por sus superiores para realizar su trabajo de la forma que considere más conveniente. El empoderamiento supone, por tanto, un incremento de su autonomía, así como de su responsabilidad en el puesto. Este estado cognitivo lo experimenta el trabajador como resultado de un conjunto de acciones mediante las que se le hace ver la importancia de su trabajo y su competencia profesional para desempeñarlo adecuadamente. Diversas investigaciones han demostrado las consecuencias positivas del empoderamiento en los propios trabajadores: mayor satisfacción (Carless, 2004; Koberg et al., 1999; Pelit et al., 2011; Sparrowe, 1994), mayor compromiso (Albrecht et al., 2011; Chen et al., 2008; Jáimez y Bretones, 2011), y más entusiasmo (Jose and Mampilly, 2014; Macsinga et al., 2015).

En esta línea, el empoderamiento del trabajador puede ser una solución tanto para mejorar el bienestar laboral del empleado, como para la necesidad de flexibilidad y atención personalizada que requieren empresas del sector servicios en la actualidad. Es más, especialmente en el sector turístico, el empoderamiento puede suponer una garantía de eficacia, rapidez, personalización, resolución y adaptabilidad a las diferentes situaciones que se producen durante la prestación del servicio, además de una valiosa herramienta para resolver positivamente algunas situaciones conflictivas en el trabajo. Gigantes empresariales en el negocio hotelero como *Ritz-Carlton*, *Marriott International* o *Four Seasons* han apostado ya por el empoderamiento de sus trabajadores, especialmente de sus trabajadores base, con resultados muy positivos (Quinn y Spreitzer, 1997).

Sin embargo, impregnar la filosofía del empoderamiento en culturas con una fuerte distancia al poder (Hofstede, 2003) o en sectores tradicionalmente jerárquicos no es cuestión baladí. En ciertos ámbitos empresariales existe aún reticencia y desconocimiento sobre las ventajas de empoderar al trabajador. Además, diversos estudios ponen de manifiesto el fracaso de su implantación (generalmente por la falta de un método claro para llevarlo a cabo), con la consecuente frustración para todos los empleados (Forrester, 2000; Siegal y Gardner, 2000; Yukl y Becker, 2006).

Este trabajo señala un camino para empoderar a los trabajadores y algunas de sus consecuencias positivas. Así, en esta tesis doctoral se ilustran algunos factores contextuales relacionados positivamente con el empoderamiento psicológico que pueden facilitar la orientación de la empresa hacia el empoderamiento: las prácticas

de RH de alto desempeño y los comportamientos (*facilitadores* y *paradójicos*) de los superiores. La demostración empírica del conjunto de mecanismos organizacionales que conducen al empoderamiento (y consiguiente entusiasmo del trabajador) que realiza esta tesis puede servir de acicate para las empresas del sector interesadas en dotar de mayor poder a sus empleados.

En líneas generales, los resultados de este trabajo coinciden con la visión del presidente de la cadena hotelera *Four Seasons*, Isadore Sharp (2009). Éste afirma que, en ocasiones es necesario que los jefes *dejen brillar* a aquellos bajo su supervisión, ya que si se cree y confía en el empleado ellos también creerán en ellos mismos; esto les hará más felices y serán más productivos, y por tanto más exitosos. Anima encarecidamente a empoderar a los trabajadores y afirma que *las personas, por lo general, tratan de estar a la altura de lo que se espera de ellas*.

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2

ANTECEDENTS AND OUTCOMES OF PSYCHOLOGICAL EMPOWERMENT

2. ANTECEDENTS AND OUTCOMES OF PSYCHOLOGICAL EMPOWERMENT

Abstract

This paper aims at disclosing some mechanisms whereby job engagement can be created in a hospitality context. A study was conducted to examine the relationships among high-performance work practices (HPWPs), empowering leadership behaviors, psychological empowerment, and engagement. A theoretical serial mediation model was developed to examine the proposed relationship. The hypotheses were tested using regression analysis with bootstrapping. 340 hotel workers participated in this study.

Both empowering leadership and psychological empowerment were found to be independent mediators of the HPWPs-engagement relationship; in addition, empowering leadership and psychological empowerment *serially mediated* this relationship. Results suggest that hospitality organizations should implement HPWPs and encourage empowering leadership behavior in their managers to create a work context that fosters psychological empowerment. This, in turn, will generate employee

job engagement. A richer, deeper understanding of various antecedents of engagement is the main theoretical contribution of this work.

This research highlights the importance of specific organizational conditions and managerial strategies in achieving the psychological fulfillment of hospitality employees. In sum, the present study provides important insights for managers and human resource managers in the hospitality industry who seek to foster empowered, engaged employees. The findings suggest that HPWPs are associated with employee engagement *through a serial mediation model with two mediators*. No research to date has used this nascent methodology to explore the association between HPWPs and engagement.

Keywords: *High-performance work practices, empowering leadership, psychological empowerment, engagement, hotels.*

2.1. Introduction

Tourism and its workplaces have undergone turmoil and transformation throughout the last decade (Baum, 2015). In fact, a profound transformation in human resources (HR) has occurred due to crisis and globalization. Service companies find that they are now dealing with a heterogeneous workforce of diverse background and demographics, with varying skills, changing demands, and high expectations. As a result, new workplace employment relations, as well as different trends in human resource management (HRM) and leadership, have emerged (Ling *et al.*, 2016). Given these new job demands and job resources (Schaufeli *et al.*, 2006; Demerouti *et al.*, 2001), organizations face an imperative to evolve in their HRM practices. The need to adapt to these new labor trends in tourism is currently compelling organizations to design new formulas to motivate workers, build capabilities, and engage valuable contributors. Some of the greatest opportunities for hospitality organizations to improve service, customer loyalty, growth, and performance rely on reinvigorating human capital strategies. Essentially, to achieve high performance, the modern service firm must create work environments that build passion and purpose.

In parallel, many organizational behavior studies in academia have shifted their focus towards the *Positive Psychology Paradigm* (De Klerk and Stander, 2014; Seligman *et al.*, 2005). In contrast to traditional papers' focus on understanding negative

company outcomes such as burnout, absenteeism, emotional exhaustion, and withdrawal, a growing body of research is oriented towards investigating “healthy organizations” (Jaimez and Bretones, 2011) and employee wellbeing (Quiñones *et al.*, 2013). These studies highlight how organizations should nurture their employees’ positive psychological capital (Karatepe and Karadas, 2015; Paek *et al.*, 2015) and the important effects of positive work emotions in improving organizational functioning.

The research streams on *service-profit-chain* logic in Heskett *et al.* (2010) and on *linkage* in Schneider *et al.* (2005) have already investigated the considerable “spillover effects” of fostering positive employee experiences at work. Since then, there has been a growing need for more empirical studies to demonstrate how companies should enhance and increase employee morale through cognitive, motivational, and behavioral tools. Constructs such as employee empowerment and engagement have received more research attention in recent decades, probably because they are seen as promising solutions for service organizations (Jose and Mampilly, 2014). Research has demonstrated that engaged employees display engrossed effort and show more energy and enthusiasm at work, thereby achieving higher levels of job performance and better service (Alfes *et al.*, 2013; Karatepe and Demir, 2014; Menguc *et al.*, 2013; Paek *et al.*, 2015). For this reason, many service organizations and practitioners are placing increased emphasis on identifying ways to raise the level of engagement among their employees.

Antecedents and consequences of engagement referred by extant literature are still exiguous, however (Jose and Mampilly, 2014), and little is known about the mechanisms or “black box” by which employee engagement is effectively achieved in service organizations. In addition, although employee engagement may have stronger repercussions in the hospitality industry than in other sectors, paradoxically, job engagement remains underreported in the hospitality literature (Lee, 2012). This study responds to the call for more scholarly research in this field.

2.1.1. Purpose

The hospitality industry is notorious for occupational strain, overtime, lack of recognition, and low pay. Its workforce frequently reports emotional exhaustion and complains about working at “antisocial times” (Tongchaiprasit and Ariyabuddhiphong,

2016), conditions that often result in absenteeism and turnover. The key question, therefore, is *how to achieve engaged employees in this particular sector*.

Research has shown that firms can indeed create an atmosphere in which engagement thrives (Barnes and Collier, 2013). Company HRM policies are directly and positively related to employee engagement (Alfes *et al.*, 2013; Karatepe, 2013a). Further, supportive managerial environments allow people to make decisions without fear of the consequences, and encourage positive feelings of self-determination and competence among workers. For this reason, this investigation expects that a certain HR architecture, in conjunction with a participatory managerial style, can foster the feeling of self-efficacy that will generate employee psychological empowerment and engagement.

The main aim of the current research is to provide a better understanding of how work contexts, mediated by people's perceptions, create the conditions in which the employee personally engages and disengages at work. Empirical research is needed to help hospitality organizations increase the engagement level of their workforce. In a sector characterized by long working hours and changing shifts, it is crucial to know how to develop enthusiasm in customer-contact employees.

This study enriches the engagement literature in several notable ways. First, it explains internal sequential procedures to achieve employee engagement in hospitality settings. Moreover, it is the first empirical study to examine the internal process through which HPWPs influence employee engagement with a *serial mediation* model (Hayes, 2013). Second, analyzing the *black box* between HPWPs and engagement reveals some contextual and psychological mechanisms underlying engagement for practitioners and the research community.

The sections to follow begin with a review of the literature on the topics to be studied, followed by the consequential development of hypotheses and an explanation of the conceptual research model (Figure 2.1). After testing the hypotheses employing survey data collected from a sample of Spanish hotel workers, the main results are discussed. The study concludes by highlighting its implications and limitations, and identifying directions for future research. This conclusion constitutes a pertinent starting point for more productive HR strategies and new insights into employee engagement.

2.2. Literature review

2.2.1. Theoretical framework on engagement

Employee engagement describes the positive, fulfilling psychological work-related state of mind that drives employees actively to involve themselves emotionally, cognitively, and physically in performing their jobs (Lee, 2012; Schaufeli *et al.*, 2002). Maslach *et al.* (1997) conceptualize engagement as the reverse of or “positive antithesis” to the three dimensions of burnout: exhaustion, cynicism, and sense of inefficacy. Schaufeli *et al.* (2002) define engagement as employees’ vigor, dedication, and absorption at work. *Vigor*, the contrary of exhaustion in burnout, indicates willingness to exert energy and determination to invest effort in one’s work, expressing mental resilience and persistence even in difficult moments (Menguc *et al.*, 2013; Schaufeli *et al.*, 2002). *Dedication* involves “a sense of significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride, and challenge” (Schaufeli *et al.*, 2002: 74). Dedication is an emotional component, whereas absorption characterizes the cognitive component of engagement. *Absorption* refers to being highly focused and completely immersed in and happy with one’s work, such that time passes quickly and it is difficult to detach from work (Salanova *et al.*, 2005).

Kahn’s (1990) conceptual work established the basis for the subsequent theoretical development of employee engagement. He related personal engagement to the individual choice of being present or absent in the present moment, referring to behaviors by which people involve or omit their personal selves during work role performances. People thus “use varying degrees of their selves—physically, cognitively, and emotionally—in the roles they perform” (Kahn, 1990: 692). For Kahn, moments of personal engagement/disengagement at work are highly influenced by work contexts and personal variables. Like Hackman and Oldham (1980), he showed that critical psychological states influence people’s internal work motivations. Work contexts and psychological experiences of work shape the processes by which people present and absent their selves during task performances (Kahn, 1990; Rich *et al.*, 2010). This study explores whether some aspects of the work context, such as human resource policies (in terms of HPWPs), create a propitious environment in which empowering leadership style can positively affect the psychological experience of work-producing psychological empowerment, which in turn would generate employee engagement.

2.2.2. High-performance work practices and employee engagement

The foregoing explains the work-contextual factors that affect employees' experience of work and their psychological fulfillment (Rich et al., 2010). Barnes and Collier (2013) confirm that certain factors in several service firms impact the level of work engagement exhibited by their frontline employees. Their study demonstrates that service climate, employee job satisfaction, and affective commitment are antecedents of engagement. Further, the findings of Alfes et al. (2013) suggest that organizational variables impact employee engagement and behavior through employee perceptions and interpretations of the work climate. Additionally, a study of fire fighters by Rich et al. (2010) finds organizational support, core self-evaluations, and value congruence to be the organizational and personal antecedents of engagement.

HRM policy can thus be a powerful transmitter of messages reflecting the organization's orientation and values. Alfes *et al.* (2013) and Karatepe (2013a) provide evidence that employees' perceptions of HR practices influence their level of engagement. Recently, Barrick *et al.* (2015) provided a holistic view of the organizational resources that drive collective organizational engagement: work design, HRM practices, and CEO transformational leadership. HRM practices thus impact employees directly and indirectly by means of different processes and levels, not only by improving employees' skills but also by increasing their motivation (Takeuchi *et al.*, 2009).

Inspired by social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), some authors argue that work engagement and positive job outcomes are some of the mechanisms through which employees repay the economic and socioemotional benefits they receive from the company (Alfes *et al.*, 2013; Karatepe, 2013b). This theory would explain how specific HRM interventions produce various beneficial consequences for employees, such as attachment and commitment (Batt, 2002) or engagement (Christensen Hughes and Rog, 2008). Moreover, high-performance HR practices (e.g., "selective staffing, extensive training, internal mobility, employment security, broad job design, results-oriented appraisal, rewards, and participation") exemplify ways of formally investing in workers' skills, knowledge, and abilities (Sun *et al.*, 2007: 565). For Tsui *et al.* (1997: 1089), HPWPs reflect a "mutual investment approach" to the employee-organization relationship.

HPWPs are characterized as a complementary combination of single practices that jointly influence organizational outcomes and performance (Aït Razouk, 2011; Batt, 2002; Takeuchi *et al.*, 2009). The positive effect of HRM systems is greater than that of isolated HR practices (Chuang *et al.*, 2016). For Aït Razouk (2011), some intermediate variables explain the causal link between HPWPs and performance. Given that this set of HR practices enhances the employee's involvement, commitment, and competences, it seems that employees will exhibit stronger emotional bonds with the organization when they perceive that their expectations have been fulfilled (Kehoe and Wright, 2013; Terglav *et al.*, 2016).

HPWPs can send a clear message that the organization values its human resources highly and is willing to establish a long-term, mutually beneficial relationship with its employees (Karatepe, 2013a; Sun *et al.*, 2007). As employees perceive more organizational investment and support (in terms of HPWPs), they feel more secure and discern that the company cares for their wellbeing; employees experience more engagement because they feel indebted to the company. One can thus expect employees' perception of the company's HRM practices to have a strong association with the level of engagement that employees experience.

Hypothesis 1. Employees' perceptions of HPWPs are positively related to their job engagement level.

2.2.3. Empowering leadership and engagement

The company's internal role models are effective means of communicating the organization's HRM orientation. Management's behavior reflects the vision and values of the company and inherently communicates information to employees about the company's orientation. Both supervisory feedback and perceived autonomy promote engagement among service employees (Menguc *et al.*, 2013).

An empowering style of leadership transmits and reinforces the message to employees that the company wants their participation and trusts their judgment. What is more, this participatory management style has a powerful positive impact on employees' self-concept and intrinsic motivation, raising self-efficacy levels (Ahearne *et al.*, 2005; Thomas and Velthouse, 1990; Zhang and Bartol, 2010). Empowering leaders show confidence in employees' competences and capabilities, and promote the self-

development of followers both by encouraging behaviors such as self-leadership and self-regulation and by setting participatory goals and delegating authority (Ahearne *et al.*, 2005).

Empowering leadership is seen as an *enabling*, rather than a delegating, process (De Klerk and Stander, 2014) because it involves sharing power with a view to enhancing employees' motivation and investment in their work. Research has shown that empowering leadership enhances the work climate for engagement by reinforcing the positive effect of a work context with high cognitive demands and high cognitive resources (Tuckey *et al.*, 2012). According to Kahn (1990), supportive, clarifying managerial interventions heighten *psychological safety*. When employees feel that they are being treated justly and taken into consideration by their company, they are likely to experience engagement. One can thus hypothesize that HPWPs manifested through management's simultaneous emphasis on reinforcing workforce effectiveness motivate employees to be more engaged.

Hypothesis 2. The relationship between high-performance work practices and employee engagement is mediated by empowering leadership.

Several studies in different contexts and countries show a strong correlation between the manager's empowering leadership behavior and employees' level of psychological empowerment: manufacturers in South Africa (Bester *et al.*, 2015), workers in a chemical products company (De Klerk and Stander, 2014), a midsize R&D organization in the U.S. (Lorinkova and Perry, 2014), and a large information technology company in China (Zhang and Bartol, 2010).

2.2.4. Psychological empowerment and engagement

Following Kanter's (1989) perspective, specific contextual factors and management techniques—namely, structural empowerment—contribute to the lowering or leveraging of power among the organization's members (e.g., implementing formal and informal communications systems, creating a supportive group atmosphere, improving job design, etc.). Despite the decentralization of decision-making power and delegation of authority, there is no automatic mechanism to produce empowered employees. In reality, sharing authority and resources with employees is not sufficient to make them to feel empowered. Several authors (Conger and Kanungo, 1988; Thomas

and Velthouse, 1990; Spreitzer, 1995) recommend defining empowerment in terms of motivational processes. Addressing the nature of empowerment as experienced by subordinates, they argue that the main aim of the empowering process should be improving employees' belief in their personal self-efficacy (following Bandura's theory, 1986, 1994). For Conger and Kanungo (1988), several organizational factors and participatory management combine to play a pivotal role in creating this particular psychological state in the employee.

Psychological empowerment refers to a cognitive state. Spreitzer (1995) identifies psychological empowerment as a work-related psychological state that reflects an active orientation to a work role. It is a motivational construct manifested in four cognitions: meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact (Spreitzer, 1995). *Meaning* outlines the value employees assign to their jobs according to their own beliefs and references. *Competence* refers to the employees' conviction in their capacity to accomplish the work activities skillfully. It derives from the concept of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997) or personal mastery. *Self-determination* refers to individuals' sense of having *choice* in their actions. *Impact* is the extent to which an employee perceives that his/her behavior is "making a difference" in accomplishing the purpose of a task.

A wide range of characteristics of one's job and work environment has also been associated with psychological empowerment; among these variables are HPWPs (i.e., participation in decision making, sharing of key resources, employee development, etc.) (Messersmith *et al.*, 2011). HPWPs often emphasize some forms of merit-based pay, rewards, and performance feedback. Similarly, HPWPs are designed to share important information with employees. All of this activity creates greater opportunities for contributions from the workforce and thus for increased feelings of psychological empowerment.

Psychological empowerment can also be seen as an internal mechanism with high potential to help elucidate the linkages between work contextual factors and engagement (Quiñones *et al.*, 2013). Organizational emphasis on practices of employee autonomy and self-determination is likely to prime employee attention and facilitate feelings of engagement. Although few, some studies point out psychological empowerment as a significant precursor of work engagement (e.g., Jose and Mampilly, 2014; Macinga *et al.*, 2015; Quiñones *et al.*, 2013). It is hypothesized that, as employees become more empowered by the HPWP context, they find their work more significant, self-fulfilling,

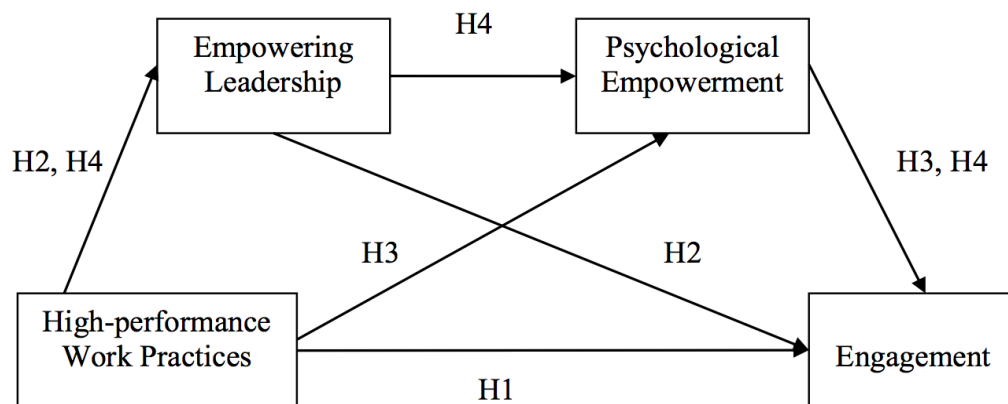
and inspiring, and accordingly become more dedicated, energized, and immersed in their tasks—in sum, more engaged.

Hypothesis 3. The relationship between HPWPs and employee engagement is mediated by psychological empowerment.

Because engagement encompasses emotional, cognitive, and physical activation, the company must employ different mechanisms to influence employees through diverse processes and levels—while consistently communicating the same message. HPWPs generate a favorable work context in which leaders’ empowering behaviors thrive. In the presence of this HRM context (HPWPs), leaders can actively encourage engagement by increasing their workers’ feelings of self-efficacy and enthusiasm through psychological empowerment. It is therefore hypothesized that empowering leadership and psychological empowerment mediate the relationship between HRM practices and employee engagement, respectively.

H4: The relationship between HPWPs and employee engagement is serially mediated by empowering leadership and psychological empowerment.

Figure 2.1. Research model



2.3. Research methodology

2.3.1. Research model

This study theorizes that HPWPs are related to employee engagement first through empowering leadership and then through psychological empowerment. “Integrating the two models with mediation” through empowering leadership and mediation through psychological empowerment yields “a three-path mediation model,” depicted in Figure 2.1 (Hayes, 2013; Van Jaarsveld *et al.*, 2010: 1492). The model is assessed using a cross-sectional survey and regression analysis with bootstrapping (Tongchaiprasit and Ariyabuddhiphongs, 2016). The PROCESS macro (Hayes, 2013) was employed to evaluate mediation effects.

2.3.2. Sample and data collection

The data were collected over a three-month period from July to September 2015 by approaching hotel workers in three major tourist destination cities in Spain face-to-face at their workplaces. Although data were collected from a convenience sample of 340 employees (Table 2.1), the sample is quite representative of the diversity of the hospitality industry in terms of star rating (11 one-star, 21 two-star, 105 three-star, 145 four-star, and 47 five-star hotels) and management strategy (39.5% independently managed, 60.5% belonging to hotel chains) (Mansour and Tremblay, 2016).

The target population of this study was limited to full-time customer contact personnel who had regular voice-to-voice or face-to-face interactions with customers (concierges, reservations agents, receptionists, reservations managers, and front desk managers). Following Karatepe’s (2013a) suggestions, hotel managers were not involved in the data collection; data were gathered directly from the hotel employees by approaching them in person during working hours.

The quantitative method used to test the research hypotheses included development of a three-section survey questionnaire to measure the hotel employees’ perceptions. A pretest was conducted on a separate pilot sample of eight frontline hotel employees and two frontline managers in the hospitality industry. The questionnaire was revised

to clarify ambiguous wording and include clearer definitions of some words and expressions.

Table 2.1. Sample characteristics

Variables	Frequency (N) and percentage	Variables	Frequency (N) and percentage
Respondent job type		Hotel type	
First-line manager*	77 (23.4%)	Hotel chain	199 (60.5%)
Non-managerial**	252 (76.6%)	Independent hotel	130 (39.5%)
Total	329 (100%)	Total	329 (100%)
Gender			
Female	136 (41.3%)		
Male	193 (58.7%)		
Total	329 (100%)		
Age		Hotel star rating	
< 21	1 (0.3%)	1 star	11 (3.3%)
21-25	58 (17.6%)	2 stars	21 (6.4%)
26-30	82 (24.9%)	3 stars	105 (31.9%)
31-35	84 (25.5%)	4 stars	145 (44.1%)
36-40	47 (14.3%)	5 stars	47 (14.3%)
41-45	30 (9.1%)	Total	329 (100%)
46-50	13 (4%)		
51-55	8 (2.4%)		
> 55	6 (1.8%)		
Total	329 (100%)		
Education			
Middle school	21 (6.4%)		
High school	51 (15.5%)		
University	204 (62%)		
Master's / Doctorate	53 (16.1%)		
Total	329 (100%)		

* (Front desk and reservations managers)

** (Concierges, receptionists, reservations agents)

A week before survey administration, a formal e-mail invitation was circulated to the sample hotels (Van Jaarsveld *et al.*, 2010). The e-mail presented the researchers and the aims of the study, and outlined confidentiality procedures. Later, a paper-based self-completion survey was administered in person to frontline workers and first-line managers who had agreed to participate in the study. A cover letter was also enclosed indicating the purpose of the study and assuring the participants that “any data they

provided would be treated confidentially and that no personal data would be reported” (Tongchaiprasit and Ariyabuddhiphongs, 2016). The survey was anonymous to avoid positively biased responses. 340 individuals volunteered to participate in the current study and actually completed and returned the survey in a closed envelope collected personally by the research team at each hotel location. The respondents were not compensated for their role in the research but were given the option to receive the results of the study.

Of the 340 questionnaires collected, 11 were discarded due to non-completion or missing data, following the *listwise deletion* procedure outlined by Hair *et al.* (2006). Of the 329 respondents who provided usable surveys, 136 were female (41.3%) and 193 male (58.7%). Of the participants, 24.9% were 26-30 years old, and 25.5% aged 31-35. Sixty-two percent of the participants had completed university education. These employees were largely non-managers (76.6%), and their average tenure in the company was 6 years (SD=7.36 years). The sample characteristics are given in Table 2.1.

2.3.3. Measures

Existing multi-item scales from previous research were used. Some measures were adapted to the Spanish hospitality context. Conventional translation and back-translation following Brislin (1980) procedures were performed by two Spanish bilingual academics and two bilingual professionals independently to ensure equivalence of meaning and translation accuracy. Foreign references, uncommon words, and errors due to cultural differences were eliminated (Tuna *et al.*, 2016). In addition, the final translated versions of the measures were pre-tested in the pilot study prior to final administration to ensure comprehensibility of the questionnaire.

Respondents were asked to rate their agreement with items using a Likert scale ranging from (1) totally disagree to (7) totally agree. All scales used this 7-point Likert response format. Items for each construct were added and averaged to form individual composite scores; higher values indicate higher variable levels. (Karatepe and Karadas, 2015; Namasivayam *et al.*, 2014; Van Jaarsveld *et al.*, 2010). Measurement results are reported in Table 2.A1 of the Appendix.

HPWPs. The theoretically informed measure of HPWPs developed by Sun *et al.* (2007), who drew upon prior research (Bamberger and Meshoulam, 2000), was used to measure employees' perceptions of the HPWPs. It consisted of 27 items based on eight unique domains for HR systems. To uncover the underlying factor structure of the HPWPs, an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) with varimax rotation was performed. All items loaded on their respective factors above the 0.5 criterion suggested by Hair *et al.* (2006) except three items of subscale mobility, which were deleted because the factor loading scored less than 0.40 in terms of significance. Next, a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted and the expected 8-factor model solution emerged. Consistent with prior research (Patel *et al.*, 2013; Sun *et al.*, 2007: 565), the HPWPs scale “included eight dimensions: selective staffing, extensive training, internal mobility, employment security, broad job design, results-oriented appraisal, rewards, and participation”. Nevertheless, HPWPs are conceived here as a set of complementary HRM practices, not in terms of isolated practices (Aït Razouk, 2011). Following prior research, an index score was calculated to reflect a single comprehensive measure of the HRM system (Barrick *et al.*, 2015; Chuang *et al.*, 2016; Patel *et al.*, 2013; Sun *et al.*, 2007). The Cronbach's alpha coefficient was .94.

Empowering leadership. The research utilized the 12-item measure of empowering leadership developed by Ahearne *et al.* (2005), due to its focus on individual supervisor-subordinate interactions (Lorinkova and Perry, 2014; Zhang and Bartol, 2010). In line with prior research (Ahearne *et al.*, 2005; Namasivayam *et al.*, 2014), the four scale scores were averaged to create a single composite score with an alpha of .95.

Psychological empowerment was assessed with Spreitzer's (1995) 12-item scale (e.g., “I have significant autonomy in determining how I do my job”). Its four dimensions (meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact) combine additively to form an overall construct (Albrecht and Andreetta, 2011; Quiñones *et al.*, 2013; Zhang and Bartol, 2010). The Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the scale in this study was .90.

Engagement was measured with the 9-item shortened version of the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale in Spanish (UWES-9; Schaufeli and Bakker, 2003). Each facet of engagement—absorption (e.g., “I feel happy when I am working intensely”), dedication (e.g., “My job inspires me”), and vigor—was assessed with three items. After the CFA was performed, the items were collapsed into a single composite measure to obtain a global measure of employee engagement (Albrecht and Andreetta, 2011; Macsinga *et*

al., 2015; Quiñones *et al.*, 2013). Overall consistency for the engagement scale was .93.

Control variables. Three employee characteristics were used as control variables to reduce the power of alternative explanations of job engagement. Background variables such as age, gender (1 = female, 2 = male), and education level may be important predictors of engagement (Lu *et al.*, 2016; Macsinga *et al.*, 2015; Quiñones *et al.*, 2013). Education was measured using a 4-point scale: middle school or less (1), high school or equivalent (2), college degree (3), postgraduate studies (4). Higher scores indicated a higher level of education (Karatepe, 2013b).

2.3.4. Common method

Since all measures were self-reported, the impact of common method bias was a concern. Established recommendations were followed to ensure that common method bias be eliminated or minimized (Podsakoff *et al.*, 2003). As a result, independent and dependent variables were arranged so as not to replicate the order of the hypotheses (Terlgav *et al.*, 2016), only established scales were used, and different instructions and filler items were included to create a psychological separation between the sets of variables (Alfes *et al.*, 2013).

2.3.5. Data-analysis strategy

The Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software, version 22, and EQS 6.1 (Bentler and Wu, 2005; Byrne, 2013) were used to analyze the data collected from the questionnaire. The “mixed.cor” function of the statistical software R was used to find correlations for the various types of variables in this study (<https://www.r-project.org/>).

To assess the measurements’ psychometric properties, the sample was firstly analyzed using EFA to determine appropriate factor structure, followed by CFA of those results (Farrell and Rudd, 2009). In testing the hypotheses, all path coefficients were calculated using regression analysis with the PROCESS plug-in for SPSS developed by Hayes (2013).

2.3.5. Preliminary analyses

Prior to analysis, accuracy of data entry, missing values, and outliers were examined. Namasivayam *et al.* (2014) and Paek *et al.* (2015) note the importance of identifying outliers because they may bias the mean and influence the normal distribution. Following Buchanan (2015) and Schulenberg *et al.* (2011: 870), “multivariate outliers were removed using indices from Mahalanobis distance, Cook’s values, and leverage”; at most, six outliers were removed, “all with very large multivariate outlier indicators and strong influence over slopes.” Assumptions of multivariate statistics (linearity, normality, homogeneity) were also analyzed and determined satisfactory.

2.4. Results

Before composing the scales for hypothesis testing, the construct validity of the measures was assessed using CFA.

2.4.1. Assessment of psychometric properties of the measures

CFA was conducted to examine convergent and discriminant validity. The convergent validity of a measure is the internal consistency of multiple dimensions for each construct. The composite reliability (CR) statistics of the constructs exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.70 (Bagozzi and Yi, 1988; Fornell and Larcker, 1981). Cronbach’s reliabilities for all scales were also above the recommended threshold of .60. Thus, all measures consistently indicated the scales’ internal consistency.

Table 2.2. CFA of second-order constructs

Second-order construct	CFI	NFI	IFI	GFI	AGFI	RMSEA	Scale reliability		
							CR	AVE	α :
Empowering Leadership	0.967	0.950	0.968	0.904	0.902	0.057	0.918	0.738	0.946
Psychological Empowerment	0.957	0.934	0.957	0.905	0.900	0.060	0.836	0.561	0.904
Engagement	0.957	0.945	0.958	0.917	0.907	0.052	0.935	0.828	0.928

The average variance extracted (AVE) was used to test for sufficient discriminant validity of the constructs. Discriminant validity evaluates the extent to which each construct used in the model differs from the others (Bagozzi et al., 1991). Each construct had an acceptable AVE value above .50 (Fornell and Larcker, 1981), indicating that “more than half of the variance in the constructs is explained by their corresponding measures rather than by errors” (Hair et al., 2006; Teruglav et al., 2016: 7). Moreover, support for the discriminant validity of all constructs was found by comparing the square root of the AVE with the correlations between constructs (Gerbing and Anderson, 1988; Fornell and Larcker, 1981). The square roots of the AVE of empowering leadership (.859), psychological empowerment (.749), and engagement (.910) were greater than the correlations between the constructs. Consequently, all measures exceeded the recommended threshold for convergent and discriminant validity.

CFA was also performed to analyze dimensionality and goodness of fit of the second-order constructs used in the model: empowering leadership, psychological empowerment, and engagement (Table 2.2). All fit indicators obtained guarantee good fit of the scales: RMSEA (Root Mean Square Error of Approximation), CFI (Comparative Fit Index), NFI (Bentler-Bonett Normed Fit Index) (Bentler and Bonett, 1980), IFI (Incremental Fit Index), and AGFI (Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index). The RMSEA is one of the most informative criteria for evaluating model fit. A RMSEA value lower than 0.08 is reasonable, but better fit is indicated by a value lower than or equal to 0.05 (Byrne, 2001). NFI, CFI, IFI, GFI, and AGFI values higher than 0.9 indicate acceptable fit (Byrne, 2001). As Table 2.2. shows, all values obtained through CFA for the second-order constructs are within the range regarded as sufficient in the literature.

The relationships between the variables were determined using the “mixed.cor” function of the statistical software R (see <https://www.r-project.org/>) to “find correlations for mixtures of continuous, polytomous, and dichotomous variables,” the situation in this study. Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated for the continuous variables and polyserial/biserial correlations used for the mixed variables (Revelle *et al.*, 2010).

Table 2.3 presents the means, standard deviations, and correlations for all study variables. The study results confirm a close correlation between the variables, with psychological empowerment and engagement having the strongest linear relationship

($r = 0.68$ and $p < .001$). Participants with more education tended to perceive more empowerment behaviors in their managers and also to experience more psychological empowerment.

Table 2.3. Means, standard deviations, and correlation matrix

	Mean	S.D.	1x	2x	3x	4x	5	6	7
1.HPWP	3.88	1.26	-						
2. Empowering Leadership	4.82	1.41	0.65**	-					
3. Psychological Empowerment	5.58	0.98	0.59**	0.62**	-				
4. Engagement	5.11	1.24	0.62**	0.60**	0.68**	-			
5. Age	4.02	1.65	-0.06	-0.10	-0.01	-0.02	-		
6. Gender	1.48	0.50	0.09	0.08	0.05	0.07	0.24**	-	
7. Education	3.88	0.75	0.12*	0.17**	0.16**	0.09	-0.33**	-0.40**	-

** Significant at a significance level of 0.01

* Significant at a significance level of 0.05

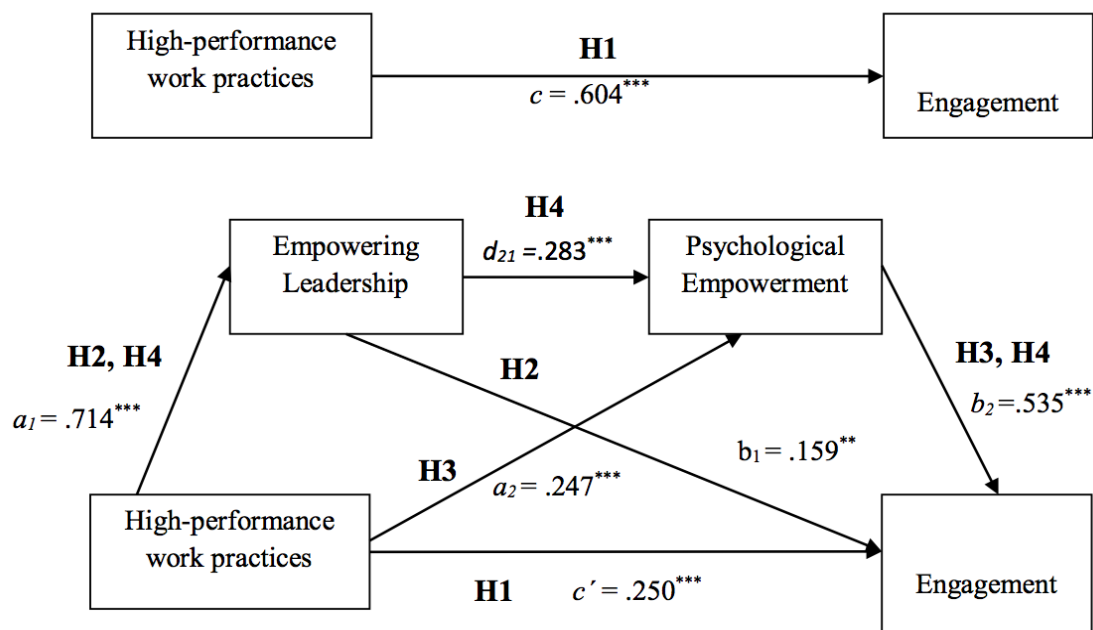
Notes: Pearson correlation coefficients are calculated for the continuous variables, and polyserial / biserial correlations are used for the mixed variables.

Composite scores for each variable were computed by averaging scores across items representing that variable; S.D. standard deviation

2.4.2. Hypothesis testing

An analytical approach outlined by Hayes (2013) was used to test the hypotheses. A three-path mediated effect was then examined (Tongchaiprasit and Ariyabuddhiphongs, 2016; Van Jaarsveld *et al.*, 2010). All path coefficients were calculated using regression analysis with the PROCESS plug-in for SPSS developed by Hayes (2013). Table 2.4 shows the results. The advantage of this approach, as outlined by Van Jaarsveld *et al.* (2010: 1496), is that it enables isolation of each mediator’s indirect effect: empowering leadership (Hypothesis 2) and psychological empowerment (Hypothesis 3); further, this approach also allows investigation of “the indirect effect passing through both of these mediators in a series” (Hypothesis 4). Figure 2.2. illustrates these models and identifies the estimates of the path coefficients.

Figure 2.2. Three-path mediation model



N = 323
 *p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.

This procedure is outlined by Hayes (2013) as superior to alternative evaluations of mediating effects. Hayes’ mediation approach “directly tests the indirect effect between the predictor and the criterion variables through the mediator via a bootstrapping procedure, addressing some weaknesses associated with the Sobel test” (Van Jaarsveld *et al.*, 2010: 1497). The bootstrap resampling method requires many fewer assumptions than the Baron and Kenny (1986) approach, provides tests of significance in small samples, and is widely accepted across a variety of literatures (Gardner *et al.*, 2011).

This study calculated all path coefficients, simultaneously controlling for employee age, gender, and education. As demonstrated in Table 2.4, however, none of the control variables was related to the study variables at a significant level. Based on 10,000 subsamples with 323 cases, the results evidence that “the 95% confidence intervals for all indirect effects do not contain zero”, confirming the proposed constructs (empowering leadership and psychological empowerment) as mediators between HPWPs and engagement (Terglav *et al.*, 2016). In Table 2.5, estimates of the indirect effects are provided along with the 95% bias-corrected bootstrapped confidence intervals for the path estimates.

Table 2.4. Regression coefficients, standard errors, and model summary information for the serial multiple mediator model

Antecedent	Consequent											
	M_1 (ELW)			M_2 (POW)			Y (ENG)					
	Coeff.	SE	<i>p</i>	Coeff.	SE	<i>p</i>	Coeff.	SE	<i>p</i>			
X (HPWPs)	α_1	.714	.047	< .001	α_2	.247	.043	< .001	c'	.250	.052	< .001
M_1 (ELW)	--	--	--		d_{21}	.283	.038	< .001	b_1	.159	.048	.001
M_2 (POW)	--	--	--		--	--	--		b_2	.535	.065	< .001
Constant	i_{M1}	1.303	.485	< .010	i_{M2}	2.788	.336	< .001	i_y	.541	.428	n.s.
Age		-.034	.038	n.s.		.039	.026	n.s.		.003	.030	n.s.
Gender		.149	.126	n.s.		-.013	.086	n.s.		.009	.099	n.s.
Education		.170	.086	n.s.		.082	.059	n.s.		-.045	.069	n.s.
		$R^2 = .439$				$R^2 = .452$				$R^2 = .551$		
		$F(4, 318) = 62.201,$ $p < .001$				$F(5, 317) = 52.198,$ $p < .001$				$F(6, 316) = 64.490,$ $p < .001$		

HPWPs: High-Performance Work Practices, ELW: Empowering Leadership; POW: Empowerment; ENG: Engagement.

Controls: age, gender, education level.

M1: First mediator; M2: Second mediator.

$$\hat{M}_1 = 1.303 + 0.714X; \quad \hat{M}_2 = 2.788 + 0.247X + 0.283M_1; \quad \hat{Y} = (0.541) + 0.250X + 0.159M_1 + 0.535M_2$$

Analysis of the first hypothesis (H1) tested the total effect of HPWPs on engagement (c'). The result of the regression analysis shows the hypothesized effect to be significant ($\beta=.604$, $SE=.04$, $p<.001$), **supporting H1**. Hypothesis 2 states that empowering leadership mediates the path between HPWPs and employee engagement. The significance test required prediction of an indirect effect of HPWPs empowering leadership engagement. According to the results, the effect is significant ($\beta=.113$, $SE=.04$, $p<.001$), **supporting H2**.

For Hypothesis 3, that psychological empowerment mediates the relationship of HPWPs to engagement, the significance test entailed estimation of an indirect effect of HPWPs psychological empowerment engagement. The test revealed that HPWPs predicted psychological empowerment ($\beta=.247$, $SE=.04$, $p<.001$) and that psychological empowerment predicted engagement ($\beta=.535$, $SE=.06$, $p<.001$). HPWPs affected engagement indirectly through the mediation of psychological empowerment ($\beta=.247 \times .535 = .132$, $SE=.03$, $p<.001$). Thus, **H3 is supported**.

Hypothesis 4 states that empowering leadership and psychological empowerment serially mediate the relationship between HRM practices and employee engagement. The indirect effect of HPWPs empowering leadership psychological empowerment engagement was thus examined. The indirect effect of HPWPs on engagement through the mediation of empowering leadership and psychological empowerment was significant ($\beta = .108$, $SE = .02$, $p < .001$). Therefore, the results of the analysis show that HPWPs are associated with higher empowering leadership and psychological empowerment, which relate to higher levels of employee engagement. Thus, **H4 is also supported**. As a result, the study accepts all of its hypotheses.

Table 2.5. Indirect effects

Indirect Effects	Boot. SE	95% Confidence Interval*		Figure Path
		Boot. Lower level CI	Boot. Upper level CI	
<i>HPWPs</i> → <i>ELW</i> → <i>ENG</i> = 0.113	(.038)	(0.043, 0.192)		<i>Ind1: (a₁b₁)</i>
<i>HPWPs</i> → <i>ELW</i> → <i>POW</i> → <i>ENG</i> = 0.108	(.024)	(0.024, 0.072)		<i>Ind2: (a₁b₁+ d₁₂b₂+ a₂b₂)</i>
<i>HPWPs</i> → <i>POW</i> → <i>ENG</i> = 0.132	(.029)	(0.029, 0.082)		<i>Ind3: (a₂b₂)</i>
Total indirect effects: 0.357	(.044)	(0.276, 0.450)		

*10,000 bootstrap samples for bias-corrected bootstrap confidence interval

2.5. Discussion and conclusions

2.5.1. Conclusions

Kahn’s (1990) basic assumption is that people’s experiences of themselves and their work environments influence moments of personal engagement and disengagement. Based on Kahn’s premises, this study sought to identify which variables explained the processes by which people adjust their selves in roles.

Hospitality industry workers were selected for the study because employee engagement is particularly relevant in the hotel sector. In such a high-customer-interaction job, it is crucial that employees be motivated and passionate about their work in order to provide good service. Given that employee engagement is an important current issue

for hospitality companies, the main aim of this study was to provide the hotel industry with a more complete picture of how employee engagement is achieved.

Alfes *et al.* (2013), Karatepe (2013a), and Karatepe and Olugbade (2016) outline the role of HPWPs as antecedents of work engagement. De Klerk and Stander (2014) also find strong associations between empowering leadership, psychological empowerment, and engagement. Finally, recent studies demonstrate a strong correlation between psychological empowerment and engagement (Jose and Mampilly, 2014; Macinga *et al.*, 2015). For this reason, HPWPs, empowering leadership, and psychological empowerment were considered together as key drivers of engagement to be explored in this research.

It appears that employees who perceive the company as implementing high performance HR practices also report that their managers display more empowering leadership behavior and, in turn, seem to experience a higher level of psychological empowerment. Moreover, HPWPs and empowering leadership make employees feel that they have a certain degree of autonomy to perform their tasks, that they are involved in the company decision-making process, and that the organization nurtures development of their skills and abilities. In sum, when employees understand that the company is trying to help them to enhance their performance, they experience higher levels of psychological empowerment, which in turn lead to higher levels of work engagement. All of these process mechanisms have direct and indirect effects on the employee's experience of engagement. The results also suggest that none of the control variables (e.g., age, gender, and educational level) has significant effects on perceptions of HPWPs, empowering leadership, or level of psychological empowerment and engagement experienced by the workforce.

2.5.2. Theoretical implications

Becker and Huselid (2006: 900) stress the need for more efforts to unveil “the mechanisms through which the HR architecture actually influences firm performance” by focusing in more proximal outcomes. Gerhart (2005) also suggests moving closer to the individual level in strategic HRM research, emphasizing HRM's impact on employee relations and attitudes. The meta-analysis by Subramony (2009) provides evidence of the efficacy of bundles of practices aimed at enhancing specific workforce

characteristics, such as employee empowerment, motivation, and skill levels. The main aim of the present study was thus to explore the mechanisms through which HPWPs can assist firms in developing a behavioral context that promotes engagement in their workforce.

The theoretical significance of this research is threefold. First, this study extends existing HRM and engagement literature by showing that HPWPs have a significant impact on employees' engagement. It responds to the call for more scholarly research on these topics in service contexts (Subramony, 2009). Second, the findings suggest that HPWPs are associated with employee engagement *through a serial mediation model with two mediators*, namely, empowering leadership and psychological empowerment. This finding is relevant because prior studies show that empowering leadership and psychological empowerment are associated with each other and have significant implications for positive employee outcomes, but no research has analyzed how the two function together in this relationship. Third, very few studies (e.g., Tongchaiprasit and Ariyabuddhiphong, 2016; Van Jaarsveld *et al.*, 2010) have tested a complex model with two serial mediators using the PROCESS macro recently developed by Hayes (2013) (see www.processmacro.com for further information). No research to date has used this nascent methodology to identify the internal mechanisms between HPWPs and engagement. This approach can be seen as a strength of the study.

Overall, the main theoretical contribution of the study is its conceptual and empirical demonstration that HPWPs influence employee engagement both directly and indirectly via two important mediators. The results of this research also contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the ways to achieve employees' psychological empowerment and engagement in the hospitality industry. Moreover, the study provides a richer, deeper understanding of various organizational and personal antecedents of job engagement.

2.5.3. Practical implications

The results of this research also contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the ways to achieve employees' psychological empowerment and engagement in the hospitality industry. From a practical standpoint, it is essential for modern service

firms to discover what they can do to maintain and enhance high levels of engagement among their employees.

Engaged employees are cognitively alert and physically involved in their task and satisfy customers by going beyond their formal job-related responsibilities (Karatepe, 2013a). Thus, from a practical standpoint, it is essential for modern service firms to discover what they can do to maintain and enhance high levels of engagement among their employees. Moreover, achieving a highly engaged workforce is especially crucial in hospitality organizations, where customer satisfaction is greatly influenced by the attitudes and behaviors of the frontline employees. Specific organizational and personal factors should be nurtured to foster engagement. One strategy is for organizations to implement HPWPs to boost employee skills, motivation, and participation, and to encourage leaders to display empowering behaviors.

HPWPs are strong systems comprising internally coherent practices that send reinforcing messages and cues to employees, and that help hospitality workers to develop and maintain service at high levels. Examples of HPWPs that hospitality companies should implement to enable higher performance are: *staffing* procedures emphasizing long-term employee potential; extensive formal *training* programs, both to help new hires develop the necessary skills to perform their jobs and to increase employees' promotability in the organization; individual career paths and opportunities for *upward mobility*; guarantee of *job security* to employees; accurate and up-to-date *job descriptions* so that the employees clearly understand all of their duties and how to perform them; *results-oriented appraisal* and measures of performance with objective quantifiable results; matching payment of individuals to their performance; allowing employees to *participate in decision-making* and providing them with the opportunity to suggest improvements in the way things are done (Gardner *et al.*, 2011; Sun *et al.*, 2007). Given the constraints on their application in current practice, one must acknowledge that all investments in human capital and in implementing HPWPs are costly (Jiang and Liu, 2015); however, as Sun *et al.* (2007: 573) advocate, "investment in HPWPs really 'pays off'."

In addition, HPWPs seem to orient and support managers' empowering behaviors. In fact, high-performance work contexts are ideal environments for training managers to empower employees effectively. Managers exhibit empowering leadership when they not only distribute responsibility towards the base of the hierarchical pyramid but also

share knowledge, information, and power with their subordinates. Empowering leaders express confidence in the employees' ability to perform at a high level and to improve even when they make mistakes (Ahearne et al., 2005). Through such techniques, supervisors enhance the employee's sense of achievement. Empowering leaders also foster employees' participation in decision making, letting them decide the best way to solve some daily problems. It is important for supervisors to understand the extent to which their own behaviors influence their employees' feelings of empowerment and engagement.

All of these actions should promote employees' intrinsic task motivation and self-efficacy levels (Thomas and Velthouse, 1990; Conger and Kanungo, 1988), increasing the likelihood that employees experience psychological empowerment. Due to empowerment, employees feel they have flexibility, choice, latitude, and control in performing their jobs, and understand their role in the organization's total performance. The resulting heightened feeling of self-competence and sense of worth at work will produce employee engagement, one of the main drivers of employee enthusiasm and dedication at work.

Hospitality organizations such as Ritz Carlton (Michelli, 2008) and Four Seasons (Sharp et al., 2009), for instance, are good examples of the successful implementation of empowerment principles. Empowerment normally yields benefits for both employees and employers, and increases job satisfaction (Pelit et al., 2011). Nevertheless, it is worth noting that *empowering employees is not the cure for all organizational sicknesses*, and that “[this] approach might not be right for everyone” (Bowen and Lawler, 1992: 31). Companies must examine in depth the costs and benefits of empowering employees and decide carefully why, how, when, and whom to empower. To implement empowerment successfully, the hotel must have reached a stage at which staff can be trusted to think for themselves and make different types of decisions. Moreover, effective empowerment requires that the company have managers who believe that their employees can act independently—termed “*Theory Y managers*” by Bowen and Lawler (1992), referencing McGregor's theory.

This paper helps managers to answer the question of how to achieve engaged employees in a sector such as the hospitality industry, characterized by low pay, long working hours, and changing shifts. The answer is simple: making workers feel better about their jobs and about themselves at work. Companies can achieve this goal by satisfying one of the most basic psychological needs: sense of achievement, self-realization.

2.5.4. Limitations and future research

This study has some limitations, which can be seen as opportunities for future research. First, the cross-sectional research design limits the extent to which cause-effect relations can be inferred from the findings. The results should be interpreted considering this limitation.

The second limitation has to do with the sampling method. The study's use of a convenience sample is not fully representative of hotel workers in Spain. Generalization of the results is thus limited. Future research should use random sampling methods to obtain representative samples of Spanish hotel workers.

Third, the study relies on self-report measures because it seeks to learn about the employees' perceptions (management cannot speak for its employees, since empowerment and engagement represent individual employees' perspectives). Nevertheless, some of the findings may have arisen "as a result of self-serving bias" (Van Jaarsveld *et al.*, 2010: 1500). New investigations should be designed as multilevel studies that also include members of management and customers as respondents (Wong, 2016). This approach would reveal actual HRM practices according to the company's view and the customers' perceptions of employee behavior.

Existing measures of HPWPs are composites formed by averaging or adding respondents' standardized ratings related to a set of HRM practices (Gardner *et al.*, 2011; Patel *et al.*, 2013). All components of the HR system are thus assumed to have identical impact on the outcomes (Jiang and Liu, 2015), and different practices can be substituted for one another to obtain similar effects (Batt, 2002). Subramony (2009) explains, however, that different sets of HR practices may impact the same outcomes in a heterogeneous way. Researchers should therefore explore new combinations of HPWPs, also considering possible synergistic effects (Aït Razouk, 2011).

The present study argues that HPWPs lead to higher levels of employee engagement through empowering leadership and psychological empowerment in a hospitality context. Previous research has demonstrated the association between transformational leadership and psychological empowerment (Avolio *et al.*, 2004; Gill *et al.*, 2010). It would thus be worthwhile to explore the role of other traditional and emerging management leadership styles in enhancing employee engagement (e.g., paradoxical leadership, servant leadership). Finally, it would be valuable to assess whether and

how these relationships differ across industries and countries to account for specific cultural factors.

These limitations notwithstanding, the findings of this study contribute to the HRM and the hospitality literature by partially illuminating the influence of HPWPs on employee engagement. It is hoped that the results of this study can inspire other researchers to develop further studies highlighting the relevance of employees' positive psychological outcomes in the hospitality industry.

APPENDIX CHAPTER 2

Table 2.A1. Summary of factor loadings, Cronbach's alpha, construct reliability, and average variance extracted

Item	Mean	S.D.	Factor loadings	t-value	R2	Scale reliability
EMPOWERING LEADERSHIP (From Ahearne <i>et al.</i> [2005] in Zhang <i>et al.</i> [2010]). Enhancing meaningfulness	Empowering leadership (enhancing the meaningfulness of work)					
Elwme1. Helping understand objectives.	4.240	1.940	0.917	a	0.841	CR: 0.955
Elwme2. Helping understand the importance of my work.	4.529	1.908	0.957	22.835	0.917	AVE: 0.875
Elwme3. Understanding how job fits into the bigger picture.	4.386	1.960	0.932	29.233	0.868	α : 0.942
Fostering participation	Empowering leadership (fostering participation in decision making)					
Elwpa1. Making decisions together.	4.106	2.028	0.940	a	0.940	CR: 0.925
Elwpa2. Consulting on strategic decisions.	4.036	2.000	0.926	27.106	0.926	AVE: 0.804
Elwpa3. Soliciting opinion.	4.559	1.901	0.820	23.315	0.820	α : 0.902
Expressing confidence	Empowering leadership (expressing confidence in high performance)					
Elwef1. Handling demanding tasks.	5.517	1.506	0.926	a	0.857	CR: 0.956
Elwef2. Ability to improve.	5.486	1.554	0.913	24.107	0.834	AVE: 0.880
Elwef3. Ability to perform.	5.620	1.473	0.974	39.008	0.949	α : 0.929
Providing autonomy	Empowering leadership (providing autonomy from bureaucratic constraints)					
Elwau1. Doing my job my way.	5.073	1.732	0.880	a	0.754	CR: 0.872
Elwau2. Keeping the rules and regulations simple.	4.787	1.721	0.735	14.782	0.540	AVE: 0.696
Elwau3. Allowing me to make important decisions quickly.	5.346	1.682	0.888	16.786	0.789	α : 0.837
PSYCHOLOGICAL EMPOWERMENT (From Spreitzer [1995]). Meaning	Empowerment (meaning)					
Powmea1. Importance of work.	5.638	1.602	0.944	a	0.892	CR:0.964
Powmea2. Meaningful work activities.	5.441	1.601	0.945	41.745	0.894	AVE: 0.900
Powmea3. Work meaningful to me.	5.580	1.585	0.958	49.589	0.958	α : 0.947

Competence	Empowerment (competence)					
Powcom1. Confidence about my ability.	6.444	0.817	0.871	a	0.759	CR:0.914
Powcom2. Self-assured about my capabilities.	6.422	0.841	0.983	18.203	0.967	AVE: 0.781
Powcom3. Necessary skills mastered.	6.283	0.885	0.786	11.237	0.685	α : 0.878
Self-determination	Empowerment (self-determination)					
Powdet1. Autonomy.	5.705	1.451	0.884	a	0.781	CR: 0.939
Powdet2. Deciding how to go about doing my work.	5.389	1.621	0.981	23.630	0.963	AVE: 0.838
Powdet3. Independence.	5.210	1.629	0.877	18.216	0.769	α : 0.920
Impact	Empowerment (impact)					
Powimp1. Large impact in my department.	5.052	1.722	0.866	a	0.749	CR: 0.937
Powimp2. Control.	4.848	1.762	0.898	18.097	0.807	AVE: 0.832
Powimp3. Influence.	4.666	1.824	0.969	20.246	0.939	α : 0.918
ENGAGEMENT (UWES-9, from Schaufeli and Bakker [2003]). Vigor	Engagement (vigor)					
Engvi1. Feeling I am bursting with energy.	4.970	1.604	0.968	a	0.937	CR: 0.924
Engvi2. Feeling I am strong and vigorous.	5.106	1.575	0.950	29.535	0.902	AVE: 0.805
Engvi3. Feeling like going to work.	4.404	1.834	0.758	17.133	0.575	α : 0.892
Dedication	Engagement (dedication)					
Engde1. Enthusiastic about my job.	4.617	1.796	0.962	a	0.907	CR: 0.912
Engde2. Job inspiration.	4.477	1.871	0.926	23.549	0.858	AVE: 0.777
Engde3. Proud of the work.	5.593	1.547	0.740	14.369	0.503	α : 0.862
Absorption	Engagement (absorption)					
Engab1. Happy when working intensely.	5.112	1.639	0.768	a	0.637	CR: 0.897
Engab2. Immersed in my work.	5.772	1.217	0.981	8.764	0.962	AVE: 0.746
Engab3. Getting carried away when working.	5.815	1.118	0.829	10.423	0.559	α : 0.827
HIGH-PERFORMANCE WORK PRACTICES (Sun <i>et al.</i> [2007]). Staffing	High-performance work practices (staffing)					
Hrstf1. Effort to select the right person.	4.56	1.886	0.903	a	0.815	CR: 0.945
Hrstf2. Long-term potential emphasized.	4.56	1.920	0.765	18.370	0.584	AVE: 0.813
Hrstf3. Importance on staffing process.	4.43	1.886	0.966	32.092	0.934	α : 0.942
Hrstf4. Effort in selection.	4.35	1.834	0.958	31.335	0.919	

Training	High-performance work practices (extensive training)					
Hrtra1. Extensive training programs.	3.98	1.880	0.731	a	0.534	CR: 0.907
Hrtra2. Training programs every few years.	3.50	2.027	0.860	15.522	0.739	AVE: 0.709
Hrtra3. Formal training programs to teach new hires.	3.43	2.050	0.890	16.078	0.793	α :0.903
Hrtra4. Training to increase employee promotability.	3.22	1.998	0.878	15.859	0.771	
Mobility	High-performance work practices (internal mobility)					
Hrmob4. Clear career paths.	3.05	1.74	0.712	a	0.507	CR: 0.684 AVE: 0.520
Hrmob5. Potential positions to be promoted to.	3.322	1.52	0.730	10.726	0.532	α :0.687
Job security	High-performance work practices (job security)					
Hrsec1. Long term expectations.	4.49	1.927	0.833	a	0.756	AVE: 0.773 CR:0.872
Hrsec2. Job security guaranteed.	4.03	1.928	0.923	11.772	0.851	α :0.869
Job description	High-performance work practices (clear job description)					
Hrjds1. Duties clearly defined.	4.72	1.865	0.762	a	0.581	CR: 0.910
Hrjds2. An up-to-date job description.	4.46	1.978	0.914	18.102	0.835	AVE: 0.774
Hrjds3. Accurate description of all duties.	4.72	1.934	0.951	18.648	0.904	α : 0.906
Appraisal	High-performance work practices (results-oriented appraisal)					
Hrapp1. Objective quantifiable results.	3.59	2.006	0.929	a	0.863	CR: 0.927
Hrapp2. Performance appraisals.	3.51	1.907	0.944	30.146	0.891	AVE: 0.81
Hrapp3. Long-term and group-based achievement.	3.71	1.867	0.822	21.601	0.675	α : 0.923
Rewards	High-performance work practices (incentive reward)					
Hrrew1. Bonuses.	2.59	2.101	0.789	a	0.623	CR:0.773 AVE: 0.629
Hrrew2. Close matching of pay to performance.	2.38	1.780	0.798	9.978	0.637	α :0.767
Participation	High-performance work practices (participation)					
Hrpar1. Participation in decisions.	4.09	2.108	0.819	a	0.671	CR:0.901
Hrpar2. Allowed to make decisions.	4.54	1.814	0.819	17.073	0.671	AVE: 0.696
Hrpar3. Improvements suggestions.	4.85	1.911	0.903	19.397	0.815	α : 0.898
Hrpar4. Open communications.	5.09	1.931	0.792	10.279	0.627	

¹a indicates that the parameter was set at 1.0. If a different parameter is set at 1.0, however, the indicator of the scale is also statistically significant.

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3

**EMPOWERING THE SERVICE
PROVIDER: IMPACT OF DIFFERENT
LEADERSHIP STYLES**

3.

EMPOWERING THE SERVICE PROVIDER: IMPACT OF DIFFERENT LEADERSHIP STYLES

Abstract

In hospitality, certain management styles can play a crucial role in achieving positive employee outcomes. To determine leadership behavior that helps followers to realize their full potential, this research proposes and tests a theoretical model that links three burgeoning leadership approaches - paradoxical, empowering, and servant - to employee psychological empowerment and engagement. These relationships were assessed using structural equation modeling (SEM) with data gathered from 340 hotel workers in Spain.

As predicted on the basis of Self-Determination Theory, empowering leadership style and paradoxical leader behavior were both positively related to psychological empowerment. Contrary to expectations, servant leadership style was not an antecedent of psychological empowerment. Furthermore, this study ascertains the positive relationship of empowering and servant leadership styles to engagement.

The findings demonstrate psychological empowerment to be a clear antecedent of job engagement, extending previous research. Implications for hospitality service managers, educators, and researchers are discussed.

Keywords: *Paradoxical leadership, empowering leadership, servant leadership, psychological empowerment, engagement, hotels.*

3.1. Introduction

The hospitality industry has a unique culture as compared to other industries. It is a sector of frequent interaction between customers and employees, where frontline staff play a crucial role in service delivery (Teroglav *et al.*, 2016). The profitability of hospitality organizations depends on essential employee attitudes and behaviors. Paradoxically, hospitality workers frequently report emotional exhaustion, lack of appreciation, occupational stress, overwork, and low pay. In fact, high absenteeism and turnover are also characteristics of these working environments.

Further, hospitality organizations are conventionally characterized as highly hierarchical and with predominance of traditional management styles (Øgaard, *et al.*, 2008). Most hotels, for example, follow the classical model of centralized decision making within strict pyramidal organization charts. Nevertheless, in this particular service sector, many unpredicted situations may occur, and if frontline employees are not given responsibility for decision making, they may find it hard to solve problems quickly and provide high-quality customer service. Since every customer and each service experience is different, hospitality employees should have some degree of autonomy and discretion in service delivery - and its recovery, when necessary - to meet customers' differing needs, demands, and expectations. For this and other reasons, managing people in this special sector involves some unique challenges for managers. On the other hand, tourism workplaces have recently been subjected to the impact of turbulence and change (Baum, 2015). In the past decade, several economic and financial variables have pushed companies to new standards, forcing them to redefine business processes. Delaying of management structures (in many cases due to downsizing) has been accompanied by a changing balance of power between employer and employee. As a result, new flattened organizational models seem to have emerged in conjunction with changes in the management philosophy. In fact,

many organizations have been compelled to shift their traditional pyramidal, top down concept of control towards more flexible and participatory managerial formulas. This change in managers' roles and responsibilities appears to have required a corresponding regeneration of the types of leadership behavior they employ. Leaders are now expected to be more adaptive and flexible. New leadership strategies are therefore needed to motivate the 21st-century workforce and to increase their positive psychological capital (Deloitte, 2014).

Alongside this trend, the value of an engaged workforce, empowered to take frontline decisions without consulting the supervisory hierarchy, has recently been recognized in the tourism sector (Baum, 2015). Both empowerment and engagement of employees are seen as promising solutions to deal with several organizational issues in hospitality. Many contemporary human resource and management professionals see these psychological states as the most prominent, critical drivers of business success today (Namasivayam *et al.*, 2014). For example, leading hospitality corporations such as Ritz Carlton or Four Seasons have identified empowerment as the key to their success.

Empowered employees are enabled to deal with the unexpected contingencies that characterize service encounters in hospitality, which frequently require employees "to depart from the script". Engaged employees, in turn, are characterized as working with passion and pride, being devoted to their work, and showing strong work involvement (Schaufeli and Baker, 2003). Research has demonstrated that engaged employees achieve higher levels of job performance and better service by being more immersed in their tasks, displaying more effort and showing more dedication at work (Alfes *et al.*, 2013; Barnes and Collier, 2013). For this reason, many service organizations and practitioners are placing increased emphasis on identifying ways to raise the level of engagement among their employees.

Along these lines, Correia and Van Dierendonck (2014) show strong relationships between the leader's conduct and employees' wellbeing. Employees' enthusiasm can certainly be reinforced by leaders' differing degrees of supportiveness and openness. Due to its impact on employees' morale and behaviors, leadership is a crucial management tool; furthermore, some leadership styles are especially helpful in developing closer and more favorable relationships with the workforce (Hsiao *et al.*, 2015; Terglav *et al.*, 2016; Tuckey *et al.*, 2012). Moreover, better performance is generally achieved

when leaders prioritize their followers' job engagement, especially in customer-contact service contexts (Barnes and Collier, 2013). Certain management leadership styles can thus play a determining role in achieving employee empowerment and engagement among customer contact employees. Nevertheless, according to Owens *et al.* (2013), insights in the job engagement literature are not conclusive about what leadership approach best fosters engaged workers, and more empirical research is needed, especially in the hospitality literature (Karatepe and Olugbade, 2009).

Given the unique characteristics of work in hotels (changing shifts, work overload fluctuations due to seasonality, emotional labor, variability of service encounters depending on personal characteristics, etc.), managers need to thoroughly understand how to ensure that hospitality employees experience positive feelings at their workplace. Barnes and Collier (2013: 495), for example, indicate that “investigating the impact of leadership on work engagement represents a promising area of research.” This study responds to the call for further scholarly research on the influence of new leadership styles on employee outcomes (Hsiao *et al.*, 2015). This empirical research could help and inspire hospitality managers to display appropriate behaviors to influence employees' positive actions and emotions at work.

3.1.1. Purpose

New leadership theories infused with a more participatory philosophy have been proposed in the recent decades (Brownell, 2010). More specifically, in today's workplaces, servant, empowering, and paradoxical leadership styles are interesting management proposals particularly suitable for hospitality managers seeking to create *service environments*. Using Self-Determination Theory as a theoretical framework, this study designs and tests a research model that analyzes the effects of growing leadership styles on important employee outcomes for hospitality companies such as employee psychological empowerment and engagement. The findings of this research should provide the hospitality industry with a more detailed description of how and to what extent employees' positive psychological outcomes are associated with three emerging participatory leadership styles: paradoxical (Zhang *et al.*, 2015), servant (Liden *et al.*, 2015), and empowering (Zhang and Bartol, 2010).

This study has three main objectives: 1) First, it contributes to the emerging body of leadership literature by investigating three novel leadership approaches—paradoxical, empowering, and servant leadership—in hotel settings. 2) Second, it provides new insights into the construct of engagement by exploring some of its antecedents in Spanish hospitality organizations. 3) Finally, the findings of the study offer a useful starting point for practical, effective, and innovative leadership strategies in a sector characterized by traditional, autocratic styles.

In the sections to follow, the paper begins with a review of the literature on the topics to be studied, followed by the consequential development of hypotheses and an explanation of the conceptual research model (Figure 3.1). After the hypotheses are tested using survey data collected from a sample of customer contact hotel workers, the main results are discussed. The study concludes by highlighting its implications and limitations, and by identifying directions for future investigations.

3.2. Literature Review

3.2.1. Theoretical framework on engagement

Employee engagement has been defined as the satisfactory, decided, affective psychological work-related state of mind that drives employees actively to consecrate themselves emotionally, cognitively, and physically to the roles their job require (Schaufeli *et al.*, 2002). Schaufeli *et al.* (2002) describe engagement as employees experiencing *vigor* (willingness and determination to exert energy and effort in one's work), *dedication* (being devoted to and inspired by their job), and *absorption* (being completely focused on and immersed in the task). Engaged employees are self-assured about their capacity to accomplish the demands of their jobs.

Job engagement is not a momentary and situational state; it is conceived as an “employee's persistent and pervasive affective-cognitive” connection with work activities (Schaufeli *et al.*, 2002: 74). According to Kahn (1990: 700), engagement is “the simultaneous employment and expression of a person's *preferred self* in task behaviors that promote connections to work and to others, personal presence (physical, cognitive, and emotional), and active, full role performances.” Kahn (1990) identifies three such psychological conditions: safety, meaningfulness, and availability. For

Kahn, moments of personal engagement/disengagement at work are highly influenced by work contexts and personal variables.

3.2.2 Psychological empowerment

Conger and Kanungo (1988) and Thomas and Velthouse (1990) address the nature of empowerment as *experienced* by subordinates; they describe empowerment as a motivational process. Drawing on this prior research, Spreitzer (1995) defines psychological empowerment as a motivational construct: it is conceived as a work-related, experienced psychological state that reflects an active orientation to a work role. Psychological empowerment is manifested in four cognitions: *meaning* (value that employees assign to their jobs), *competence* (employees' conviction in their ability to perform their tasks skillfully), *self-determination* (perception of having some latitude), and *impact* (perception of achieving positive outcomes in accomplishing the purpose of a task).

The self-efficacy theory developed by Bandura (1977) has been traditionally described as one of the best frameworks for understanding employees experiencing psychological empowerment. Self-efficacy is the internal belief of having the capabilities and competence to successfully carry out the required courses of actions to achieve certain goals. Given its positive impact on the employee's intrinsic self-efficacy, theoretical arguments suggest that psychological empowerment can be critical for employee engagement to thrive.

3.2.2.1. Psychological empowerment and engagement

Psychological empowerment can be thus considered as an internal mechanism that may help to explain linkages between certain work factors and engagement (Quiñones *et al.*, 2013). Since empowered employees are confident about themselves and the work that they do, they are more likely to be engaged (Stander and Rothman, 2010). As reported by previous research, employees' feelings of empowerment lead them to feel motivated and engaged, while also experiencing more connection, commitment, and feelings of belongingness to their organization (Albrecht and Andretta, 2011; Macsinga *et al.*, 2015). Hence, psychologically empowered employees tend to be more engaged, given their increased levels of self-efficacy and competence.

According to Ryan and Deci's (2000) Self-Determination Theory (SDT), psychological empowerment is also “particularly suitable to understand motivation at the task level, potentially affecting engagement” (Correia and Van Dierendonck, 2014: 880). A few studies confirm psychological empowerment as a significant antecedent of work engagement (e.g., Jose and Mampilly, 2014; Macinga *et al.*, 2015; Quiñones *et al.*, 2013; Stander and Rothman, 2010). It is thereby hypothesized that, as employees become more empowered by their managers, they feel more capable and trusted, and they find their work more inspiring, significant, and rewarding. Accordingly, they become more dedicated, passionate, and immersed in their jobs—in sum, more engaged.

***Hypothesis 1.** Employees' psychological empowerment is positively related to employee engagement.*

3.2.3. Self-Determination Theory

The process by which increased motivation, employee enablement, and skill-development practices affect psychological empowerment and individual engagement can be explained by Ryan and Deci's (2000) SDT. This theory ascertains three innate psychological needs of all individuals: the need for *autonomy* (to participate in choices without external direction), *competence* (to perceive oneself as able to accomplish different enterprises), and *relatedness* (to be part of a collective involving care and mutual respect) (Ryan and Deci, 2000). Therefore, work-related factors and management practices that lead to the satisfaction of these needs will result in “intrinsic motivation, overall well-being, and positive work feelings” (Gardner *et al.*, 2011: 320). Hence, any managerial strategy or technique that strengthens employees' self-determination will in some way enhance their self-efficacy belief, making them feel more powerful and trusted; as a result, employees will be more engaged.

According to Murari and Gupta (2012), since the level of employees' empowerment in an organization depends on their managers' leadership style, different types of leadership impact employees' psychological empowerment differently. Empowering, servant, and paradoxical leadership styles involve managerial practices that in one way or another enhance SDT basic needs, such as competence and autonomy. It is

thus expected that these leadership approaches result in employees' experiencing more psychological empowerment and being more engaged.

3.2.4. *Empowering leadership*

The empowering leadership style involves managers giving their staff more power and freedom of choice in decisions. Following the conceptualization of Ahearne *et al.*, (2005), an empowering leadership approach creates conditions that foster employee participation by promoting decision making and reducing bureaucratic constraints. Empowering leaders show confidence in employees' competences and capabilities, allowing further opportunities and responsibility in the workplace. They normally set participatory goals and foster autonomy, while also promoting self-development of the workforce by fostering autonomous behaviors such as self-leadership and self-regulation, and by delegating authority (Ahearne *et al.*, 2005; Bester *et al.*, 2015).

Previous research shows a strong correlation between managers' empowering leadership behavior and employees' level of psychological empowerment in different contexts and countries, for example, among manufacturers in South Africa (Bester *et al.*, 2015), workers in a chemical products company (De Klerk and Stander, 2014), a midsize R&D organization in the U.S. (Lorinkova and Perry, 2014), and a large information technology company in China (Zhang and Bartol, 2010). Namasivayam *et al.* (2014) also found evidence associating empowering leadership with psychological empowerment in their sample of restaurant frontline employees in the US. Hence, prior studies illustrate how empowering leadership exerts a direct influence on psychological empowerment.

For Conger and Kanungo (1988), participatory management plays a pivotal role in creating certain psychological states in the employee. Tuckey *et al.* (2012) state that empowering leadership creates the right work environment to boost employee self-management by teaching employees self-leadership skills. Moreover, the main aim of any empowering process is to improve employees' belief in their personal self-efficacy. It is thus expected that empowering leadership positively influences the psychological empowerment experienced by subordinates, as stated in the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2. *Managers' empowering leadership is positively related to employees' psychological empowerment.*

Leaders strongly influence employees' work experience and psychological well-being. De Klerk and Stander (2014) found strong associations between empowering leadership, psychological empowerment, and engagement. When employees perceive that managers have an empowering leadership style, they will feel empowered. Such feelings of psychological empowerment will lead to feelings of connections and belongingness to their organization and their jobs, resulting in employees being more engaged (Albrecht and Andretta, 2011).

Specifically, since empowering leadership has the effect of optimizing working conditions for engagement, this style directly inspires work engagement in followers Tuckey *et al.* (2012). This enabling leadership style thus facilitates the motivational processes that underpin employee work engagement; when employees perceive that their manager is giving them power, autonomy, and authority, they will feel trusted and more capable, and consequently will be more enthusiastic when performing work-related tasks and will be more engrossed in their work. It is thus hypothesized that managerial practices' emphasis on employees' autonomy and self-determination - as is the case in empowering leadership - is likely to prioritize employee attention and yield feelings of engagement. If leadership practices that foster autonomy and discretion among the employees lead to increased level of engagement, empowering leadership is expected to be positively associated with employee engagement, as indicated by Hypothesis 3.

***Hypothesis 3.** Managers' empowering leadership is positively related to employee engagement.*

3.2.5. Paradoxical leadership

Paradox theory helps to shed light on the nature and management of opposing requests in organizations. Paradoxical leader behavior responds to new and seemingly contradictory inquiries that managers must currently face. Outside the conventional managerial duties, a paradoxical leader establishes a balance between mutually exclusive assumptions or conditions in the workplace which are nevertheless deeply interrelated and may even coexist (Lewis *et al.*, 2014). Paradoxical leadership is defined as the seemingly competing, yet interrelated, behaviors displayed by the leaders "to meet structural and follower demands simultaneously and over time" (Zhang *et al.*,

2015: 538). They integrate both organizational and individual solutions harmoniously and simultaneously.

Only through paradoxical leadership can conflicting poles be united successfully. Managers following the paradoxical leadership approach maintain decision control while allowing autonomy (Zhang *et al.*, 2015). For example, they normally control important work issues and make final important decisions but, at the same time, allow subordinates to handle other smaller issues and work details. They do not *micromanage*, but allow employees full control of specific work processes. While maintaining overall control, these leaders give subordinates appropriate autonomy and latitude. Paradoxical leaders thus allow others to share the leadership role in some aspects of the daily work.

Further, paradoxical leaders empower their followers while keeping control, combining both autonomy and discipline in the way they manage their teams. In fact, paradoxical leaders might “maintain long-term control precisely by continuously granting employees the discretion to bend the rules” (Lewis *et al.*, 2014; Zhang *et al.*, 2015: 541). As this leadership provides some degree of discretion and freedom of choice to employees, it is expected that paradoxical leadership will influence employees’ feeling of psychological empowerment:

***Hypothesis 4.** Managers’ paradoxical leadership is positively related to employees’ psychological empowerment.*

In hospitality organizations, frontline employees sometimes experience *role conflict* in dealing with opposing components of paradoxes at work. For example, the company policies make employees follow standardized *corporate behavior* while at the same time continuously requiring the staff to *customize the service* to each client individually. This may cause confusion, frustration, and lack of motivation among employees. For this reason, and given the peculiarities and uncertainty of service encounters, paradoxical leadership can be a good way to manage workers in hospitality. Under the paradoxical leadership approach, managers stress conformity in task performance but allow for exceptions.

Moreover, paradoxical leaders’ behavior represents a good example for employees because these leaders must also consider opposing viewpoints together and integrate them over time. For example, on the one hand, subordinates expect their line managers

to grant them discretion in delivering guest service; on the other, the organization expects the line manager to supervise and control processes. Paradoxical leadership can thus deal effectively with workplace tensions or contradictions, embracing two possible alternatives at the same time and integrating them as a pair. Supervisors' paradoxical leadership behaviors thus serve as a good role model to show employees how to accept and embrace contradictions in complex environments. As a result, employees learn to fulfill complicated and even ambivalent requirements.

Further, a paradoxical leader's example will teach employees the ability to respond to the differing expectations of different customers, to be more interpersonally flexible. With paradoxical leader behavior as role model, subordinates learn to be more versatile and open to varied possibilities, an experience that contributes to expanding their holistic understanding. Consequently, followers will be more likely to be adaptive and proactive, and will work proficiently, exploring new ways to fulfill their daily job requirements (Zhang *et al.*, 2015). As a result, employees will feel more capable and enthused at work.

Furthermore, paradoxical leaders adapt their commands to the aptitude, strengths, and capabilities of each subordinate and regulate their expectations to the heterogeneity of each situation, while still assigning equal workloads. They also adjust their behavior to the need of their different team members, while keeping homogeneous standards for all. Subsequently, employees see themselves as more task capable and interactively skilled, becoming in turn more dedicated and eager at work and, as hypothesized in H5, more engaged:

***Hypothesis 5.** Managers' paradoxical leadership is positively related to employee engagement.*

3.2.6. *Servant leadership*

Recent research has identified servant leadership as “the next step in leadership evolution” in the hospitality industry (Brownell, 2010: 363). The servant leadership philosophy was introduced by Greenleaf (1970). In his classic essay, he outlines the importance of prioritizing support for employees, as well as their comfort and development.

A servant leader is an individual who improves his/her followers' necessities, self-concept, beliefs, and values, through firstly setting an example of high moral standards, integrity, kindheartedness, and dedication. Servant leaders believe in ethical utilization of power and encourage participant behaviors that enhance work performance (Liden *et al.*, 2015).

Research has demonstrated that servant leadership has a positive influence on employee behavior because it fulfills some of the workers' psychological needs (Hsiao *et al.*, 2015). In this line, Murari and Gupta (2012) highlight that some characteristics of servant leadership (foresight, persuading, awareness, and stewardship) are very important for employee empowerment, finding a strong significant correlation between servant leadership and empowerment in their study. Servant leadership emphasizes collaboration and the ethical use of power, enabling more autonomy and decision making in employees. Servant leaders include followers' input into important managerial decisions. As a result, followers feel that a significant part of the business' success is their responsibility.

Servant leaders' behavior increases employees' self-determination and self-efficacy levels by providing them with autonomy, empowerment, and the conditions in which to grow and develop. Followers consequently gain more self-confidence and conviction in their ability to perform well. Moreover, servant leadership has been demonstrated to be a particularly effective employee-centered leadership approach through which leaders support and empower subordinates (Liden *et al.*, 2014). As servant leadership brings out employees' full potential, it is expected to influence employees' psychological empowerment. Based on the foregoing discussion, servant leadership is expected to increase the psychological empowerment of individual employees by positively influencing their psychological states.

***Hypothesis 6.** Managers' servant leadership is positively related to employees' psychological empowerment.*

As Liden *et al.* (2015: 254) state, servant leadership is portrayed as a desirable approach to leadership "in response to the increasing need for employee engagement", as well as "societal demands for higher levels of ethical behavior in organizations". Servant leaders are altruistic and normally create value for others, both inside and outside the organization; this behavior instills positive energy among their followers. Overcoming

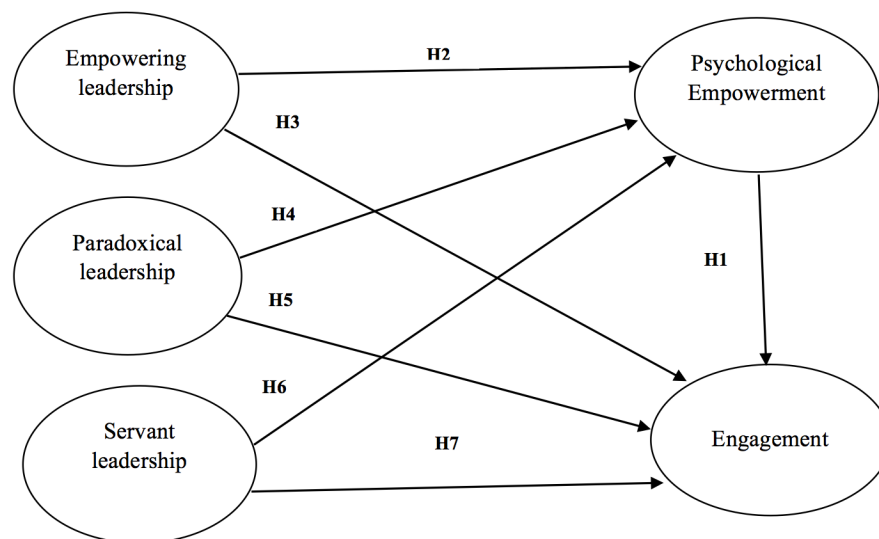
their self-interest, servant leaders prioritize serving their followers before attending to their own needs. This type of leader notices their subordinates' needs and desires by the way of personalized attention and takes on a key role in ensuring fairness while focusing on helping others.

Servant leaders enable their workers to experience personal efficacy by fostering conditions for strengthening motivation to complete tasks. When employees perceive servant behaviors from their managers, they feel less constrained and are more likely to expect success, consequently feeling more enthusiastic and emotionally attached to their work.

Servant leaders express humility, authenticity, and interpersonal acceptance (Murari and Gupta, 2012). According to Owens *et al.* (2013: 1533), “humble leaders foster learning-oriented teams and engaged employees, as well as job satisfaction and employee retention”. Prior research (e.g., Correia and Van Dierendonck, 2014) also shows that servant leadership enhances employee engagement in service companies. Servant leaders promote conditions for *psychological safety*, one of the necessary conditions signaled by Kahn (1990) for employees to engage at work. It is thus hypothesized that servant leadership positively affects employee engagement.

Hypothesis 7. *Managers' servant leadership is positively related to employees' engagement.*

Figure 3.1. Research Model



3.2.7. Research model

Drawing on the theory and empirical evidence previously detailed, this study theorizes that paradoxical leadership, empowering leadership, and servant leadership are related to employee psychological empowerment and employee engagement. The research model that integrates the hypothesized relationships is depicted in Figure 3.1. The model proposes that employees' perceptions of empowering, paradoxical, and servant leadership styles in their managers are positively related to both psychological empowerment and job engagement levels in employees. Data from a cross-sectional survey and structural equation modelling were used to provide an indicative assessment of the model.

3.3. Material and Methods

3.3.1. Sample and data collection

A three-section survey questionnaire was developed to measure the hotel employees' perceptions. Multi-item scales from previous research were used, and some measures were adapted to the hospitality context. Since the data were not collected in an English-speaking country, the steps for back-translation proposed by Brislin (1980) were followed. Conventional translation and back-translation were performed by two Spanish bilingual academics and two bilingual professionals independently to ensure equivalence of meaning and translation accuracy. Foreign references, uncommon words, and errors due to cultural differences were eliminated. Prior to final administration, and to ensure comprehensibility of the questionnaire, a pretest with the final translated versions of the measures was conducted on a pilot sample of 12 hotel employees. The questionnaire was revised to clarify ambiguous wording and to include clearer definitions of some words and expressions.

Data were collected over a three-month period (from July to September 2015) from a sample of hotel workers in three of the most important tourist destination cities in Spain. The target population of this study was limited to full-time customer contact employees who had intense interactions with customers—face-to-face or voice-to-voice (e.g., concierges, reservations agents, staff from the front desk department, etc.). Following Karatepe's (2013) suggestions, hotel managers were not involved in

the data collection process. The data were gathered directly from the employees by approaching them face-to-face at their workplace.

A week before survey administration, a formal e-mail invitation was circulated to the sample hotels. The e-mail presented the researchers and the aims of the study, and outlined confidentiality procedures. Later, a paper-based self-completion survey was administered in person to the hotel employees who had agreed to participate in the study. Each questionnaire included a cover letter explaining the objectives of the study and informing the participants that any data they provided would be treated confidentially and that no personal data would be reported. The survey was anonymous to encourage participation and avoid positive bias in responses. 340 individuals volunteered to participate in this study and completed and returned the survey in a closed envelope. The envelopes were collected personally by the research team at each hotel setting. The respondents were not compensated for their role in the research but were given the option to receive the results of the study.

Although data were gathered from a convenience sample of 340 hotel workers, the sample is quite representative of the diversity of the hospitality industry in terms of star-rating (11 one-star, 21 two-star, 105 three-star, 145 four-star, and 47 five-star hotels) and management strategy (39.5% independently managed, 60.5% belonging to hotel chains) (Mansour *et al.*, 2016). Due to non-completion or missing data, 11 questionnaires were discarded, following the *listwise deletion* procedure outlined by Hair *et al.* (2006). Of the 329 respondents who provided complete surveys, 193 were men (58.7%); 78.1% had completed university education; 42.8% were 21-30 years of age; and 39.8% were 31-40. These employees were largely non-managers (76.6%), and their average tenure in the company was 6 years (SD=7.36 years).

3.3.2. Measures

Up-to-date scales, recently developed in the management literature to measure new leader behaviors, were employed in this study. Respondents rated their agreement with items using a Likert scale ranging from (1) *totally disagree* to (7) *totally agree*. All scales used this 7-point Likert response format.

Engagement was measured with the 9-item shortened version of the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES-9, Schaufeli *et al.*, 2002; Schaufeli and Baker, 2003). Each

facet of engagement—absorption (e.g., “I feel happy when I am working intensely”), dedication (e.g., “My job inspires me”), and vigor— was appraised with three items. The Cronbach’s alpha for the engagement scale was .93.

Psychological empowerment. Spreitzer’s (1995) scale was used to operationalize psychological empowerment (e.g., “I can decide on my own how to go about doing my work”). The 12-item scale consists of four dimensions: meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact. The Cronbach’s alpha for the scale was .90.

Empowering leadership. The research utilized the measure of empowering leadership developed by Ahearne *et al.* (2005). This 12-item measure has multi-item subscales corresponding to four dimensions: (1) enhancing the meaningfulness of work, (2) fostering participation in decision making, (3) expressing confidence in high performance, and (4) providing autonomy from bureaucratic constraints. The Cronbach’s alpha coefficient for the scale in this study was .95.

Paradoxical leadership. The research employed the measure of paradoxical leadership developed by Zhang *et al.* (2015). This 22-item scale has five subscales that correspond to its five dimensions: (1) treating subordinates uniformly while allowing individualization, (2) combining self-centeredness with other-centeredness, (3) maintaining decision control while allowing autonomy, (4) enforcing work requirements while allowing flexibility, and (5) maintaining both distance and closeness. Therefore, high levels of paradoxical leadership behavior imply the degree to which leaders connect and embrace two paradoxical poles consistently. The Cronbach’s alpha coefficient for the scale in this study was .94.

Servant leadership. The short version of the servant leadership scale (SL-7), recently refined by Liden *et al.* (2015), was used to measure employees’ perceptions of their managers’ servant leadership style. It consisted of 7 items (e.g., “My supervisor puts my best interests ahead of his/her own”) representing a single construct of servant leadership style. The Cronbach’s alpha for the scale was .87.

Control variables. Two employee characteristics were used as control variables: gender (1 = female, 2 = male) and education level, because both factors have been shown to relate to engagement (Macsinga *et al.*, 2015; Quiñones *et al.*, 2013). Education was measured using a 4-point scale: middle school or less (1), high school or equivalent

(2), college degree (3), postgraduate studies (4). Higher scores indicated a higher level of education.

3.3.3. Data-analysis strategy

The IBM Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software, version 22, and EQS 6.2 (Bentler and Wu, 2005; Byrne, 2013) were employed to analyze the questionnaire data. Schumacker and Lomax (2004) recommend a two-step procedure: (1) evaluate the measurement model to ensure its fit (and confirm discriminant and convergent validity); and (2) examine the full model to evaluate predictive validity. EQS 6.2 software was used to evaluate the measurement model, as well as the structural model. Since the multivariate normality test showed non-normality of the data (Mardia's coefficient=138.443; t -value=46.792), the robust maximum likelihood ML estimation method was applied (Bentler and Bonett, 1980).

3.4. Results

3.4.1. Assessment of psychometric properties of the measures

To assess the measurements' psychometric properties, the sample was first analyzed through exploratory factor analysis (EFA) to delineate appropriate factor structure, followed by confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) of those results. Farrell and Rudd (2009: 5) recommend conducting both types of analysis: "Instead of only conducting a CFA, researchers should first conduct EFA to identify cross-loading items (i.e., for subsequent removal from the analysis if necessary)."

Exploratory Factor Analysis. - An EFA of principal components was performed using SPSS v.22 for each set of questions determined *ex-ante* to represent each construct. The items with loadings over 0.4 on more than one construct or that loaded on a factor that made no sense were eliminated (items Svl1, Svl6, Svl7 on the Servant Leadership scale and Pdxso1, Pdxso2, Pdxrf2 and Pdxdc1 measuring Paradoxical Leadership). After all measurement instruments were defined, another factor analysis was performed to verify the results. The factors obtained were consistent with previous expectations.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis. – To test the rigor of the psychometric characteristics of all variables, CFA was conducted to examine convergent and discriminant validity. The measurement model was thus evaluated (Gerbing and Anderson, 1988). Measurement results are reported in Table 3.A1 of the Appendix.

The convergent validity of a measure is the internal consistency of multiple dimensions for each construct. The scales' reliability was evaluated using the composite reliability statistics (CR), average variance extracted (AVE), and Alpha Cronbach (Hair *et al.*, 2006). The CR statistics of the constructs surpassed the recommended threshold of 0.70, and the AVE statistics took values over 0.5, as shown in Table 3.A1 (Bagozzi and Yi, 1988; Fornell and Larcker, 1981). The Alpha Cronbach coefficients measure the internal consistency of the constructs. Cronbach's reliabilities for all scales were also above the recommended threshold of 0.80 (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1978). Thus, as confirmed in Table 3.A1, all measures consistently indicated the scales' internal consistency and reliability.

A CFA was also developed to demonstrate multidimensionality and goodness of fit of the second-order constructs used in the model. The measurement model for the second-order constructs obtained acceptable fit indicators, as summarized in Table 3.1.

Discriminant validity at construct level was evaluated in accordance with Voorhees *et al.* (2016). First, the approach developed by Fornell and Larcker (1981) was used, which involves comparing the square root of the AVE with the correlations between constructs. The square root of the AVE appears on the main diagonal of Table 3.2 and is greater than the correlations between constructs. The results demonstrate the presence of discriminant validity among the constructs used in the model. Second, the HTMT ratio (Henseler *et al.*, 2015) was calculated for each pair of constructs. As Table 3.3 shows, the HTMT ratio is lower than 0.85 for each pair of constructs, also indicating the presence of discriminant validity.

To determine the relationships between the variables, Pearson's correlation coefficient was calculated. Table 3.2 presents the means, standard deviations, and correlations for all study variables. The study results confirm a close correlation between the variables, with psychological empowerment and engagement having the strongest linear association ($r = 0.69$ and $p < 0.001$). All independent variables (leadership

behaviors) correlated significantly with the dimensions of psychological empowerment and engagement.

Table 3.1. CFA of Second-Order Constructs

Factors	Standardized parameters	t-values	R ²	Scale reliability
Empowering Leadership				
E.L. Meaningfulness	0.799	a	0.639	CR:0.918
E.L. Participation	0.919	17.132	0.844	AVE: 0.738
E.L. Confidence	0.792	10.834	0.627	α : 0.946
E.L. Autonomy	0.918	13.327	0.843	
CFI 0.967; NFI 0.950; IFI 0.968; GFI 0.904; AGFI 0.902; RMSEA 0.057				
Paradoxical Leadership				
P.L. Treating uniformly/ individualization	0.767	a	0.588	
P.L. Self-centeredness/ other-centeredness	0.906	15.620	0.820	CR:0.920
P.L. Decision control/ autonomy	0.865	13.752	0.749	AVE: 0.700
P.L. Enforcing work requirements/ flexibility	0.910	10.482	0.829	α : 0.940
P.L. Distance/ Closeness	0.716	24.004	0.512	
CFI 0.946; NFI 0.902; IFI 0.947; GFI 0.910; AGFI 0.900; RMSEA 0.056				
Psychological empowerment				
P.E. Meaning	0.798	a	0.597	CR:0.836
P.E. Competence	0.711	26.424	0.505	AVE: 0.561
P.E. Self-determination	0.736	30.676	0.551	α : 0.904
P.E. Impact	0.748	11.993	0.560	
CFI 0.957; NFI 0.934; IFI 0.957; GFI 0.905; AGFI 0.900; RMSEA 0.060				
Engagement				
E. Vigor	0.925	a	0.855	CR:0.935
E. Dedication	0.981	18.740	0.962	AVE: 0.828
E. Absorption	0.816	17.683	0.665	α : 0.928
CFI 0.957; NFI 0.945; IFI 0.958; GFI 0.917; AGFI 0.907; RMSEA 0.052				

¹a indicates that the parameter was set at 1.0. If a different parameter is set at 1.0, however, the indicator of the scale is also statistically significant.

Table 3.2. Correlation Matrix

	1x	2x	3x	4x	5	Mean	S.D.
1.Engagement	0.91					5.09	1.27
2.Psychological empowerment	0.69**	0.75				5.55	0.99
3.Empowering leadership	0.58**	0.61**	0.86			4.81	1.42
4.Paradoxical leadership	0.49**	0.40**	0.67**	0.84		4.76	1.27
5.Servant leadership	0.48**	0.35**	0.71**	0.61**	0.83	3.63	1.64

Diagonal elements (bold figures) are the square root of the AVE (the variance shared between the constructs and their measures).

** significant at a significance level of 0.01 (2-tailed).

Notes: Composite scores for each variable were computed by averaging scores across items representing that variable.

S.D. =standard deviation

3.4.2 Common method

Since all measures were self-reported, the potential for common method bias was also evaluated by adopting a series of procedural measures before collecting the data (Podsakoff *et al.*, 2003). For example, independent and dependent variables were arranged so as not to replicate the order of the hypotheses (Terglav *et al.*, 2016), making it unlikely that respondents would intuit the specific research model. Besides, if the research question is not known, respondents are less able to manipulate their responses to satisfy expectations about the relationships assumed. Furthermore, only established scales were used, and different instructions and filler items were included to create a psychological separation between the sets of variables (Alfes *et al.*, 2013).

Statistical analysis of common method bias was also conducted based on Harman's one-factor test (Podsakoff and Organ, 1986), which showed that seventeen factors are present, only 20.185% of the variance is explained by the first factor, and the rest of the variance is explained through balanced distribution across the other factors. This result suggests that common method bias is not an issue (Podsakoff and Organ, 1986). We also included a common latent variable in the model that was comprised of all items in the questionnaire (Podsakoff *et al.*, 2003) and followed Matzler *et al.* (2016) in comparing the substantial variance with the method variance. The average substantively explained variance of the indicators is 0.678, while the average method-based variance is 0.007 – a ratio of 96.857:1-. Furthermore, most method factor loadings were not significant. Given the small magnitude of the method variance, method bias is unlikely to be a serious concern in this study.

Table 3.3. HTMT ratio

	SVL	ELWME	ELWPA	ELWCF	ELWAU	PDXUI	PDXSO	PDXCA	PDXRF	PDXDC	POWMEA	POWCOM	POWDET	POWIMP	ENGVI	ENGDE	ENGAB
SVL																	
ELWME	0,467																
ELWPA	0,389	0,661															
ELWCF	0,307	0,383	0,543														
ELWAU	0,255	0,465	0,580	0,598													
PDXUI	0,435	0,561	0,469	0,320	0,360												
PDXSO	0,375	0,552	0,548	0,323	0,458	0,599											
PDXCA	0,481	0,552	0,499	0,329	0,457	0,559	0,587										
PDXRF	0,336	0,391	0,441	0,245	0,404	0,397	0,467	0,510									
PDXDC	0,318	0,393	0,386	0,210	0,414	0,505	0,518	0,487	0,452								
POWMEA	0,229	0,296	0,364	0,231	0,241	0,281	0,244	0,244	0,190	0,254							
POWCOM	0,095	0,044	0,181	0,306	0,218	0,128	0,300	0,400	0,132	0,350	0,318						
POWDET	0,108	0,270	0,361	0,378	0,527	0,257	0,292	0,287	0,229	0,192	0,328	0,363					
POWIMP	0,195	0,342	0,479	0,442	0,451	0,281	0,287	0,246	0,262	0,105	0,310	0,220	0,488				
ENGVI	0,301	0,411	0,464	0,346	0,396	0,349	0,311	0,258	0,341	0,284	0,544	0,261	0,380	0,373			
ENGDE	0,350	0,447	0,462	0,256	0,374	0,374	0,372	0,301	0,355	0,332	0,628	0,189	0,372	0,342	0,599		
ENGAB	0,275	0,354	0,408	0,253	0,333	0,256	0,315	0,294	0,290	0,253	0,578	0,227	0,362	0,304	0,537	0,514	

Note: SVL: Servant Leadership; ELW: Empowering leadership; PDX: Paradoxical leadership; POW: Psychological empowerment; ENG: Engagement.

3.4.3. Fit of the structural model

The analytical methodology followed is based on confirmatory modeling. This method consists of specifying a model whose relationships have been established according to theory and using structural equation modelling (SEM) to evaluate its statistical significance.

To evaluate the study hypotheses, the overall fit of the proposed model was analyzed. The global fit indices of the structural model indicate that the theoretical model tested fits the sample data well (Bollen, 2014) (Chi square= 514.028; $p < 0.001$; IFI=0.935; NNFI=0.921; CFI=0.934; RMSEA=0.05; see Table 3.4.). This finding suggests that the equations that define the model are a good representation of the data. Further, following the recommendation of Riedl *et al.* (2014), the statistical power was calculated for the structural equations model using the approach of MacCallum *et al.* (1996). A value of 0.84 (for $\epsilon_0 = 0.05$; $\epsilon_a = 0.08$) was obtained, which falls between 0.8 and 1, confirming the validity and reliability of the results.

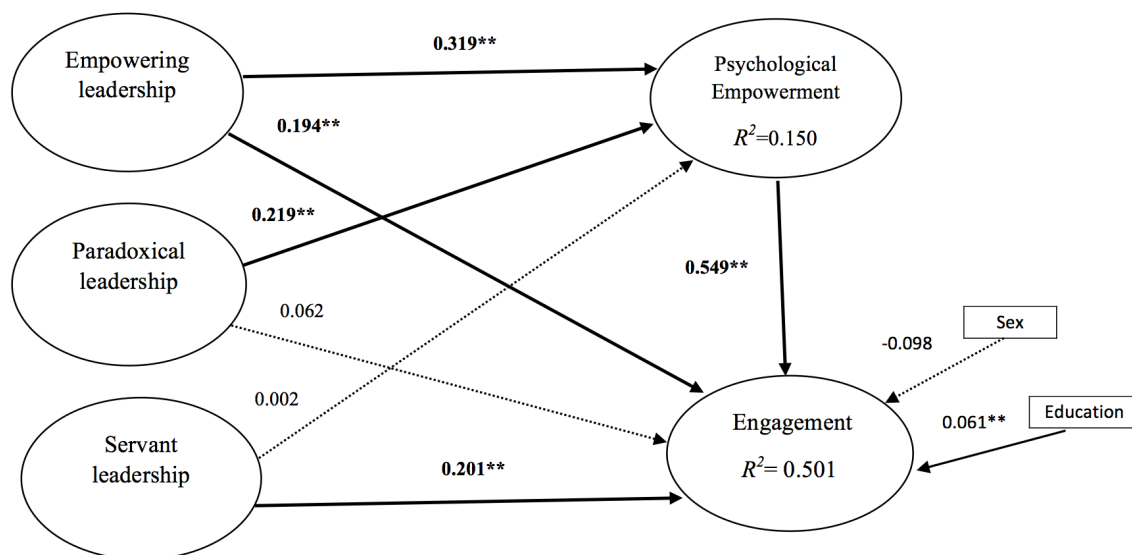
Table 3.4. Fit of the structural model

Measures	Acceptance levels	Result of the model
Measures of Absolute Fit		
Chi-Square	High, low	514.028 ($p < 0.001$)
Goodness of Fit Index (GFI)	> 0.9	0.904
Root Mean Square Residual (RMSR)	Close to 0	0.028
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)	< 0.09	0.05
Measures of Incremental Fit		
Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI)	>0.9	0.902
Normed Fit Index (NFI)	>0.9	0.908
Non-Normed Fit Index (NNFI)	>0.9	0.921
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	>0.9	0.934
Incremental Fit Index (IFI)	>0.9	0.935

3.4.4. Hypothesis Testing

Figure 3.2 shows the estimation values of the standardized coefficients for the representative parameters of each hypothesis, as well as their respective significance levels.

Figure 3.2. Structural equation model



$N=329$ ** $p < .01$ Chi square= 512.028; $p < 0.001$; IFI=0,935; NNFI=0.921; CFI=0.934; RMSEA=0.05

According to the results of SEM, a positive relationship exists between psychological empowerment and engagement, as predicted. The path coefficient from psychological empowerment to engagement was positive and significant ($\beta = .549, p < 0.01$). Hence, Hypothesis 1 is supported.

Hypothesis 2 anticipated that the manager’s empowering leadership style would be positively associated with psychological empowerment, and Hypothesis 3 predicted that the manager’s empowering leadership would be positively related to employee engagement. Hypotheses 2 and 3 both received empirical support. Specifically, the results in Figure 3.2 show that both direct effects of empowering leadership, on psychological empowerment ($\beta = .319, p < 0.01$) and job engagement ($\beta = .194, p < 0.01$) respectively, were significant and positive.

The results also indicated that paradoxical leadership is positively associated with psychological empowerment ($\beta = .219, p < 0.01$), supporting Hypothesis 4. Nevertheless, the expected relationship between paradoxical leadership and engagement was not significant, providing no support for Hypothesis 5.

Hypotheses 6 and 7 predicted the positive influence of servant leadership on psychological empowerment and on engagement, respectively. Hypothesis 6 was rejected, whereas the results support H7. Specifically, servant leadership has no significant effect on employees' feeling of psychological empowerment but exerts a positive effect on employees' engagement ($\beta = .201, p < 0.01$).

In sum, the suitability of this model to analyze the effects of different leadership styles on engagement is reinforced by the relatively high explained variance obtained for engagement ($R^2 = .501$). This engagement variance is explained by empowering leadership ($\beta = .194$), servant leadership ($\beta = .201$), and psychological empowerment ($\beta = .549$). Results also reveal a moderate explained variance of psychological empowerment ($R^2 = .150$), obtained thanks to the effects received from paradoxical leadership ($\beta = .219$) and empowering leadership ($\beta = .319$). Although there is no influence of servant leadership on psychological empowerment, this leadership style still has a significant direct effect on job engagement ($\beta = .201$).

Mediation analysis

Following Zhang *et al.* (2010), for better interpretation of the relationships among the variables in the hypothesized model, it is advisable to conduct decomposition of effects, as this procedure provides fuller understanding of the direct and indirect. Thus, the direct, indirect, and total effects of each type of leadership on engagement were estimated (following the procedure outlined by Zhao *et al.* 2010). In addition, 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals were calculated with SPSS v.22. The bootstrapping approach recommended by Preacher and Hayes (2008), and Hayes (2013) was adopted with 5000 bootstrap resamples. According to Hayes (2013) and Zhao *et al.* (2010), a mediating effect is significant if the confidence interval for the indirect effect does not include zero.

Table 3.5. Mediation Analysis

Leadership style	Estimate	T-statistic	p-level	95% Bc CI
Empowering Leadership				
Direct effect Empowering Leadership → Engagement	0.194	3.719	0.05	0.190 – 0.254
Indirect effect Empowering Leadership → Engagement	0.175	2.881	0.05	0.142 – 0.203
Total effect Empowering Leadership → Engagement	0.369	6.600	0.05	0.351 – 0.454
Paradoxical Leadership				
Direct effect Paradoxical Leadership → Engagement	0.062	1.152	n.s.	-0.012 – 0.125
Indirect effect Paradoxical Leadership → Engagement	0.120	2.303	0.05	0.047 – 0.187
Total effect Paradoxical Leadership → Engagement	0.182	2.942	0.05	0.103 – 0.243
Servant Leadership				
Direct effect Servant Leadership → Engagement	0.201	4.015	0.05	0.171 – 0.237
Indirect effect Servant Leadership → Engagement	0.002	0.001	n.s.	-0.027 – 0.035
Total effect Servant Leadership → Engagement	0.203	4.074	0.05	0.139 – 0.276

“Specific indirect effects represent the portion of the total effect that works through a single intervening variable” (Zhang *et al.*, 2010: 118). The results in Table 3.5 show that the indirect effect of paradoxical leadership on job engagement through psychological empowerment was significant and positive (indirect effect $\beta = .12$, $t = 2.30$, $p < 0.05$). The effects decomposition also obtained a coefficient (β) of .18 ($p < 0.05$) for the indirect effect of empowering leadership on job engagement through psychological empowerment, which accounted for 47.43 percent of the total effect of empowering leadership.

3.5. Discussion and Conclusions

In the hospitality industry, prompt action is often required at the frontline level to provide good service. For this reason, the inability or unwillingness of customer-contact employees to respond quickly to service contingencies may result in

unsatisfactory service encounters. Empowerment represents a promising solution in hospitality organizations, since it *empowers* employees, enabling them to make decisions to achieve successful service recovery and, in turn, satisfaction and retention of customers. In hotel settings, providing outstanding service sometimes indeed requires *departing from the script*. In line with Baum's (2015) recommendations, companies should empower their front-line workforce to make decisions without reference to the supervisory and managerial hierarchy. The present research findings especially advocate empowering and paradoxical leadership behaviors for employees to experience psychological empowerment in hotel settings.

The results of the present study also extend previous research by pointing to psychological empowerment as a clear antecedent of job engagement in hospitality. Only a few studies (Jose and Mampilly, 2014; Macsinga *et al.*, 2015; Quiñones *et al.*, 2013) anticipated this positive association: that experiencing meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact at work (i.e., psychological empowerment) improves employees' engagement. Engaged employees display engrossed effort and show more energy and enthusiasm at work, achieving better performance and providing excellent service (Alfes *et al.*, 2013). For this reason, many service organizations and practitioners are placing greater emphasis on identifying ways to raise the level of engagement among their employees. According to the study results, the employee's gender is not a determining factor in his/her experience of engagement, but education level is. It seems logical that more educated employees in hospitality are more skilled when performing their jobs and tend to feel more pride and enthusiasm about their own performance.

This study suggests that achieving engaged employees in hotel businesses requires managerial tools that foster psychological empowerment. In this line, empowering leadership is found to be a key leadership style for hospitality managers, given its strong and positive influence on customer-contact staff. When employees perceive that their managers have an empowering style of leadership, they are more prone to feeling empowered and engaged in their jobs. These results are consistent with prior research (Albrecht and Andretta, 2011; Tuckey *et al.*, 2012). *Staff-enabling* actions such as providing autonomy, encouraging employee participation, expressing confidence in workers' performance, and helping employees to understand the importance of their work are essential actions for leaders to perform, not only to enhance psychological empowerment but also to increase engagement levels among

hospitality workers. Since each service encounter is different in service organizations due to people's heterogeneity, many unexpected contingencies that arise during service delivery can be resolved promptly and satisfactorily by frontline employees if their managers enable them to use their professional judgment and discretion at work. This latitude and responsibility will make employees feel more capable, more enthused, and more dedicated at work—in sum, more engaged.

Furthermore, like the findings of De Klerk and Stander (2014), the results in this study confirm the indirect effect of psychological empowerment on the relationship between empowering leadership and job engagement. This effect implies that managers' increased empowering leadership behaviors will result in higher levels of employees' psychological empowerment in hospitality organizations, which will, in turn, raise employees' job engagement. When leaders empower their followers by delegating responsibility, sharing information as well as power, and encouraging autonomous action, they heighten follower self-efficacy, increasing their employees' level of engagement.

Evidence was also found of the positive relationship between paradoxical leadership and psychological empowerment. Managers following paradoxical behavior leadership approach grant autonomy while simultaneously preserving decision control. Although enforcing work requirements and setting the same standards for all, this type of leader is flexible and allows for exceptions (Zhang *et al.*, 2015). When managing their staff, such managers maintain both distance and closeness, achieving a perfect combination of self-centeredness and other-centeredness to share the leadership role in some aspects of the daily work. Thus, when leaders engage in paradoxical behavior, hotel employees feel trusted; they feel that they are being given freedom to resolve work issues by using their creative personal judgment; in other words, they feel empowered.

Contrary to expectations, paradoxical leadership was not found to be related to employee engagement in the hotel staff sample surveyed. This result can be explained because, traditionally, hospitality organizations in Spain have had very hierarchical and autocratic structures. In such tightly structured contexts, unconventional approaches to work problems are not popular. In fact, paradoxical leadership style works better in organizations with organic structures than in organizations with mechanistic structures characterized by higher-level authorities (Zhang *et al.*, 2015). Consequently, it is possible that the employees surveyed in this study are not yet

ready cognitively to identify the benefits of paradoxical mindsets in their leaders. On the contrary, some employees may even perceive those paradoxical behaviors as ambiguous management moves and thus be confused about their superiors' real intentions. Such ambiguous signals could raise suspicion among employees rather than engage them.

The study also produced some compelling findings in its examination of the association between the servant leadership and job engagement: employees who perceive that their managers are displaying servant leadership are more prone to be engaged in their jobs. This finding can be explained by drawing on Liden and colleagues (2015), who note that servant leaders normally stimulate strong relationships with followers and encourage employee enthusiasm and dedication. Moreover, servant leaders motivate their followers by helping them to realize their full potential, as well as by paying attention to their needs. Employees frequently see this type of leader as a role model and normally display positive and ethical behaviors at work in return (Greenleaf, 1970).

Servant leadership was not significantly related to psychological empowerment among hospitality employees in the present study. This result differs from that of Correia and Van Dierendonck (2014), who find that servant leaders enable workers to participate in organizational processes and to become agents of change, inducing greater levels of psychological empowerment. One possible explanation for this difference is that the effectiveness of a leadership style is contingent upon the sector, cultural context, and momentum of the organization. For example, Humphreys (2005) postulates that servant leadership may be more applicable in contexts of stability and less effective in periods of renewal and change. Contrary to the ideal servant leadership scenario, Spain has in recent years been characterized by turbulence and fluctuations due to economic crisis. In this context of uncertainty and frequent layoffs, servant leaders who prioritize employees' needs over their own are surely a minority; or they may on some level avoid fostering psychological empowerment fully among their employees so that they themselves become *indispensable* in the company. Further, cultural contexts like Spain, with higher levels of power distance (Hofstede *et al.*, 2010), could provide a less fertile environment for employees to feel empowered by the servant leadership style, especially in traditionally hierarchical sectors such as hospitality, where pyramidal charts dominate HR configurations. One last explanation for this lack of connection between servant leadership and psychological empowerment

could be that, despite servant leaders' empowerment of their employees, bureaucratic constraints or even psychological barriers (culture) persist in the workplace that limit the staff's ability to perceive that their servant managers are in fact empowering them when displaying this type of *retainer* leadership. Servant leaders in this study were observed as good at fulfilling some needs of their followers but not at effectively empowering their workforce.

The findings of this research benefit both scholars and practitioners by providing empirical evidence on the value of empowering, paradoxical, and servant leadership in ensuring workforce empowerment and engagement.

3.5.1. Theoretical implications

Since traditional leadership styles may not encompass the full gamut of behaviors required for effective leadership in today's service organizations, this study enriches knowledge of emerging leadership styles in hospitality by exploring their positive association with desirable employee outcomes, such as psychological empowerment and engagement. It thus satisfies a need for specific research to identify the managerial factors that best promote positive employee attitudes and behavior in the 21st-century hotel context.

Whereas traditional leadership styles such as transformational leadership have been widely studied in many sectors, only a handful of empirical studies have been conducted to test the effects of other growing leadership types in services. For example, investigations of servant leadership in hospitality are paradoxically few (e.g., Ling *et al.*, 2016; Wu *et al.*, 2013), despite the fact that the foundation of the hospitality industry is the *culture of serving others*. Moreover, this is the first study to apply the recently-developed paradoxical leadership scale (Zhang *et al.*, 2015) in a western country. In addition, whereas empowering leadership has been posited as one of the best leadership approaches for managing service workers, most prior research has been conducted outside Europe (e.g., Albrecht and Andreetta, 2011; Bester *et al.*, 2015; De Klerk and Stander, 2014; Lorinkova and Perry, 2014; Zhang and Bartol, 2010).

This study differs from other leadership research in that it highlights how *novel* leadership approaches are necessary in the Spanish hotel industry to achieve positive

employee feelings at work. The study results may stimulate researchers to explore further the influence of different leadership styles on different positive outcomes related to employee well-being, in line with the recent *Positive Psychology Paradigm* (Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi, 2014).

Further, the concept of employee engagement is rather new and is thus an emerging construct in academia. This research also contributes to clarifying some managerial antecedents of employee engagement in a particular service sector, hospitality, where having resolute and *happy* workers really makes a difference in business performance. Moreover, the study findings have the potential to help researchers better understand the relationship between psychological empowerment and engagement.

3.5.2. Practical implications

In contemporary markets, with globalized competition, a richer and deeper understanding of the ways to create employee engagement can constitute a milestone for many hospitality organizations. As employees play a decisive role in service encounters, it is imperative to learn ways to motivate and engage them so that they display positive attitudes and behaviors that result in outstanding performance. Hence, the modern service firm must create work environments in which employees feel enthusiastic, energized, and motivated (Barnes and Collier, 2013). In service organizations, the emphasis must be placed on the customer, on both *internal and external clients*. What is more, according to the *service-profit chain* logic (Heskett and Sasser, 2010), to satisfy the external client, it is imperative to first satisfy the internal client, or *employee*. Modern managers should thus display leadership styles that motivate people and raise their levels of moral and engagement.

In the hospitality industry, failure of leadership is expensive, as it can damage employees' trust and performance, reducing guests' satisfaction (Terjav et al., 2016). There is rising concern for employees' wellbeing, an issue in which the role of managers is becoming increasingly relevant. Growing trends in hospitality organizations indicate that novel leadership styles are gradually becoming more significant. For instance, due to downsizing, organizational delayering is ongoing in today's tourism business (Baum, 2015), blurring the distinction between managerial and operational roles.

There is thus a need to broaden, deepen, and accelerate leadership development at all levels (Deloitte, 2014).

As contemporary business environments change, leadership faces new challenges. For Liden *et al.* (2014: 1447), “as employees’ education levels increase, autocratic leadership approaches will no longer be tolerated.” Service employees today expect a more people-oriented and collaborative leadership style in line with what companies themselves expect from them when attending to customers, and managers must be exemplary role models. Leaders must find ways to improve employees’ self-efficacy and enthusiasm in the workplace, and to develop employees’ positive psychological capital, given its impact on business performance. For long-term success, it is essential to pay more managerial attention to employees’ needs. As Ryan and Deci (2000) postulate, fulfilling basic psychological needs (autonomy, competence, and relatedness) is a key determinant of wellbeing, and positively affects intrinsic motivation, resulting in a sense of self-determination. It is thus crucial for managers to understand the extent to which their own behaviors—and, more importantly, *which of their behaviors*—influence intermediate organizational outcomes (Namasivayam *et al.*, 2014). Unlike leadership approaches with a top-down hierarchical tone, servant, empowering, and paradoxical leadership styles emphasize trust and collaboration and enhance employee self-efficacy. This research thus outlines how servant and empowering leaders can have a substantial impact on employee engagement.

Servant leadership is especially beneficial for service organizations such as the hospitality industry, because servant leaders focus on power sharing and satisfaction of their followers’ needs, even placing others’ interests ahead of their own. “Servant leadership has a more moral tone that differentiates it from most other models of leadership” (Correia and Van Dierendonck, 2014: 880). Servant leaders serve as an example of *orientation towards others*. The research of Liden and colleagues (2015) confirms a key principle of servant leadership theory: that servant leaders’ subordinates follow the example of their supervisors’ ethical behavior, sometimes giving priority to the needs of others above their own. Since servant leadership can permeate the whole organization (Hsiao *et al.*, 2015), this kind of leadership is especially advocated for the hospitality industry, where “serving culture” is the prime principle.

This investigation delineates several useful implications for managers in the hospitality industry regarding leadership styles conducive to positive employee outcomes. The findings strongly advise hotel managers to display more participatory leadership styles, especially empowering behavior, to encourage their employees to experience psychological empowerment and engagement. In particular, hospitality organizations should encourage *enabling* behaviors in their managers, supporting followers to assume responsibilities and to work autonomously without “always getting a stamp of approval” (Tuckey *et al.*, 2012). But managers must keep in mind that empowering is not merely delegating: cession of resources and a rewards system must accompany the empowerment process. This insight will help leaders to maximize desirable organizational outcomes by managing their own behavior. These results open new paths for tourism companies to promote psychological empowerment and engagement, leading eventually to happier and healthier personnel, who will likely provide better customer service.

Nevertheless, acceptance of empowerment by first-line managers and frontline employees is *not a sure thing*, as Karatepe (2013) highlights. In a traditionally hierarchical sector like hospitality, it is not an easy task to unanimously accept employees’ freedom of choice. Isadore Sharp, founder and chairman of Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts, tells the difficulties of the *empowerment-oriented* cultural change, and how workers had first to *unlearn* the original role models (Sharp *et al.*, 2009).

The Spanish hospitality industry has been run on hierarchical lines for so long that new leadership styles can meet with reluctance from workers at all levels. On the one hand, employees may perceive that they are being given more responsibilities for the same salary, or even see the empowering philosophy as demagogic or as mere *lip service* (Biron and Bamberger, 2011) with no real authority delegated. On the other, managers frequently do not fully understand, embrace, or encourage empowerment because they do not even know how to delegate authority and power. In both cases, extensive training programs should be implemented. The empowerment process should in any case be accompanied by a proper rewards system, not only economic but also emotional. On the practical level, hospitality companies must train the workforce at all levels of the hierarchy: 1) managers in successfully delegating power, and 2) employees in accepting more responsibility and authority to act in challenging service encounters.

Finally, and of equal importance, this study has interesting outlines for educators. As Brownell (2010) stresses, it is important to reflect growing trends in leadership curricula. For example, professors can take steps to instill modern leadership principles in their students by using pedagogical tools that help learners adopt paradoxical thinking and servant behaviors, such as, for example, *role-playing*. Case studies of successful organizations run under the empowerment philosophy, such as Semco (Semler, 1989) or Ritz Carlton (Michelli, 2008), can also make people rethink their mental frameworks.

3.5.3. *Limitations and Future Research*

This research has limitations, which can be viewed as opportunities for future research.

First, although the cross-sectional research design evaluates participants in specific situations at a specific moment in time, participants are likely to change their perceptions over time. This cross-sectional analysis limits the extent to which cause-effect relations can be inferred from the findings. The results should be interpreted in conjunction with this limitation. Future studies could “perform longitudinal surveys to conduct cross-period research and collect long-term data on organizations” (Hsiao *et al.*, 2015: 54).

Second, the study’s use of a convenience sample is not fully representative of hotel workers in Spain. Further studies must address the generalizability of the results by using random sampling methods to obtain representative samples.

Third, this study relies on self-report measures because it aims to learn about employees’ perceptions. Management can neither speak for its employees nor know their perceptions. Nevertheless, employing data from a single source risks the possibility of common method bias, and some findings may be the result of self-serving bias. The survey instrument was carefully designed to mitigate this problem, and the results suggest that method bias is not an issue in this investigation. However, it is usually desirable to collect data from multiple sources. New investigations should be designed as multilevel studies that also reveal the leaders’ vision of their own behaviors (Wong, 2016).

Further, it is important to identify the boundary conditions under which leadership behaviors influence the desired outcomes. To do so, moderators of the links between leadership styles and engagement must be explored. For example, as Barnes and Collier (2013) hypothesize, the kind of relationship that managers and employees have developed seems likely to influence employees' level of engagement. It could thus be interesting to include the Leader-Member Exchange framework (LMX, Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995), as do Dhar (2016) and Luo *et al.* (2016), in the proposed model.

On the other hand, it is necessary for certain contextual and *personal* factors to converge for employees to experience positive feelings at work. Prior research has identified personality factors as relevant to psychological empowerment (Kim *et al.*, 2009) and job engagement (e.g., Macsinga *et al.*, 2015). Personality traits may also be highly influential in employee perceptions and work experiences. If so, including the Five-Factor Model of personality (Costa and McCrae, 2008) in the proposed model could provide a more comprehensive portrait of critical factors influencing empowerment and engagement of hospitality employees.

Regardless of these limitations, the findings of this study contribute to the leadership and the hospitality management literature by partially illuminating the relationship of emerging leadership styles to employee psychological empowerment and engagement. While this study focused on leaders' empowering, paradoxical, and servant behaviors, future research could examine other leadership styles, such as authentic (Walumbwa *et al.*, 2008) or charismatic leadership (Babcock-Roberson and Strickland; 2010). This study thus opens a stream of potential research that seeks to understand how other leadership behaviors result in employee wellbeing in hospitality.

APPENDIX CHAPTER 3

Table 3.A1. Summary of Factor Loadings, Cronbach's Alpha, Construct Reliability, Average Variance Extracted, Skewness, and Kurtosis

Item	Mean	S.D.	Skewness	Kurtosis	Factor loadings	t-value	R2	Scale reliability
SERVANT LEADERSHIP (From Liden, Wayne, Meuser, Hu, Wu, and Liao [2015]).	Servant leadership							
Svl2. Makes my career development a priority.	3.723	1.911	0.007	-1.150	0.808	a	0.653	CR: 0.898
Svl3. I would seek help from my leader if I had a personal problem.	4.164	2.191	-0.208	-1.367	0.850	23.095	0.722	AVE: 0.689
Svl4. Emphasizes the importance of giving back to the community	3.790	1.881	-0.048	-1.027	0.903	21.976	0.816	α : 0.868
Svl5. Puts my best interests ahead of his/her own.	2.881	1.759	0.464	-0.919	0.752	16.799	0.566	
EMPOWERING LEADERSHIP (From Ahearne, Mathieu, and Rapp [2005], in Zhang <i>et al.</i> , 2010). Elwme	Empowering leadership (enhancing the meaningfulness of work)							
Elwme1. Helps me understand how my objectives and goals relate to that of the company.	4.240	1.940	-0.361	-1.009	0.917	a	0.841	CR: 0.955
Elwme2. Helps me understand the importance of my work to the overall effectiveness of the company	4.529	1.908	-0.509	-0.840	0.957	22.835	0.917	AVE: 0.875
Elwme3. Helps me understand how my job fits into the bigger picture.	4.386	1.960	-0.397	-1.034	0.932	29.233	0.868	α : 0.942

Elwpa	Empowering leadership (fostering participation in decision making)							
Elwpa1. Makes many decisions together with me.	4.106	2.028	-0.198	-1.269	0.940	a	0.940	CR: 0.925
Elwpa2. Often consults me on strategic decisions.	4.036	2.000	-0.169	-1.256	0.926	27.106	0.926	AVE: 0.804
Elwpa3. Solicits my opinion on decisions that may affect me.	4.559	1.901	-0.481	-0.855	0.820	23.315	0.820	α : 0.902
Elwcf	Empowering leadership (expressing confidence in high performance)							
Elwcf1. Believes that I can handle demanding tasks.	5.517	1.506	-1.075	0.666	0.926	a	0.857	CR: 0.956
Elwcf2. Believes in my ability to improve even when I make mistakes.	5.486	1.554	-1.143	0.769	0.913	24.107	0.834	AVE: 0.880
Elwcf3. Expresses confidence in my ability to perform at a high level.	5.620	1.473	-1.179	0.822	0.974	39.008	0.949	α : 0.929
Elwau	Empowering leadership (providing autonomy from bureaucratic constraints)							
Elwau1. Allows me to do my job my way.	5.073	1.732	-0.860	-0.102	0.880	a	0.754	CR: 0.872
Elwau2. Makes it more efficient for me to do my job by keeping the rules and regulations simple.	4.787	1.721	-0.621	-0.423	0.735	14.782	0.540	AVE: 0.696
Elwau3. Allows me to make important decisions quickly to satisfy customer needs.	5.346	1.682	-1.074	0.430	0.888	16.786	0.789	α : 0.837

PARADOXICAL LEADERSHIP (From Zhang, Waldman, Han and Li [2015]). Pdxui	Paradoxical leadership (treating subordinates uniformly while allowing individualization)							
Pdxui1. Uses a fair approach to treat all subordinates uniformly, but also treats them as individuals.	4.720	1.921	-0.548	-0.833	0.889	a	0.790	
Pdxui2. Puts all subordinates on an equal footing, but considers their individual traits or personalities.	4.860	1.867	-0.674	-0.550	0.931	34.619	0.866	CR: 0.948
Pdxui3. Communicates with subordinates uniformly without discrimination, but varies his or her communication styles depending on their individual characteristics or needs.	4.790	1.833	-0.566	-0.649	0.899	30.310	0.808	AVE: 0.786
Pdxui4. Manages subordinates uniformly, but considers their individualized needs.	4.675	1.877	-0.567	-0.669	0.938	30.329	0.880	α : 0.929
Pdxui5. Assigns equal workloads, but considers individual strengths and capabilities to handle different tasks.	4.450	2.010	-0.328	-1.138	0.764	21.577	0.584	
Pdxdc	Paradoxical leadership (maintaining both distance and closeness)							
Pdxdc2. Keeps distance from subordinates, but does not remain aloof.	5.058	1.711	-0.891	0.040	0.847	a	0.717	CR:0.895
Pdxdc3. Maintains position differences, but upholds subordinates' dignity.	5.109	1.700	-0.865	-0.090	0.885	15.275	0.783	AVE: 0.740
Pdxdc4. Maintains distance from subordinates at work, but is also amiable toward them.	5.164	1.670	-0.874	-0.032	0.849	15.124	0.721	α : 0.791

Pdxso	Paradoxical leadership (combining self-centeredness with other-centeredness)							
Pdxso3. Insists on getting respect, but also shows respect toward others.	5.264	1.828	-0.943	-0.153	0.791	a	0.626	CR: 0.893
Pdxso4. Has a high self-opinion, but shows awareness of personal imperfection and the value of other people.	4.544	1.829	-0.466	-0.811	0.855	17.605	0.731	AVE: 0.735
Pdxso5. Is confident regarding personal ideas and beliefs, but acknowledges that he or she can learn from others.	4.766	1.939	-0.585	-0.843	0.922	18.289	0.850	α : 0.865
Pdxca	Paradoxical leadership (maintaining decision control while allowing autonomy)							
Pdxca1. Controls important work issues, but allows subordinates to handle details.	4.991	1.756	-0.819	-0.196	0.810	a	0.656	CR:0.926
Pdxca2. Makes final decisions for subordinates, but allows subordinates to control specific work processes.	5.058	1.701	-0.891	0.040	0.878	21.206	0.771	AVE: 0.757
Pdxca3. Makes decisions about big issues, but delegates lesser issues to subordinates.	5.109	1.700	-0.864	-0.090	0.903	20.210	0.815	α : 0.903
Pdxca4. Maintains overall control, but gives subordinates appropriate autonomy.	5.164	1.670	-0.874	-0.032	0.887	24.054	0.786	
Pdxrf	Paradoxical leadership (enforcing work requirements while allowing flexibility)							
Pdxrf1. Stresses conformity in task performance, but allows for exceptions.	4.808	1.639	-0.657	-0.213	0.727	a	0.550	CR:0.830
Pdxrf3. Is highly demanding regarding work performance, but is not hypercritical.	4.647	1.668	-0.611	-0.395	0.755	8.183	0.571	AVE: 0.621
Pdxrf4. Has high requirements, but allows subordinates to make mistakes.	4.860	1.709	-0.748	-0.223	0.874	8.073	0.763	α : 0.761

PSYCHOLOGICAL EMPOWERMENT (From Spreitzer [1995]). Powmea	Empowerment (meaning)							
	Powmea1. The work I do is very important to me.	5.638	1.602	-1.243	0.823	0.944	a	0.892
Powmea2. My work activities are personally meaningful to me.	5.441	1.601	-1.003	0.281	0.945	41.745	0.894	AVE: 0.900
Powmea3. The work I do is meaningful to me.	5.580	1.585	-1.146	0.628	0.958	49.589	0.958	α : 0.947
Powcom	Empowerment (competence)							
Powcom1. I am confident about my ability to do my job.	6.444	0.817	-1.713	3.110	0.871	a	0.759	CR:0.914
Powcom2. I am self-assured about my capabilities to perform my work activities.	6.422	0.841	-1.661	2.730	0.983	18.203	0.967	AVE: 0.781
Powcom3. I have mastered the skills necessary for my job.	6.283	0.885	-1.218	1.144	0.786	11.237	0.685	α : 0.878
Powdet	Empowerment (self-determination)							
Powdet1. I have significant autonomy in determining how I do my job.	5.705	1.451	-1.176	0.703	0.884	a	0.781	CR: 0.939
Powdet2. I can decide on my own how to go about doing my work.	5.389	1.621	-0.966	0.175	0.981	23.630	0.963	AVE: 0.838
Powdet3. I have considerable opportunity for independence and freedom in how I do my job.	5.210	1.629	-0.916	0.143	0.877	18.216	0.769	α : 0.920
Powimp	Empowerment (impact)							
Powimp1. My impact on what happens in my department is large.	5.052	1.722	-0.791	-0.240	0.866	a	0.749	CR: 0.937
Powimp2. I have a great deal of control over what happens in my department.	4.848	1.762	-0.669	-0.457	0.898	18.097	0.807	AVE: 0.832
Powimp3. I have significant influence over what happens in my department.	4.666	1.824	-0.546	-0.663	0.969	20.246	0.939	α : 0.918

ENGAGEMENT (UWES-9, from Schaufeli and Bakker, 2003).	Engagement (vigor)							
Engvi								
Engvi1. At my work, I feel bursting with energy.	4.970	1.604	-0.821	0.199	0.968	a	0.937	CR: 0.924
Engvi2. At my job, I feel strong and vigorous.	5.106	1.575	-0.847	0.288	0.950	29.535	0.902	AVE: 0.805
Engvi3. When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work.	4.404	1.834	-0.518	-0.682	0.758	17.133	0.575	α : 0.892
Engde	Engagement (dedication)							
Engde1. I am enthusiastic about my job.	4.617	1.796	-0.593	-0.514	0.962	a	0.907	CR: 0.912
Engde2. My job inspires me.	4.477	1.871	-0.559	-0.668	0.926	23.549	0.858	AVE: 0.777
Engde3. I am proud of the work that I do.	5.593	1.547	-1.338	1.426	0.740	14.369	0.503	α : 0.862
Engab	Engagement (absorption)							
Engab1. I feel happy when I am working intensely.	5.112	1.639	-0.876	0.147	0.768	a	0.637	CR: 0.897
Engab2. I am immersed in my work.	5.772	1.217	-1.193	1.593	0.981	8.764	0.962	AVE: 0.746
Engab3. I get carried away when I'm working.	5.815	1.118	-1.008	1.058	0.829	10.423	0.559	α : 0.827

¹a indicates that the parameter was set at 1.0. If a different parameter is set at 1.0, however, the indicator of the scale is also statistically significant.

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4

**COUNTERACTING WORKPLACE
OSTRACISM WITH PSYCHOLOGICAL
EMPOWERMENT**

4. COUNTERACTING WORKPLACE OSTRACISM WITH PSYCHOLOGICAL EMPOWERMENT

Abstract

This study seeks to examine the effect of workplace ostracism on hospitality employees' self-esteem, and how this effect, in turn, is associated with their extra-role customer service. Moreover, it is aimed to discover whether psychological empowerment can help mitigate the detrimental effects of workplace ostracism. The proposed model was tested based on survey data from a sample of 340 hotel workers in Spain.

The partial least squares (PLS) method of estimation was employed to test the hypotheses and to analyse the mediation and moderation effects involved. Empirical analysis confirms the positive relationship between self-esteem and extra-role customer service, and how workplace ostracism negatively affects self-esteem. Moreover, in presence of psychological empowerment, the negative relationship between workplace ostracism and self-esteem decreases.

It is highlighted the importance of empowering workers in hospitality. The results will be of interest to practitioners and researchers. Study limitations and future avenues of research are also delineated.

Keywords: *Ostracism, self-esteem, extra-role behavior, psychological empowerment, hotels.*

4.1. Introduction

In hospitality, customer service is an interpersonal experience in which employee disposition is paramount. Given the intangibility of the hospitality product, the *manner* in which the hospitality worker provides the service is critical to the customer's overall enjoyment of the experience (Dawson et al., 2011). In hotel businesses, employees' attitudes and behaviors are thus determinants of customers' perceived quality of service and satisfaction, as well as key elements to building long-term relationships with the clientele, which in turn impact organizational performance (Bowen and Lawler, 1995; Terglav et al., 2016). Outstanding customer service sometimes requires employees *to go the extra mile*, which means investing discretionary effort (brainpower, energy, extra time) in their work, beyond the required minimum, to get the job done; this additional effort is conceived as extra-role customer service (Bettencourt and Brown, 1997; Garg and Dhar, 2016; Karatepe, 2013). Since frontline employees play a pivotal role in service encounters, service organizations must place primary emphasis on customer well-being – but on both internal and external clients' well-being –. What is more, to satisfy the external client, it is imperative first to satisfy the *internal client*, the employee. The research streams on *service-profit-chain* logic in Heskett et al. (2014) and on *linkage* in Schneider et al. (2005) have already investigated the considerable “spillover effects” of fostering positive employee experiences at work. Subsequently, there has been a growing need for empirical studies to demonstrate how companies should enhance and increase employee morale through cognitive, motivational, and behavioral tools. The *Positive Psychology Paradigm* (Klerk and Stander, 2014; Seligman et al., 2005) highlights how organizations should nurture their employees' positive psychological capital and the notable impact of positive work emotions in improving organizational functioning (Karatepe and Karadas, 2015; Paek et al., 2015).

Despite this evidence of the importance of employee morale, the hospitality industry is notorious for lack of recognition, overwork, low pay, limited job control, and low decision latitude at the bottom of the hierarchical pyramid, conditions that habitually affect working climate and performance negatively (Karatepe and Tizabi, 2011; Zhao et al., 2013). The hospitality workforce frequently reports emotional exhaustion and complains about working at “antisocial times” (Tongchaiprasit and Ariyabuddhiphongs, 2016), conditions that commonly result in absenteeism and turnover. The sector is high-stress as well, since it also involves *emotional labor*: no matter what their feelings, staff must display positive attitudes when serving customers (Chu et al., 2012; Lee and Ok, 2012). Moreover, the unexpected contingencies that arise during service delivery and the heterogeneity of each situation due to people’s diversity sometimes put hotel employees under too much pressure.

The specific conditions of working in hotel settings may cause deterioration of interpersonal relations at work, affecting the quality of the work done and leading potentially to internal work problems. Stressful working conditions can cause employees’ dysfunctional or counterproductive work behaviors (Ferris et al., 2015, 2009). Some hospitality employees are likely to display negative conducts at work, especially towards their co-workers, for example, by ostracizing them.

Work ostracism is a hazard for organizations because it can serially damage their performance through poor customer service and huge commercial losses (Akgunduz, 2015). Recent research demonstrates the terrible negative impact of workplace ostracism on employees’ self-esteem and, indirectly, on their performance (Ferris et al., 2015). The key question, therefore, is *whether it is possible to counteract negative employee behavior—such as workplace ostracism—when it occurs in this peculiar sector of hospitality.*

4.1.1. Purpose

Psychological empowerment has been recognized by both researchers and practitioners as a powerful tool to motivate and engage employees, as it enhances their self-efficacy and self-concept; empowerment has been also highlighted as a key driver of quality service in hospitality, where employee proactivity, resolution, and prompt action are often required (Albrecht and Andreetta, 2011; Namasivayam et

al., 2014). This study thus investigates whether fostering favorable psychological conditions in hospitality employees—through psychological empowerment—can restore the self-esteem undermined when employees suffer workplace ostracism. In pursuing this goal, the study sheds additional light on service employees' experience of ostracism, a topic especially underreported in the hospitality literature (Zhao et al., 2013). After analyzing the relationships among workplace ostracism, self-esteem, and extra-role customer service, it explores the moderating effect of employees' level of psychological empowerment on the relationship between workplace ostracism and self-esteem. Interpreted in the context of Bandura's theory of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977) and Ryan and Deci's theory of self-determination (Ryan and Deci, 2000), the findings show that the negative relationship between workplace ostracism and self-esteem can be contingent on the level of psychological empowerment the employee experiences, and that a close association exists between self-esteem level and extra-role customer service. Based on the study findings, hotel management is strongly advised to empower its workforce.

4.2. Theoretical background

“Individuals working in organizations are exposed to various structures, events, processes, social interactions, and management practices affecting their individual feelings, interpretations, and degree of commitment” (Gardner and Wright, 2011: 319). Rich et al. (2010) demonstrate how work-contextual factors strongly affect employees' experience of work and their psychological fulfillment. In fact, the ability of an employee to handle job demands effectively and attain high job performance depends on the interplay of various individual features and contextual factors.

4.2.1. *Self-esteem and performance*

Rosenberg (1965) defines self-esteem as an overall evaluation of one's personal worth or value. A person's degree of self-acceptance notably affects his/her capability to cope with stressful situations, ability to form relationships, and work proficiency. People with high self-esteem tend to feel confidence in what they do and normally have a positive perception of their own competences and skills.

Bandura's (1977) theory explains that self-judged efficacy determines how much effort people will expend and how long they will persist in the face of difficulties. Following self-verification theory (Swann, 2012), people with a high self-concept are expected to succeed in their work because they are absolutely convinced that they can and will. Self-esteem has a significant influence on employees' self-efficacy and subjective well-being. According to Akgunduz (2015), self-esteem can impact one's performance to a large extent.

4.2.1.1. *Extra-role customer service*

In service contexts, “the employee is the service guarantee” (Firnstahl, 1989), since the guest-contact service representative plays a determining role, interacting with the customer in each service encounter. In contemporary hospitality organizations, frontline employees must adjust their behavior to the demands of each individual client to provide an excellent customer service (= *customization* versus service standardization). Excellence in serving customers sometimes involves employees *departing from the script*, doing everything necessary to satisfy the customer's needs and quickly to provide efficient solutions to service recovery. This proactive behavior sometimes involves putting discretionary effort and time into job activities, doing more than what is expected.

Extra-role customer service consists of engaging in a set of behaviors to meet or exceed guests' expectations in service encounters, often going *beyond the call of duty* in serving customers (Bettencourt and Brown, 1997; Klidas et al., 2007). Garg and Dhar (2016) and Karatepe (2013) use the term extra-role customer service to define the proficient behavior of excellent employees who perform beyond their formal role boundaries.

Psychological wellbeing has been outlined as an antecedent of extra-role customer service behaviors (Namasivayam et al., 2014). In line with Bandura's (1977) self-efficacy theory, perceived self-efficacy results in successful and superior performance: when people judge themselves capable and skilled enough to accomplish their tasks, they are more likely to display positive behaviors and outperform at work. Those with a strong sense of efficacy normally try harder to master the challenges. Several

empirical studies (e.g., Akgunduz, 2015; Chang et al., 2012; Ferris et al., 2015, 2010) indicate that increasing self-esteem enhances job performance. The following hypothesis is thus proposed:

Hypothesis 1. Self-esteem is positively related to extra-role customer service.

4.2.2. Workplace ostracism

Work contexts and psychological experiences of work shape most employees' concept of their worth. The perception of failure to *meet goals* (personal, social, and professional goals) negatively impacts workers' self-esteem. Employees' self-esteem can also be influenced by individuals with whom they have had contact in the past or still have contact, from their workmates to other social group members.

Hospitality is a sector of intense and continuous interpersonal contact, where service displayed depends greatly upon the satisfactory interaction, communication, and team work of different members of the organization (involving concierges, receptionists, bellboys, chambermaids, waiters, maintenance techniques, etc.). Hotel workers frequently have to deal with mixed demands from customers and compeers. In this context, people's heterogeneity, various sociodemographic backgrounds, and unpredicted situations that arise during service delivery can create tense interpersonal relations among co-workers, especially in the face of difficulties—for example, when a front desk agent reprimands the chambermaid about the status of a bedroom after a long wait from the customer, or when a waiter delivers room service to the wrong customer due to a misunderstanding by the person who took the order. Many such job stressors can cause workplace relations to deteriorate in hotel settings. Some individuals may respond by deliberately troubling interpersonal relationships with co-workers through actions such as avoiding contact with them at work or “repeatedly and intentionally not replying to someone who attempts to converse” (Blackhart et al., 2009: 270).

Ostracism is the extent to which a person perceives he or she is being ignored, rejected, or excluded by others (Williams, 2007). Workplace ostracism is a form of passive aggression and social exclusion at work. It has a negative impact on employees' subjective wellbeing, making them feel less worthy and even insecure about their

abilities. Workplace ostracism is psychological mistreatment, since it involves some people purposively ignoring a workmate, making him or her feel unappreciated, and deliberately isolating him/her from the rest of the group. Such treatment makes the ostracized person feel less appreciated, useless, and of little value.

4.2.2.1. Workplace ostracism and self-esteem

People need to form and keep social bonds; in fact, social connection in its different forms is especially important these days. Following Kahn's (1990) postulates, interpersonal relationships promote *psychological safety* when they are supportive and trusting. For this reason, any form of social rejection causes "a significant shift toward a more negative emotional estate" (Blackhart et al., 2009: 269). Furthermore, a person's sense of worth is highly conditioned by feeling important, beloved, respected, and appreciated by others. Being ostracized at work can negatively affect the appraisal one makes about oneself, leading to the perception that one *must have done something wrong*, loss of confidence, and emotional disturbance (fear, guilt, hostility). Workplace ostracism can jeopardize one of the three basic human needs identified by Ryan and Deci (2000): the need for relatedness.

Ostracism has detrimental effects on people's perception of their worthiness and capabilities, undermining their self-esteem. Being *given the silent treatment* by others generates high emotional arousal, cognizing potential difficulties as bigger than they really are. Although self-esteem is a relatively stable trait, individuals can experience temporary fluctuations in response to recent events and outcomes, such as perceived social approval (Blackhart et al., 2009). For example, Leary et al. (1995) affirm that self-esteem is strongly affected by perceived inclusionary status (i.e., according to the *sociometer model*, self-esteem would be a measure of social acceptance). Williams (2007) theorizes that ostracism reduces self-esteem more than other forms of social exclusion. Hence, workplace ostracism can make individuals feel insecure about their own capacities, even undermining the effective use of the skills they have, and consequently appraising themselves as weaker, ultimately diminishing their global self-esteem. The following hypothesis can thus be formulated:

Hypothesis 2. Workplace ostracism is negatively related to self-esteem level.

4.2.3. Psychological empowerment

Several authors (Conger and Kanungo, 1988; Spreitzer, 1995; Thomas and Velthouse, 1990) recommend defining empowerment in terms of motivational processes. Addressing the nature of empowerment as *experienced* by subordinates, they argue that the main aim of the empowering process should be improving employees' belief in their personal *self-efficacy*, in accordance with the theory of Bandura (1977). Spreitzer (1995) defines empowerment as a process or psychological state represented by four cognitions: 1) *meaning* (discernment that one's work is personally significant); 2) *competence* (belief in one's capability to perform successfully), 3) *self-determination* (perception of latitude to initiate or conduct tasks), and 4) *impact* (sense of making a difference in the organization).

Employee psychological empowerment plays a prominent role in dynamic and complex environments. It is advocated especially for heterogeneous service sectors such as hospitality, where personnel must adapt their behaviors to the demands of each and every service encounter (Bowen and Lawler, 1995). Empowering employees can eliminate some work-related problems by enhancing workforce self-efficacy and increasing intrinsic task motivation, positively affecting employees' self-esteem level.

4.2.3.1. Psychological empowerment: a key psychological boundary

By empowering employees, organizations strive to communicate a powerful message to their workforce: that they are trusted and valued. When employees perceive that they are being empowered, they understand that their company promotes their participation, independence, and discretion. This perception reinforces their self-confidence, raising their self-esteem.

In hospitality contexts, empowerment provides employees with the chance to prove themselves when serving customers by showing their talent in daily operations' decisions and to demonstrate efficient competency skills by promptly anticipating or solving customer complaints. This latitude encourages customer-contact workers to display proactive behavior contributing to betterment of their subjective wellbeing. Empowered employees are more likely to anticipate problems, demonstrate resourcefulness, maintain control in the presence of risk or uncertainty, and solve customer and organizational problems diligently and professionally by using their

creative personal judgment (Karatepe, 2013; Kong et al., 2016; Menguc et al., 2013). Psychological empowerment thus encourages positive feelings of self-determination and competence among workers (Thomas and Velthouse, 1990; Spreitzer, 1995).

The process by which employee enablement increases motivation and improves self-perception can be explained by Ryan and Deci's (2000) self-determination theory (SDT). This theory ascertains three innate psychological needs of all individuals: the need for *autonomy* (to participate in choices without external direction), *competence* (to perceive oneself as able to accomplish different enterprises), and *relatedness* (to be part of a collective involving care and mutual respect). Work-related factors or management practices that contribute to satisfying these needs will result in "intrinsic motivation, overall wellbeing, and positive work feelings" (Gardner and Wright, 2011: 320). Empowering workers satisfies two of those three human basic needs: the needs for competence and for autonomy (Conger and Kanungo, 1988).

SDT theory is useful for understanding how various social forces and interpersonal environments affect individuals at work. Whereas workplace ostracism jeopardizes the *need to belong*, psychological empowerment seems to satisfy the other two basic human needs, for *competence* and *autonomy*, by enhancing belief in self-efficacy and sense of achievement. As a result of empowerment, employees' self-esteem levels rise, making it possible to develop a variety of coping processes to prevent employees from suffering ostracism in the workplace. Furthermore, psychological empowerment also positively influences the work environment and employees' communication skills: Corsun and Enz (1999) demonstrate how perceived psychological empowerment resulted in a supportive work environment rich in care and trust. Seibert et al. (2011) indicate that the relationships among employees tend to be more people-oriented and based on sharing when empowerment is implemented.

For Spreitzer (1995), employees who perceive themselves as empowered feel less constrained and more motivated, and they are more likely to expect success. Similarly, Deci et al. (1989) highlight the positive effect of self-determination on self-esteem. Psychological empowerment serves as a psychological reward that makes workers feel valued—at least by the management that empowers them—despite the isolating behaviors of some colleagues. Workplace ostracism is thus expected to affect employees to a lesser degree when they attain this positive psychological state. It can be hypothesized that psychological empowerment positively affects employees'

psychological wellbeing and mitigates the negative impact of ostracism on their self-esteem. In consideration of the above discussion, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 3. Psychological empowerment moderates the relation between workplace ostracism and level of self-esteem, such that the relation is weaker when psychological empowerment is high.

4.2.4 Research model

Figure 4.1 depicts the research model that integrates the hypothesized relationships. The model proposes that workplace ostracism negatively affects self-esteem, and that self-esteem is positively related to extra-role customer service. Moreover, in the presence of psychological empowerment, the negative relationship between ostracism and self-esteem decreases. Data from a cross-sectional survey and structural equation modelling were used to provide indicative assessment of the model.

4.3. Methodology

4.3.1. Sample and procedures

In this empirical study, data were gathered over a three-month period (from July to September 2015) by approaching hotel workers in three major tourist cities in Spain at their workplaces. The data were drawn from a convenience sample composed of full-time customer contact employees who had regular face-to-face or voice-to-voice interactions with customers (concierges, reservations agents, receptionists, reservations managers, and front desk managers).

A paper-based self-completion survey was distributed in person to employees who had agreed to participate in the study. Each survey packet included a cover letter explaining the main aims of the study and informing the participants that any data they provided would be treated confidentially and that no personal data would be reported. 340 workers volunteered to participate in the study and completed and returned the survey in a closed envelope collected personally by the research team at each hotel location. Following suggestions in Karatepe (2013), hotel managers

were not involved in the data collection; data were gathered directly from the hotel employees by approaching them in person during working hours.

Although data were obtained from a convenience sample of 340 employees, the sample is quite representative of the diversity of the hospitality industry in terms of star-rating (11 one-star, 21 two-star, 105 three-star, 145 four-star, and 47 five-star hotels) and management strategy (39.5% independently managed, 60.5% belonging to hotel chains) (Mansour and Tremblay, 2016).

Eleven questionnaires were discarded due to non-completion or missing data, following the *listwise deletion* procedure outlined by Hair et al. (2010). Of the 329 respondents who provided usable surveys, 193 were male (58.7%) and 62% had completed university education. The majority of the survey participants were non-managers (76.6%). Of the respondents, 24.9% were 26-30 years old, and 25.5% aged 31-35. The mean organizational tenure was 6 years (SD= 7.36 years), and most employees (64.7%, $n=213$) had an indefinite term contract.

4.3.2. Measures

This study adopted multi-item scales from the literature (see Table 4.A1 in Appendix). All perceptual constructs were measured using scales from the extant literature. Response options ranged from 1, “strongly disagree,” to 7, “strongly agree.” Conventional translation and back-translation (Brislin, 1980) were performed by two Spanish bilingual academics and two bilingual professionals independently to ensure equivalence of meaning and translation accuracy. In addition, a preliminary version of the measurement instrument was pretested on a pilot sample of ten hospitality workers; thanks to this pretest, uncommon words were clarified and errors due to cultural differences eliminated (Tuna et al., 2016).

4.3.2.1. Workplace ostracism

Workplace ostracism was assessed with the 10-item workplace ostracism scale developed by Ferris et al. (2008). Items include “Some work colleagues have ignored me at work,” “I involuntarily have sat alone in a crowded lunchroom at work,” etc. Ostracism was measured as a reflective first-order construct. Cronbach’s alpha was .90.

4.3.2.2. *Self-esteem level*

Rosenberg's (1965) instrument for evaluating individual self-esteem was employed. Participants were asked to indicate their level of agreement with each statement regarding their self-esteem (e.g., "I take a positive attitude toward myself"). Previous studies identified a single common factor in this scale (Gray-Little et al., 1997). Self-esteem is thus a single construct, specified as composite in this research.

4.3.2.3. *Extra-role customer service*

Extra-role customer service was measured as a reflective first-order construct through the scale developed by Bettencourt and Brown (1997) (e.g. "I voluntarily assist customers even if it means going beyond job requirements"). The Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the scale in this study was .85.

4.3.2.4. *Psychological empowerment*

Psychological empowerment was assessed with Spreitzer's (1995) 12-item scale (e.g., "I have significant autonomy in determining how I do my job") determined by four dimensions: meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact. Psychological empowerment in this research is conceived as a reflective construct at first-order level and composite at second-order level.

In composite constructs, measures are the ingredients of the construct, as they jointly contribute to the meaning of the conceptual construct" (Rigdon et al., 2014). Composite measures are endogenous ("the indicator causality is from indicators to the construct"), and conceptually unchangeable ("indicators do not have the same content") (Braojos-Gómez et al., 2015: 447). Moreover, "because formative measures determine and are not a function of underlying constructs, it is inappropriate to use estimates of internal consistency (e.g., coefficient alpha) to test for consistency among the items" (Gardner and Wright, 2011: 333).

4.3.2.5. *Control variables*

Previous studies suggest that employee demographics such gender and age are associated with employees' extra-role customer service (Garg and Dhar, 2016; Karatepe, 2013). These factors were therefore included as control variables: gender (0= male, 1= female), age (1= 20 years or younger, 2= 21–25 years, 3=26–30 years, 4=31–35 years, 5= 36–40 years, 6= 41–45 years, 7= over 46 years), together with job position (0= non-managerial, 1= managerial).

4.3.3. Common method

Since all measures were self-reported, the potential for common method bias was evaluated by adopting a series of procedural measures before collecting the data (Podsakoff et al., 2003; Yüksel, 2017). First, “to reduce the cause and effect of respondents knowing what was being tested,” independent and dependent variables were not presented in the hypothesized order in the questionnaire, and “the titles of the variables and dimensions were excluded in the survey” (Hsiao et al., 2015: 50; Terglav et al., 2016). Second, only established scales were used, and different instructions and filler items were included to create a psychological separation between the sets of variables (Alfes et al., 2013). Third, a survey pre-test was performed to avoid ambiguity. Further, respondents were assured that there was no right or wrong answer to the survey questions. Finally, the respondents were provided with an envelope in which to place the completed survey, which had then to be sealed to protect anonymity and confidentiality of the responses, and to prevent social desirability bias.

4.3.4. Data-analysis strategy

The Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software, version 22, and the statistical software package SmartPLS 3.2.3. Professional (Ringle et al., 2015) were used to analyze the data collected from the questionnaire. The variance-based SEM technique and partial least squares (PLS) estimation method were used firstly to confirm the reliability and validity of the measurement instruments, and then to test the hypotheses and analyze the mediation effects involved in the proposed model. PLS estimation method was chosen because it is particularly suitable for assessing models that combine composite and reflective constructs (Henseler et al., 2014). The bootstrapping algorithm with 5000 subsamples was performed to evaluate the level

of significance of weights, loadings, and path coefficients (e.g., Barroso et al., 2010).

The PLS estimation method is appropriate in this study for the following reasons: first, PLS is a “full-fledged SEM method” of estimation that can conduct exact “test of model fit” and provides consistent estimations (Henseler et al., 2016: 3). Second, the constructs self-esteem and empowerment at second-order level are identified as composite, and PLS is particularly suitable for estimating models combining composite and reflective constructs (Henseler et al., 2014; Peng and Lai, 2012). Third, PLS is better suited when estimating complex models (i.e., with moderating effects or multidimensional constructs) than are covariance-based SEM techniques (Hair et al., 2014), and primarily appropriate for studies where theoretical knowledge is relatively scarce (Chin, 2010). Moreover, since “the weights developed for each construct take into account only those neighboring constructs [to which] it is structurally connected” (Chin, 2010: 660), any misspecified paths do not bias other estimates throughout the proposed model.

To define the minimum sample size required to test the theoretical postulates, a statistical power analysis was completed. Assuming a desired statistical power level of 0.80, four predictors (i.e., the number of links received by the construct self-esteem), and a confidence level of 0.95, the minimum required sample size to estimate the model is 84 (Cohen, 1992); since the final sample consists of 329 hotel workers, this number is more than sufficient to achieve statistical power.

4.4. Results

4.4.1. Descriptive statistics and correlations

A correlation analysis was performed to obtain an initial evaluation of the relationships between the variables. Table 4.1 provides the mean values, standard deviations, and correlations for the variables measured in the study. As presented in the table, the correlations between the variables were determined via the Pearson product-moment correlation co-efficient. The results show that extra-role customer service correlated significantly and positively with self-esteem ($r = .32$, $p < .001$) and psychological empowerment ($r = .43$, $p < .001$), while self-esteem correlated significantly and negatively with workplace ostracism ($r = -.24$, $p < .001$).

Table 4.1. Correlation matrix

	1	2	3	4	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.4	5	6	Mean	Standard deviation
1. Workplace ostracism	0.791										1.715	1.061
2. Self-esteem	-0.242 ^{***}										5.802	1.060
3. Extra-role customer service	-0.046	0.323^{***}	0.850								6.274	0.864
4. Psychological empowerment	-0.288 ^{***}	0.542^{***}	0.432^{***}								5.556	0.993
4.1. Meaning	-0.135 ^{**}	0.253^{***}	0.281^{***}	0.467^{***}	0.951						5.553	1.518
4.2. Competence	-0.207 ^{***}	0.517^{***}	0.366^{***}	0.951^{***}	0.318^{***}	0.899					6.383	0.760
4.3. Self determination	-0.248 ^{***}	0.327^{***}	0.217^{***}	0.603^{***}	0.367^{***}	0.380^{***}	0.928				5.435	1.457
4.4. Impact	-0.201 ^{***}	0.252^{***}	0.157^{**}	0.465^{***}	0.329^{***}	0.222^{***}	0.563^{***}	0.927			4.855	1.641
5. Age	0.095 [*]	0.039	-0.047	0.072	0.099 [*]	0.094 [*]	-0.072 [†]	-0.067			4.020	1.642
6. Gender	0.080 [†]	0.002	-0.052	-0.024	0.018	-0.042	-0.010	0.047	0.196^{***}		0.53	0.500
7. Position	0.006	0.030	0.009	0.001	-0.018	-0.007	0.027	0.044	-0.108 [*]	-0.026	0.230	0.424

(^{*}p < 0.05, ^{**}p < 0.01, ^{***}p < 0.001)

(Note: Diagonal row values in boldface represent square root of the AVE for each first-order construct, evaluated for discriminant validity based on Fornell and Larcker criterion)

4.4.2. Measurement model evaluation

Table 4.A1 (in the appendix) displays the details of the measurement model evaluation at first- and second-order level. Reflective and composite constructs were assessed differently, as recommended by Peng and Lai (2012).

Reliability, convergent and discriminant validity of the reflective constructs (*ostracism*, *extra-role customer service*, and the dimensions of *psychological empowerment*) were tested first. Reliability was evaluated through the construct composite reliability and its indicator loadings. Indicators with a loading lower than 0.70 were dropped (e.g., OST2, OST3, OST6). The remaining indicator loadings and composite reliability exceed the recommended value of 0.70 (Chin, 2010). Convergent validity was tested by examining the constructs' average variance extracted (AVE) values, which are well above the recommended threshold of 0.50. Further, in line with Fornell and Larcker's (1981) approach, the constructs' discriminant validity was evaluated by examining whether the square root of the construct AVE was greater than the horizontal and vertical correlation among constructs—and it was (see main diagonal of Table 4.1). Moreover, the heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT) of correlations (Henseler et al., 2015) (see Table 4.2) and evaluation of the cross-loadings among constructs were also assessed (Table 4.3), reconfirming the existence of discriminant validity across constructs.

The loadings and significance level of the composite constructs (*self-esteem*, and *psychological empowerment at second-order level*) were carefully examined, as well as the weights and their level of significance when checking for multi-collinearity (Cenfetelli and Bassellier, 2009). For Petter et al. (2007), multi-collinearity is only a problem if the variance inflation factors (VIFs) are below 5; since VIF values range from 1.22 to 1.67, multi-collinearity is not a problem in the composite constructs in this study. A composite indicator/dimension should be retained if its weight and/or loading is/are significant (Cenfetelli and Bassellier, 2009).

Table 4.2. Discriminant validity evaluation based on heterotrait-monotrait ratio

	Workplace ostracism	Extra-role customer service	Meaning	Competence	Self-determination	Impact	Age	Gender	Position
Workplace ostracism									
Extra-role customer service	0.066 [*]								
Meaning	0.157 ^{***}	0.303 ^{***}							
Competence	0.243 ^{***}	0.424 ^{***}	0.343 ^{***}						
Self determination	0.290 ^{***}	0.235 ^{***}	0.395 ^{***}	0.413 ^{***}					
Impact	0.231 ^{***}	0.168 ^{**}	0.352 ^{***}	0.245 ^{***}	0.617 ^{***}				
Age	0.100 [*]	0.064 [*]	0.104 [*]	0.098 [*]	0.075 [†]	0.070 [†]			
Gender	0.090 [*]	0.055 [†]	0.019	0.052 [†]	0.022	0.049	0.196 ^{***}		
Position	0.042 [*]	0.033	0.019	0.059 ^{**}	0.032	0.046	0.108 [*]	0.026	

([†] $p < 0.05$, ^{**} $p < 0.01$, ^{***} $p < 0.001$). (HTMT ratio is lower than 0.85 for each pair of constructs, indicating the presence of discriminant validity)

Table 4.3. Discriminant validity evaluation based on cross-loading evaluation

	Ostracism	Extra-role customer service	Meaning	Competence	Self determination	Impact	Age	Gender	Position
OST1	0.693	-0.020	-0.198	-0.155	-0.282	-0.217	0.063	0.041	-0.027
OST4	0.712	-0.070	-0.020	-0.116	-0.023	-0.093	0.110	-0.005	0.049
OST5	0.832	-0.021	-0.062	-0.088	-0.201	-0.155	0.096	0.095	0.012
OST7	0.840	0.001	-0.128	-0.201	-0.275	-0.202	0.035	0.087	0.026
OST8	0.863	-0.063	-0.143	-0.263	-0.227	-0.141	0.060	0.100	-0.040
EXTR1	-0.063	0.769	0.239	0.358	0.210	0.102	0.028	-0.018	0.000
EXTR2	-0.045	0.896	0.248	0.367	0.171	0.130	-0.048	-0.061	0.023
EXTR3	-0.006	0.874	0.178	0.271	0.083	0.083	-0.088	-0.066	-0.042
EXTR4	-0.046	0.855	0.283	0.267	0.261	0.201	-0.040	-0.030	0.040
POWMEA1	-0.141	0.218	0.941	0.279	0.350	0.303	0.123	0.024	-0.019
POWMEA2	-0.115	0.291	0.948	0.278	0.357	0.343	0.080	0.016	-0.024
POWMEA3	-0.131	0.282	0.963	0.341	0.343	0.295	0.087	0.013	-0.009
POWCOM1	-0.166	0.319	0.347	0.918	0.311	0.213	0.131	0.006	0.039
POWCOM2	-0.204	0.359	0.280	0.947	0.355	0.218	0.095	-0.028	0.020
POWCOM3	-0.188	0.308	0.226	0.828	0.364	0.164	0.021	-0.097	-0.089
POWDET1	-0.224	0.225	0.337	0.437	0.932	0.479	-0.064	-0.038	0.049
POWDET2	-0.228	0.181	0.309	0.324	0.947	0.534	-0.078	0.009	0.027
POWDET3	-0.242	0.190	0.381	0.270	0.906	0.572	-0.059	0.012	-0.010
POWIMP1	-0.196	0.151	0.336	0.238	0.573	0.910	-0.047	0.039	0.035
POWIMP2	-0.188	0.170	0.300	0.197	0.499	0.931	-0.062	0.051	0.049
POWIMP3	-0.172	0.111	0.277	0.180	0.491	0.941	-0.078	0.041	0.038
AGE	0.095	-0.047	0.099	0.094	-0.072	-0.067	1.000	0.196	-0.108
GENDER	0.080	-0.052	0.018	-0.042	-0.010	0.047	0.196	1.000	-0.026
POSITION	0.006	0.009	-0.018	-0.007	0.027	0.044	-0.108	-0.026	1.000

Evaluation of the measurement model shows that only the weight of one dimension of empowerment (*impact*) was not significant. Since this dimension's loading was significant, however, that dimension was retained, as recommended by Braojos-Gómez et al. (2015). Overall, all analyses indicate good measurement properties for the proposed model.

When multidimensional constructs appear, a two-step approach is needed to estimate the proposed model (Chin, 2010). In the first step, the first-order constructs (including

the dimensions of empowerment) are freely correlated to obtain the latent variable scores. In the second step, the latent variable scores of the dimensions are used as the manifest variables of the multidimensional construct empowerment (Wang et al., 2015).

4.4.3. Hypothesis test results

The proposed model was tested by performing a consistent PLS estimation and analyzing effect size (f^2) for the hypothesized relationships, path coefficients, level of significance, and R^2 values (Dijkstra and Henseler, 2015).

Figure 4.1 presents the results of the test of hypotheses and Table 4.4 the effect size for every relationship included in the model. Beta coefficients around 0.20 are considered economically significant, and R^2 values higher than 0.20 indicate good explanatory power (Chin, 2010). The main path coefficients of the model range from -0.13 ($p < .01$) to 0.35 ($p < .001$), and the variance explained by the endogenous variables (self-esteem and extra-role customer service) is 0.33 and 0.12, respectively. f^2 values less than 0.02, greater than 0.15, and greater than 0.35 indicate weak, medium, or large effect size of adding a link between an exogenous and endogenous variable (Cohen, 1992). The f^2 values of the relationships of the study model range from 0.03 to 0.13, as Table 4.4 shows.

The empirical analysis thus provides support for H1, H2, and H3 at 0.001, 0.01, and 0.01 confidence levels, respectively. Self-esteem positively contributes to the development of extra-role customer service ($\beta = 0.35$, $p < .001$, $f^2 = 0.13$) among the sampled hospitality employees, confirming Hypothesis 1. As anticipated by Hypothesis 2, workplace ostracism negatively impacts self-esteem level ($\beta = -0.16$, $p < .01$, $f^2 = 0.03$), but this negative relationship is mitigated in the presence of psychological empowerment ($\beta = -0.12$, $p < .01$, $f^2 = 0.03$), as Hypothesis 3 predicted. None of the control variables has a significant effect on extra-role customer service; the results are the same before and after including the control variables, which gives robustness to the analysis.

Figure 4.1. Research model and results of test of hypotheses

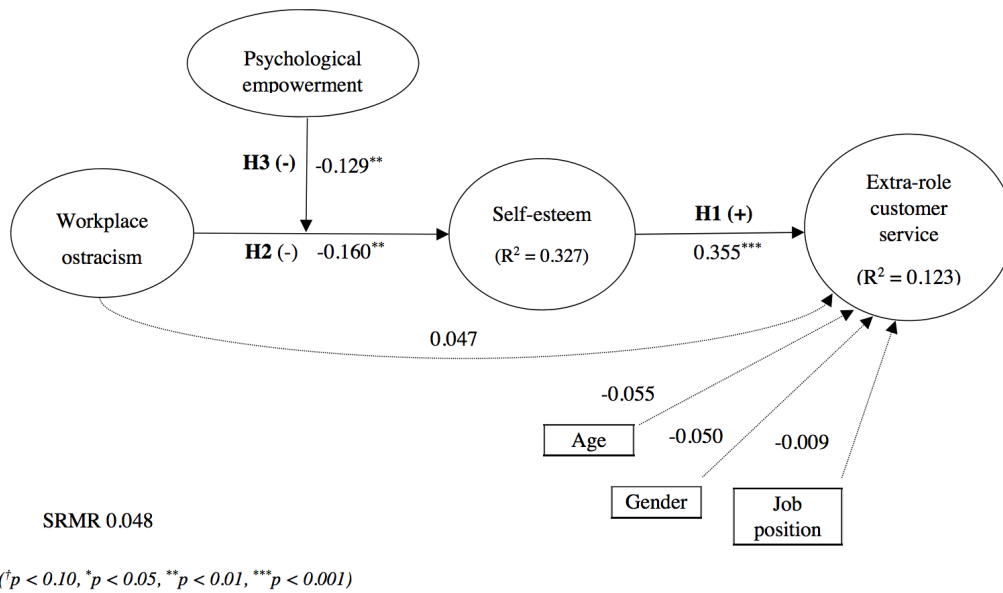


Table 4.4. Effect size analysis

Relationship	f^2 value	Effect size
Hypothesized relationship	f^2 value	Effect size
Workplace ostracism → Self-esteem (H1)	0.031	Weak
Self-esteem → Extra-role customer service (H2)	0.134	Medium
Workplace ostracism* P. empowerment → Self-esteem (H3)	0.036	Weak
Control variables	f^2 value	Effect size
Age → Extra-role customer service	0.003	Very weak
Gender → Extra-role customer service	0.003	Very weak
Job position → Extra-role customer service	0.000	Zero

Moreover, the standardized root mean squared residual (SRMR) has a value of 0.04, well below the threshold of 0.08, which suggests that the proposed model fits the data very well (Henseler et al., 2015; Henseler et al., 2014). Overall, the analysis suggests good structural properties of the proposed model.

4.4.4. Post-hoc mediation analysis

The mediation effect of self-esteem implicit in the proposed model was also explored by examining the significance of the indirect effect involved. Analyzing this mediation model can be useful to check whether the results of the hypotheses remain the same after adding the direct effects link in the model (Henseler et al., 2016). The direct relationship between ostracism and extra-role customer service was thus also explored in the model. Although this relationship was not significant, as Table 4.5 illustrates (Zhao et al., 2010), the indirect effect was, suggesting that workplace ostracism negatively affects extra-role behavior through self-esteem. This indirect effect underpins the results obtained in the test of hypotheses and reaffirms recent research findings, such as Ferris et al. (2015), who highlight that self-esteem level is an important mediating mechanism -wherein lowered self-esteem is responsible for the effect of workplace ostracism on various outcomes, such as performance-.

Table 4.5. Indirect effect analysis

Relationship	Direct effect	Indirect effect	Total effect
Ostracism → Extra-role customer service	0.047	-0.057*	-0.010

(* $p < 0.05$)

4.4.5. Test of robustness

The robustness of the structural model was tested in two ways. First, the measurement model was triangulated by considering every construct as reflective at first and second-order level (see Table 4.6 and Figure 4.2).

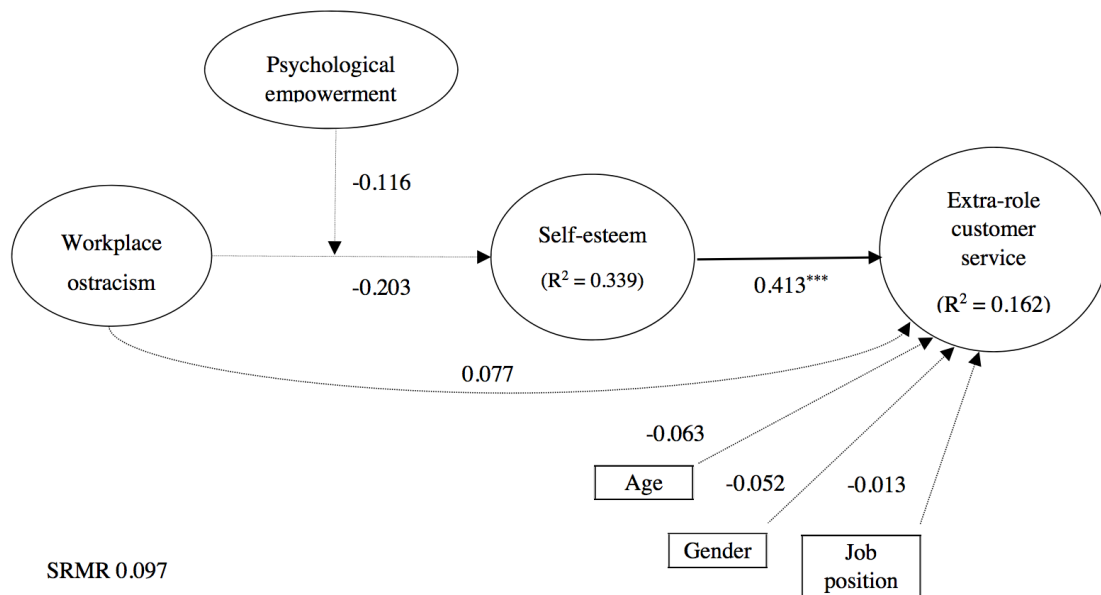
The results show that the relationship between workplace ostracism and self-esteem is not supported; nor is the moderation effect of psychological empowerment on it. Moreover, reliability and convergent validity tests yield invalid measurement properties for the alternative model. Loadings, composite reliabilities, and AVE values for the constructs of self-esteem and empowerment do not reach the threshold standards. In addition, the SRMR value of 0.097 demonstrates worse fit of the alternative model relative to the proposed model.

Table 4.6. Test of robustness

Beta coefficient	Base model	Triangulation test	First alternative model	Second alternative model
Ostracism → Self-esteem (H1)	-0.160**	-0.203	-0.252***	-0.123*
Self-esteem → Extra-role customer service (H2)	0.355***	0.413***	0.170**	
Ostracism*Empowerment → Self-esteem (H3)	-0.129**	-0.116		
Ostracism → Extra-role customer service	0.047	0.077	0.113*	
Self-esteem*Empowerment → Extra-role customer service			0.023	
Empowerment → Ostracism				-0.313***
Empowerment → Self-esteem				0.489***
Control variables				
Age → Extra-role customer service	-0.055	-0.063	-0.082 [†]	
Gender → Extra-role customer service	-0.050	-0.052	-0.036	
Position → Extra-role customer service	-0.009	-0.013	-0.002	
R²				
Self-esteem	0.327	0.339	0.063	0.292
Extra-role customer service	0.123	0.162	0.234	
Ostracism				0.098
Value SRMR	0.048	0.097	0.047	0.061
Effect size analysis				
Ostracism → Self-esteem (H1)	0.031	0.053	0.068	0.019
Self-esteem → Extra-role customer service (H2)	0.134	0.186	0.025	
Ostracism*Empowerment → Self-esteem (H3)	0.036	0.028		
Ostracism → Extra-role customer service	0.002	0.006	0.015	
Self-esteem*Empowerment → Extra-role customer service			0.001	
Empowerment → Ostracism				0.109
Empowerment → Self-esteem				0.305
Age → Extra-role customer service (control variable)	0.003	0.004	0.008	
Gender → Extra-role customer service (control variable)	0.003	0.003	0.002	
Position → Extra-role customer service (control variable)	0.000	0.000	0.000	

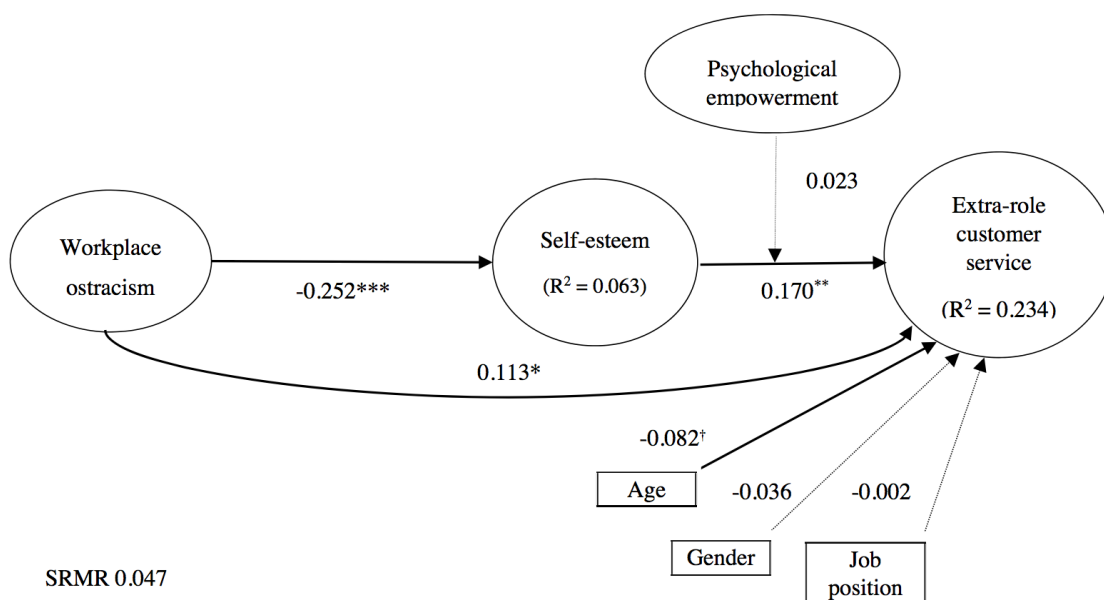
([†]p < 0.10, *p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001)

Figure 4.2. Results of the triangulation test
(reflective at first and second-order level)



($^{\dagger}p < 0.10$, $*p < 0.05$, $**p < 0.01$, $***p < 0.001$)

Figure 4.3. Results of the first structural alternative model

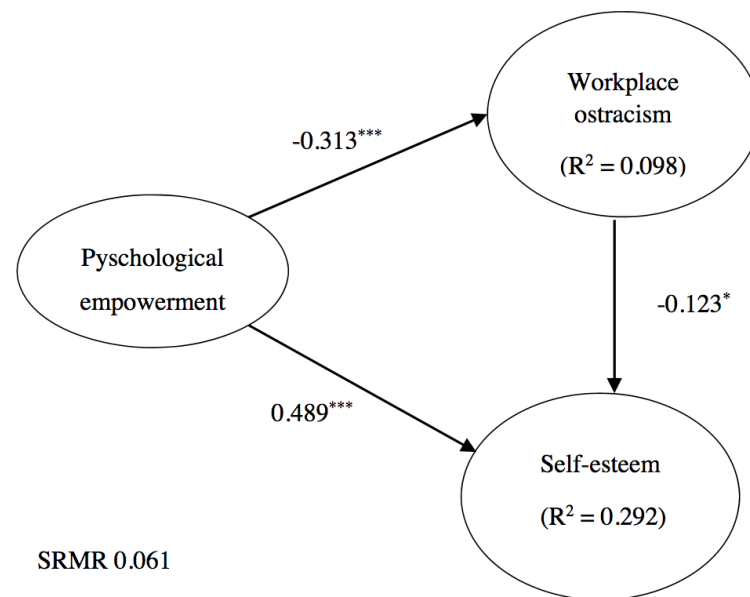


($^{\dagger}p < 0.10$, $*p < 0.05$, $**p < 0.01$, $***p < 0.001$)

Second, two alternative models were estimated to further check robustness of the proposed structural model (referred to as *base model* in Table 4.6). In a first alternative model, psychological empowerment moderates the relationship between self-esteem and extra-role customer service (Figure 4.3). Even though the alternative model has a fairly equal SRMR (0.047) compared to the proposed model, the empirical analysis shows that psychological empowerment does not moderate the relationship between self-esteem and extra-role customer service. In a second structural alternative model, workplace ostracism mediates the relationship between psychological empowerment and self-esteem (Figure 4.4.). Estimation of this second alternative model grants robustness to the idea that psychological empowerment serves as a resource to reduce exposure to ostracism and increase self-esteem. The results show that psychological empowerment improves self-esteem directly, and indirectly by reducing workplace ostracism.

Overall, these tests suggest that the proposed base model is the best explanation of the data.

Figure 4.4. Results of the second structural alternative model



(† $p < 0.10$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$)

4.5. Discussion

The analyses provide support for all three proposed hypotheses. Based on the structural equation modelling, self-esteem is positively related to extra-role customer service: people with low self-esteem levels are less likely to engage in prosocial or helpful behaviors, and the reverse is true for those with high esteem (Ferris et al., 2008). This conclusion shares similarities with the results of previous research analyzing the relationship between employees' self-esteem and performance (Akgunduz, 2015; Zhao et al., 2013).

In line with recent studies (Ferris et al., 2015, 2010; Williams, 2007), workplace ostracism was found to have negative associations with self-esteem. What is more, this study shows self-esteem to be positioned as a key mediating mechanism accounting for the effects of ostracism on behaviors, “invoking the notion that individuals seek to verify their self-perceptions by behaving in a way that is consistent with those self-perceptions,” as in Ferris et al. (2015: 279). When employees experience social isolation, they feel emotionally down and perceive themselves as less valued; this somehow makes them feel unable to cope with some service demands, providing worse customer service.

Finally, the findings indicate that the negative relationship between workplace ostracism and an individual's self-esteem is moderated by psychological empowerment, such that the connection between ostracism and self-esteem is less negative when employees are more empowered. Empowerment requires the employee to display proactive behavior and contributes to betterment of the employee's subjective wellbeing; this psychological reinforcement seems to help employees to cope with workplace ostracism. Drawing on Ryan and Deci's (2000) SDT, and considering the enhanced self-efficacy that empowerment normally generates (Conger and Kanungo, 1988; Spreitzer, 1995), it seems reasonable to conclude that the self-esteem of hospitality workers being ostracized is less likely to be negatively affected by that social exclusion when they feel more psychologically empowered.

This study holds therefore great significance for academics and practitioners alike.

4.5.1. Theoretical implications

The need for studies that focus on disentangling how work contexts affect favorable work attitudes and behaviors has been highlighted, as have studies on how to promote psychological wellbeing of service employees (Paek et al., 2015; Seligman et al., 2005). To develop “healthier organizations” (Jáimez and Bretones, 2011), interest has shifted to understanding the boundary conditions under which the undermining role of negative experiences at work can be minimized or, better yet, reversed to ameliorate individual performance. The present study contributes to this research stream by illuminating how different work situations can raise or undermine employee self-esteem. The findings also provide a better understanding of some of the factors that help hotel workers to engage in extra-role customer service, such as self-esteem (Chang et al., 2012) and psychological empowerment (Garg and Dhar, 2016; Zeglát et al., 2014).

This study has three main theoretical contributions. First, as Ferris et al. (2008) state, the concept of ostracism has been neglected in main organizational psychology research. In filling this gap, the current study adds knowledge to the nascent literature on workplace ostracism by examining the effects of ostracism on Spanish hotel workers. It is the first study conducted in Spain to measure workplace ostracism and extra-role customer service among hospitality workers. Additionally, the empirical demonstration that ostracism influences employee performance indirectly via self-esteem is an interesting finding.

Second, and in accordance with Peterson (2014), researchers have not placed careful consideration of the relationship between the dimensions and the higher-order construct of empowerment. Empowerment has been inconsistently conceptualized as “a superordinate construct (i.e., empowerment is manifested by its dimensions), an aggregate construct (i.e., empowerment is formed by its dimensions), or rather as a set of distinct constructs” (Peterson, 2014: 53). Since reflective and formative measures differ in the direction of causality assumed in the relationship between a construct and its measures, empirical studies can yield very different results depending on the conceptualization of the construct. Peterson (2014) comments that the nature of empowerment as a higher-order multidimensional construct has been insufficiently developed in the literature. For this reason, and thanks to the PLS utilities to specify composite constructs, it was possible to explore and conceptualize

psychological empowerment as a second-order construct, reflective at first-order level and composite at second order level in this study.

Third, an important theoretical contribution of this investigation is the empirical finding that increases in empowerment may undermine the detrimental impact of ostracism on self-esteem: employees with more autonomy and more authority on the job are less likely to be psychologically affected by social exclusion at work.

All of these findings make a substantial contribution to the hospitality literature.

4.5.2. Practical implications for the hotel industry

In today's global competitive market environment, achieving better understanding of the ways to create work environments in which employees feel valued, competent, and motivated can constitute a milestone in the development of many hospitality organizations. Modern service firms should be aware of the importance of identifying how to enhance workers' self-confidence and raise their self-esteem levels at work. Since hospitality employees represent the interface between the organization's internal and external environment, it is crucial to determine the factors that affect workforce job performance to better satisfy customers' needs and expectations.

The findings of this study underscore the relevance of empowering hospitality employees to counteract work-related problems, such as workplace ostracism. More specifically, it was found that employees who feel they have latitude and power to make decisions feel a stronger sense of personal accomplishment and tend to cope better with the negative effects of experiencing ostracism at work. Supervisors at all hierarchical levels in hospitality are thus strongly advised to adopt empowering leadership styles. Managers exhibit empowering leadership when they not only distribute responsibility towards the base of the hierarchical pyramid but also share knowledge, information, and power with their subordinates, enhancing employee autonomy, responsibility, and self-development (Albrecht and Andreetta, 2011; Namasivayam et al., 2014). Empowering leaders foster employees' participation in decision making, letting them decide the best way to solve some daily problems. Positive feedback, recognition, and rewards are other ways to increase employee morale. It is very important for supervisors to understand the extent to which their behaviors influence their employees' feelings of empowerment.

Psychological empowerment is, in sum, a powerful stimulator of psychological wellbeing, which helps employees to respond better to negative events at work, as it helps to satisfy the basic needs of competence and autonomy. Furthermore, management should bear in mind that “Generation Y employees (...) expect autonomy to accomplish the job via empowerment” (Kong et al., 2016: 2554).”

This research also reveals that the positive psychological state that high self-esteem provides fosters employees’ engagement in more extra-role efforts. Service organizations primarily based in customer-service, such as hotels, must thus be conscientious about taking care of the emotional health of their *internal customers* in order subsequently to achieve a competitive advantage. This research highlights how interventions aimed at developing employee self-esteem will likely result in enhanced customer service in hospitality contexts.

Now more than ever, the tourism industry employs workers from diverse cultural, social, and generational backgrounds. Different ways of understanding work, combined with the stressful working conditions that characterize service settings, may cause friction and problems among co-workers, resulting in some employees being ostracized. To adapt to 21st-century requirements, teams should perhaps be reskilled to embrace diversity and handle complexity better in the workplace. As Lee and Ok (2012: 1110) suggest, “hospitality organizations may consider implementing emotional intelligence training or development programs to foster employees’ emotional competence.” More attention should be placed on developing positive psychological capital among customer-service workers, through training not only in technical skills but also in personal abilities related to self-awareness, self-control, and self-motivation, thereby qualifying these workers to appraise certain work situations more positively.

Service companies should also screen continuously to detect conflicts or negative feelings at work, and take prompt actions when they detect them. Hotel employers must not ignore the stressful situations that their staff sometimes face in their daily jobs. Zhao et al. (2013) recommend that managers provide training, counselling, and mentoring to employees with poor political skills, while also developing and improving explicit norms and regulations to restrict the excluders, such as clearing reporting channels. Lee and Ok (2012: 1110) outline that “for employees to keep their emotional resources charged, management should listen to their employees, particularly when they have concerns about work,” and encourage employees and

managers to share experiences and skills with each other. In line with these authors, emotional intelligence and mindfulness training programs could be good solutions for increasing representatives' skills in empathy and respect toward self and others, and to teach employees how to handle negative emotions and stressful situations at work.

Organization theorists have focused on recovery experiences that enable employees to restore their energy resources to come to terms better with stress and work problems. Recently, Lee et al. (2016) revealed the key role of dimensions of recovery experiences in enhancing the level of organizational self-esteem. "These recovery experiences make it possible for the workforce to not only return to their pre-stressor levels, but also maintain their levels of subjective wellbeing" (Lee et al., 2016: 1). Employers should proffer professional aid or stronger organizational support for employees, facilitating recovery experiences, especially in stressful business situations such as hotels. Examples of recovering experiences that can help employees to preserve their psychological and subjective wellbeing include fostering the practice of relaxation exercises during working hours, allowing employees to take days off to permit some psychological detachment from work, encouraging enjoyment of leisure and relaxing activities during free time. Human resources (HR) departments should devote some effort to developing strategies that help to restore individuals' energy resources inside and outside work, especially in the hotel domain.

This study provides useful findings for managers and HR managers in the hospitality industry who seek to prevent negative situations at work. Hotel managers can and should take actions to minimize the effects of the negative work situations that damage self-esteem among employees, indirectly affecting performance. *How?* The answer is simple: Make employees feel better about their jobs and about themselves at work by satisfying one of the most basic psychological needs: sense of achievement, self-realization.

4.5.3. Limitations and future research

This paper is not free of limitations, which can be seen as opportunities for future research.

The primary limitation of this study is its use of self-report questionnaires intended to measure employees' perceptions (Alfes et al., 2013). In spite of its usefulness

in measuring these perceptions, self-report data can be biased by a number of methodological issues. However, precautionary steps were taken following recommendations by Podsakoff et al. (2003) and Yüksel (2017). Researchers are encouraged also to collect data from managers and co-workers to evaluate frontline employees' extra-role customer service and workplace ostracism, thereby reducing the risk of common method bias, as do Ferris et al. (2015).

Moreover, Bester et al. (2015: 11) warn that “self-report measures are subjective in nature and are influenced by how an employee feels at a specific point in time”; thus, “these feelings might not be an accurate reflection of the entire system at the given time.” Considering the cross-sectional research design, causal inferences cannot be reliably drawn from the findings. Although it is theoretically reasonable to posit that ostracism affects self-esteem and that self-esteem level conditions customer service, researchers are encouraged to circumvent this cross-sectional limitation by “employ[ing] longitudinal or cross-lagged panel designs” (Ferris et al., 2008: 1362). Longitudinal analyses would help to assess issues of causality, as well as the strength and duration of the proposed relationships.

Another limitation of this study is its use of a convenience sample, with participants selected according their accessibility to overcome constraints of time and budget. As Kong et al. (2016) suggest, future studies should use probability sampling methods.

Further, other individual and organizational moderators may be important for understanding the relationships between workplace ostracism and extra-role customer service and their outcomes. For example, research on contingences of self-worth reveals that domains in which goals are linked to self-worth differ widely from person to person (Crocker et al., 2003). Integrating a moderating variable such as *importance of performance to self-esteem* in the proposed model (Ferris et al., 2015) could be an interesting avenue of future research. Although ostracism understandably has an immediate negative impact in individuals, subsequent coping responses could be sensitive to situational and individual difference factors (Williams, 2007). Future research should examine different contextual and personal factors to fully understand the phenomena.

Finally, it could also be interesting to analyze the relationships studied in various tourism and hospitality settings cross-nationally.

These limitations notwithstanding, the findings of this study contribute to the ostracism and the hospitality literatures by partially illuminating the influence of negative internal situations at work (such being ostracized by workmates) on the final service provided.

4.5.4. Conclusions

Since hospitality jobs are high-customer-interaction, ensuring that employees feel good in their workplace is especially crucial to providing good service. The psychological wellbeing of the workforce can make a real and positive difference to business outcomes. Events that affect employees' self-esteem can influence directly or indirectly the quality of the service they provide.

In this study, individual self-esteem is shown to be a predictor of extra-role customer service. Moreover, it is determined that workplace ostracism negatively affects self-esteem. The study findings also demonstrate that employees' psychological empowerment acts as a moderator that weakens the negative impact of workplace ostracism on self-esteem. The moderated-mediation model tested provides interesting results for hospitality scholars and practitioners, and contributes to expanding research on workplace ostracism in hotels. This investigation also highlights the relevance of enhancing the positive psychological capital of hospitality personnel.

APPENDIX CHAPTER 4

Table 4.A1. Measurement model evaluation at first- and second-order level

Construct/indicator	Composite reliability	AVE	Loading	VIF	Weight
Ostracism (Ferris et al., 2008)	0.892	0.626			
OST1. Being ignored by some work colleagues			0.701 ^{***}		
OST4. Sitting alone in a crowded lunchroom at work			0.712 ^{***}		
OST5. Being avoided by some work colleagues at work			0.832 ^{***}		
OST7. Being excluded from conversations at work			0.840 ^{***}		
OST8. Being refused to be talked to at work			0.863 ^{***}		
Self-esteem (Rosenberg, 1965)					
SEL3. Inclination to conceive oneself as a failure (<i>R</i>)			0.685 ^{***}	1.356	0.322 ^{**}
SEL4. Able to do things as other people			0.716 ^{***}	1.246	0.381 ^{***}
SEL6. Positive attitude towards oneself			0.826 ^{***}	1.307	0.526 ^{***}
SEL8. Wish to feel more self- respect (<i>R</i>)			0.517 ^{***}	1.288	0.141 [*]
Extra-role customer service (Bettencourt and Brown, 1997)	0.912	0.722			
EXTR1. Assisting customers even beyond job requirements			0.776 ^{***}		
EXTR2. Helping customers beyond expected or required			0.895 ^{***}		
EXTR3. Going above the call of duty when serving customers			0.868 ^{***}		
EXTR4. Going out of the way to satisfy customers			0.855 ^{***}		
Psychological empowerment (Spreitzer, 1995)					
<i>Meaning</i>	0.966	0.904	0.560 ^{***}	1.240	0.185 ^{**}
POWMEA1. Importance of work			0.941 ^{***}		
POWMEA2. Meaningful work activities			0.948 ^{***}		
POWMEA3. Work meaningful to me			0.963 ^{***}		
<i>Competence</i>	0.927	0.808	0.929 ^{***}	1.222	0.773 ^{***}
POWCOM1. Confidence about my ability			0.918 ^{***}		
POWCOM2. Self-assured about my capabilities			0.947 ^{***}		
POWCOM3. Necessary skills mastered			0.828 ^{***}		
<i>Self determination</i>	0.949	0.862	0.621 ^{***}	1.672	0.232 ^{**}
POWDET1. Autonomy			0.932 ^{***}		
POWDET2. Deciding how to go about doing my work			0.947 ^{***}		
POWDET3. Independence			0.906 ^{***}		
<i>Impact</i>	0.948	0.860	0.465 ^{***}	1.503	0.070
POWIMP1. Large impact in my department			0.910 ^{***}		
POWIMP2. Control			0.931 ^{***}		
POWIMP3. Influence			0.941 ^{***}		

(*R* =reverse-scored) (* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$)

4.6. References

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5

CONCLUSIONES E IMPLICACIONES

5. CONCLUSIONES E IMPLICACIONES

Introducción

En una conferencia impartida en la Universidad de Carolina del Sur en 2013, Tony Hewes, ejecutivo del área de Recursos Humanos del gigante hotelero Marriott International, revelaba las claves del éxito de su empresa¹. Apuntaba, en primer lugar, hacia la filosofía del “espíritu de servir” que debía permear en todos los trabajadores de esta industria, y destacaba cómo el empoderamiento de los empleados de su compañía había mejorado el servicio al cliente desde la base de la organización. También aseguraba que una fuerza de trabajo entusiasta y altamente comprometida suele estar mejor equipada para prestar un servicio extraordinario al cliente, y ponía en valor la importancia de determinadas prácticas de recursos humanos para ello. Así, indicaba cómo el seleccionar, formar y retener a ese talento excepcional es lo que garantiza a su organización que el servicio al cliente se mantenga en altos estándares de forma continuada. Señalaba también la importancia de contar con líderes excepcionales que ayuden a los trabajadores a desarrollarse y tomar decisiones por ellos mismos -y

¹ (Se puede ver la entrevista completa en: <https://www.calsouthern.edu/content/events/the-marriott-way-empowering-employees-and-enhancing-customer-service-to-drive-the-bottom-line>).

si tales líderes no existen, hay que saber detectar la necesidad de formarlos para que sean así...

Los resultados de esta tesis doctoral parecen apuntar, en mayor o menor medida, en esa misma dirección.

5.1. Conclusiones

Esta investigación demuestra cómo el empoderamiento de los trabajadores en contacto directo con el cliente puede ser una herramienta muy poderosa en un sector tan tradicionalmente jerárquico como es el sector hotelero.

El empoderamiento (*estructural*) hace referencia a todas aquellas políticas y prácticas organizacionales que fomentan la participación, la autonomía y la toma de decisiones de los trabajadores en una organización. Teóricos clásicos del empoderamiento como Conger y Kanungo (1988), Spreitzer (1995) y Thomas y Velthouse (1990) afirman que cuando se dota de poder a los trabajadores se refuerzan sus expectativas de eficacia personal y se incrementan sus convicciones sobre su propia efectividad, cobrando el trabajo mucho más sentido y significado; se mejora así la iniciativa y la motivación intrínseca hacia la tarea de estos empleados. Sin embargo, estos autores también aseguran que el empoderamiento sólo es efectivo cuando los trabajadores alcanzan un nivel cognitivo en el que realmente sienten que están siendo empoderados. Así, el *empoderamiento psicológico* tiene lugar cuando el individuo *efectivamente percibe* esa cesión de poder de decisión, información y recursos por parte de sus superiores. Los resultados de esta tesis doctoral contribuyen teóricamente a confirmar los postulados anteriores, además de proporcionar un mayor conocimiento del tema objeto de estudio. Este trabajo profundiza en algunos antecedentes contextuales del empoderamiento psicológico y pone de relieve algunas de sus consecuencias positivas a nivel individual. Dado que los análisis se han llevado a cabo en base a una muestra de trabajadores hoteleros, seleccionada en tres grandes destinos turísticos españoles, los resultados de esta investigación son de gran utilidad para las empresas de hospedaje ya que señalan determinadas directrices para que estas organizaciones turísticas puedan llevar a cabo una mejor gestión de sus recursos humanos.

5.1.1. Antecedentes contextuales del empoderamiento psicológico

En cuanto a los antecedentes del empoderamiento psicológico analizados, determinada política organizacional de recursos humanos junto con estilos de liderazgo *facilitador* y paradójico por parte de los jefes, se perfilan como elementos determinantes para que el empoderamiento psicológico del trabajador tenga lugar.

En primer lugar, los trabajadores de la muestra seleccionada para este trabajo parecen experimentar más empoderamiento psicológico cuanto mayor es su percepción sobre el nivel de prácticas de recursos humanos (RH) de alto desempeño presentes en su organización. Las prácticas de RH de alto desempeño son conjuntos de prácticas combinadas de tal forma que favorecen un mayor rendimiento global de los trabajadores. Se trata de una serie de procedimientos de gestión del personal encaminados a: garantizar procesos de reclutamiento exhaustivos y precisos, proporcionar formación continua e intensiva de la mano de obra, asegurar un cierto nivel de seguridad laboral, desarrollar adecuados procesos de promoción interna, realizar un diseño de puestos detallado y minucioso, evaluar los resultados tanto a nivel grupal como individual, establecer políticas justas de incentivos y remuneración, y diseñar mecanismos que fomenten la participación de los trabajadores de los distintos niveles organizativos. Así, **las prácticas de RH de alto desempeño** comunican implícitamente un mensaje a todos trabajadores: que se les aprecia, se confía en ellos y se vela por su bienestar. Esto no sólo **contribuye a mejorar el grado de empoderamiento psicológico** que experimenta el trabajador, sino que tiene un notable impacto en su nivel de dedicación y **entusiasmo** en la realización de sus tareas diarias. En definitiva, las prácticas de RH de alto desempeño constituyen una clara apuesta por parte de la organización por invertir en la mejora de habilidades, conocimientos y destrezas de sus empleados (Subramony, 2009; Sun et al., 2007). Como resultado, el empoderamiento psicológico se produce, entre otros factores, cuando el empleado: mejora sus habilidades y destrezas profesionales (fruto de la formación que recibe por parte de la empresa), siente suficiente estabilidad laboral, puede acceder a la información, y cuenta con los medios adecuados para hacer su trabajo de forma eficaz.

Al mismo tiempo, esta política de recursos humanos basada en prácticas de alto desempeño parece ser el entorno organizacional ideal para que los superiores cedan autoridad y responsabilidades a sus subordinados mediante un **liderazgo facilitador**, tal y como se desprende del test de hipótesis presentado en el Capítulo 2.

En segundo lugar, los comportamientos de los jefes -medidos en este estudio en términos de percepciones de sus subordinados- parecen jugar también un papel determinante en el proceso de empoderamiento. Además del liderazgo facilitador (Ahearne et al., 2005), también el estilo de **liderazgo paradójico** (Zhang et al., 2015) de los superiores parece estar positivamente relacionado con el empoderamiento psicológico de sus empleados - tal y como se deduce de los resultados aportados en el Capítulo 3-. Esto ilustra cómo en la actualidad el papel de los jefes está cambiando en muchas organizaciones, mutando hacia un nuevo rol más participativo, colaborador y motivador respecto a los trabajadores a su cargo. Una de las principales conclusiones de esta investigación es, por tanto, la necesidad de abandonar estilos de liderazgo tradicionales tan fuertemente arraigados en determinadas empresas hoteleras, como el autocrático o el paternalista, para dar paso a modelos de gestión mucho más democráticos e inspiradores, que pongan el foco en la realización y el bienestar de los trabajadores.

5.1.2. Consecuencias del empoderamiento psicológico

En cuanto a las bondades del empoderamiento psicológico, este trabajo de investigación demuestra que **existe una clara relación positiva entre el empoderamiento psicológico y el entusiasmo laboral (*engagement*)** en los trabajadores del sector hotelero encuestados - tal y como se pone de manifiesto en los Capítulos 2 y 3. Esta aportación coincide con similares conclusiones recientemente publicadas en estudios científicos del área (Jose y Mampilly 2014; Macsinga et al. 2015). De aquí se desprende que los trabajadores empoderados son, generalmente, personas con más recursos que hacen todo lo necesario para realizar su trabajo con entusiasmo y dedicación, ya que comprenden el impacto de su trabajo en su organización. Igualmente, estos trabajadores empoderados actúan con mayor determinación y diligencia, puesto que tienen las competencias suficientes para tomar decisiones ante ciertas contingencias, pudiendo resolverlas de forma rápida y profesional.

Por otro lado, el empoderamiento otorga a los trabajadores sensación de independencia y control, así como flexibilidad y discreción en la forma de desempeñar las distintas tareas (Menguc et al., 2013). Esta autonomía de la que el empleado disfruta le permite actuar ante las distintas necesidades de los clientes de forma no estandarizada, empleando su propio criterio y aportando soluciones creativas (Karatepe, 2013;

Spreitzer, 1995). Por todo ello, parece que los trabajadores empoderados afrontan mejor determinadas situaciones complicadas de su entorno laboral. Como ejemplo, la presente investigación demuestra -en el Capítulo 4- que el **empoderamiento psicológico contribuye a mitigar los efectos negativos del ostracismo laboral en la autoestima** del trabajador, mejorando, por tanto, su bienestar laboral. Hasta la fecha, ningún estudio había contemplado el papel moderador del empoderamiento psicológico en la relación negativa existente entre ostracismo laboral y autoestima, por lo que el empoderamiento psicológico se perfila como un instrumento importante para que el trabajador pueda hacer frente mejor a situaciones de exclusión laboral.

Como conclusión general, los resultados de esta tesis doctoral parecen indicar que, en la industria hotelera -sector tradicionalmente caracterizado por la toma de decisiones centralizada, un liderazgo autoritario y una estructura jerárquica piramidal bien marcada-, es necesario virar hacia modelos de gestión de recursos humanos basados en una filosofía más participativa y orientada al *cliente interno*, donde el poder esté más democráticamente distribuido entre todas las líneas jerárquicas. Así, se favorece que los empleados tomen la iniciativa sobre cómo realizar mejor su propio trabajo en aras de un mejor servicio, y también el que puedan experimentar entusiasmo laboral como resultado de su mayor autonomía y autodeterminación. La industria hotelera se basa en una continua interacción con los clientes, quienes demandan una elevada personalización del servicio para que se adapte a sus necesidades particulares. En este tipo de sectores, de nada sirve plantear modelos de gestión con estructuras complejas que dificulten la rápida toma de decisiones y limiten la actuación del trabajador ante situaciones relativamente sencillas de resolver -si se tiene potestad para ello-. Hoy más que nunca, en entornos empresariales tan competitivos y turbulentos como los de los últimos años, la flexibilidad y la rapidez en la respuesta son casi una obligación en el sector servicios; por ello, es necesario que se permita que los empleados empiecen a pensar y actuar de forma estratégica sobre su trabajo y su entorno laboral, y asuman responsabilidades por la calidad de sus resultados.

El objetivo principal de esta tesis doctoral era identificar una serie de antecedentes y consecuencias del empoderamiento psicológico del trabajador hotelero para intentar descifrar si, a través del mismo, era posible generar entusiasmo laboral en una industria tan particular. Las prácticas de RH de alto rendimiento junto con los estilos de liderazgo facilitador y paradójico parecen configurar el entorno idóneo para el empoderamiento psicológico. Éste tiene efectos positivos en el entusiasmo laboral

de los empleados, además de contribuir a contrarrestar algunos eventos negativos como el ostracismo laboral. La Teoría del Intercambio Social (Blau, 1986), la de la Autodeterminación (Ryan and Deci, 2000) y la Teoría de la Autoeficacia (Bandura, 1977), parecen configurarse como los marcos teóricos idóneos para encontrar una explicación científica a los fenómenos y procesos relacionados con el empoderamiento anteriormente descritos.

Esta tesis doctoral tiene distintas contribuciones teóricas y numerosas aplicaciones prácticas, las cuales se detallan en los epígrafes siguientes.

5.2. Implicaciones del trabajo de investigación para el ámbito académico

Además de una aportación novedosa a la literatura académica específica de las áreas de turismo y gestión hotelera, este trabajo supone una contribución a los campos teóricos del liderazgo, el entusiasmo laboral y el empoderamiento. Concretamente, con esta tesis doctoral se responde a dos grandes interrogantes: *cómo generar empoderamiento psicológico en trabajadores hoteleros*, y *cuáles son las principales consecuencias de ello*. Al esclarecer una serie de mecanismos internos, organizacionales e individuales, que explican los procesos anteriores, se apunta hacia el liderazgo facilitador como principal desencadenante del empoderamiento psicológico, y al entusiasmo laboral como su mayor consecuencia a nivel individual. Al mismo tiempo, esta investigación también contribuye de forma indirecta a dilucidar ciertos factores clave importantes para combatir una problemática de gran interés social en la actualidad como es la exclusión u ostracismo laboral. Paralelamente, se señala la autoestima del trabajador como un factor relevante en su comportamiento extra-rol.

5.2.1. Contribución teórica: antecedentes y consecuencias del empoderamiento psicológico

De acuerdo con Alfes et al., (2013), las investigaciones actuales sobre RH deben centrarse en el enfoque de *caja negra*: es decir, desentrañar aquellos procesos intrínsecos que tienen lugar en el seno de las organizaciones y que explican y contribuyen a resultados organizativos a un nivel más global. Analizar esos mecanismos internos que suceden en el nivel intermedio organizativo ayuda especialmente a comprender

el origen de determinados comportamientos y actitudes de los trabajadores. En esta tesis doctoral se han inspeccionado algunos de esos “elementos de la caja negra” de las organizaciones que conducen a que los empleados sean diligentes, autónomos, resolutivos y entusiastas; todos ellos, aspectos clave en esos “momentos de la verdad” en los que los empleados interactúan con los clientes durante la prestación del servicio.

En este trabajo, el **empoderamiento psicológico se perfila como claro antecedente del entusiasmo laboral** en la industria hotelera española. Muy pocos trabajos han demostrado anteriormente esta relación (ej. Jose and Mampilly, 2014; Macinga et al., 2015; Quiñones et al., 2013), por lo que se trata de una aportación interesante para las disciplinas de gestión hotelera y gestión de recursos humanos. En definitiva, el hallazgo de esta relación empoderamiento psicológico-entusiasmo laboral es relevante no sólo por el mayor conocimiento sobre la interrelación entre ambos constructos, sino porque las publicaciones científicas que establecen dicha asociación son aún realmente escasas – tal vez debido a la reciente aparición de ambos *topics* en la literatura de gestión-. Es más, como apuntan Karatepe y Olugbade (2009), el entusiasmo laboral es un tema especialmente poco analizado en el sector hotelero.

Si bien es cierto que el empoderamiento es un constructo más maduro, estudiado de forma más o menos constante en las dos últimas décadas, la investigación sobre el entusiasmo laboral aún se encuentra en una “fase embrionaria”, como afirma Lee (2012). Por lo tanto, cualquier investigación que contribuya a su mayor conocimiento resulta valiosa para la comunidad científica hoy en día. Según los resultados de esta tesis doctoral, las prácticas de RH de alto desempeño y el liderazgo facilitador parecen crear la atmósfera ideal para que el empoderamiento y el entusiasmo laboral tengan lugar. Las prácticas de RH de alto desempeño favorecen, en cierto modo, determinados comportamientos facilitadores (“empoderantes”) de los superiores, quienes, en este contexto, promueven la autonomía y descentralización en la toma de decisiones en beneficio de sus subordinados. Estos procesos, en última instancia, generan empoderamiento y entusiasmo laboral. Además de lo anterior, el Capítulo 3 ilustra cómo el estilo de liderazgo servicial de los jefes parece estar positivamente relacionado con el entusiasmo laboral de los trabajadores.

Por otro lado, esta tesis doctoral contribuye también al ámbito académico en lo que refiere a la **investigación empírica de nuevos estilos de liderazgo**. Los estilos de liderazgo clásicos, como el transaccional o transformacional, han sido objeto de

numerosos estudios durante la segunda mitad del siglo XX. De hecho, la relación entre el liderazgo transformacional y el empoderamiento psicológico ha quedado claramente dibujada anteriormente en diversas investigaciones (por ejemplo: Avolio et al., 2004; Gill et al., 2010; Meyerson and Kline, 2008; Şahin, 2014; Tims et al., 2011). Por el contrario, los efectos de *nuevos* estilos de liderazgo como el facilitador (Ahearne et al., 2005; Arnold et al., 2008) el servicial (Liden et al., 2015) y el paradójico (Zhang et al., 2015) permanecen aún muy poco explorados en la literatura de gestión. Es más, existe un creciente interés por descubrir su influencia en distintas culturas y en diferentes sectores económicos. Esta investigación aporta conocimiento sobre esos nuevos estilos de liderazgo. Sin embargo, es necesario matizar que la exploración de los efectos de estos tres estilos de liderazgo no se ha realizado únicamente para cubrir ese vacío, sino porque teóricamente parecen ser soluciones de liderazgo especialmente idóneas para la industria hotelera, necesitada claramente de líderes que sepan mantener ese punto intermedio entre la orientación hacia las personas y hacia los resultados (*paradójicos*), que sean solícitos y den ejemplo (*serviciales*), y que estén dispuestos a delegar autoridad, poder y responsabilidades (*facilitadores*).

La relación entre liderazgo facilitador y empoderamiento se había analizado anteriormente, pero principalmente en contextos anglosajones (Bester et al., 2015; Lorinkova y Perry, 2015; Namasivayam et al., 2014), y en otros ámbitos de actividad, como la industria farmacéutica (Klerk y Stander, 2014) o la tecnológica (Fong y Snape, 2015; Zhang y Bartol, 2010). Sin embargo, no son tantas las investigaciones al respecto realizadas en Europa y en el sector turístico europeo (Klidas et al., 2007) - y mucho menos en España-. En este trabajo, se perfila el liderazgo facilitador como claro antecedente del empoderamiento psicológico en una muestra española de 329 trabajadores de hotel, enriqueciéndose así el conocimiento del fenómeno en cuanto al ámbito geográfico y en lo referente al sector de actividad.

El liderazgo servicial (Greenleaf, 1977) es un constructo novedoso que ha cobrado especial interés en la literatura de gestión en los últimos años (Liden et al., 2014, 2015). Pese a la obvia necesidad de emplear personal con una clara *orientación al servicio* en el sector terciario (Pizam, 2012), paradójicamente se trata de un tema objeto de estudio apenas analizado en el sector servicios, y aún más escasamente en contextos hoteleros -con la excepción del trabajo de Hsiao et al., (2015)-. En esta tesis doctoral se examinan comportamientos de líderes serviciales en empresas hoteleras, y se llega a la conclusión de que este tipo de liderazgo por parte de los jefes

es un predictor del entusiasmo laboral de sus subordinados, pero no de su nivel de empoderamiento psicológico (*ver Discusión del Capítulo 3*).

Quizá una de las aportaciones más interesantes de esta tesis doctoral sea el análisis del liderazgo paradójico: un estilo de liderazgo del que existen verdaderamente muy pocas publicaciones hasta la fecha (eg. Lavine, 2014; Lewis et al., 2014, Zhang et al., 2015). De hecho, la búsqueda específica de “liderazgo paradójico” en las principales bases de datos (como ABI o ProQuest) arroja menos de una veintena de trabajos relacionados en mayor o menor medida con este tema. Esta exigüidad de estudios sobre el liderazgo paradójico quizá se explique porque no es hasta 2015 cuando se operacionaliza el fenómeno, con el desarrollo de la escala de Zhang et al. (2015) en China; o porque, como argumentan estos autores, el esquema mental occidental no está acostumbrado a un razonamiento tan holístico. De hecho, la concepción del todo como una suma de opuestos (similar al planteamiento del *Yin y el Yang*) es un modelo de pensamiento bastante más frecuente en países asiáticos que en occidentales, según reconocen Zhang y sus compañeros (2015). Esto puede explicar la falta de relación encontrada en el presente estudio entre liderazgo paradójico y entusiasmo laboral, lo cual tiene sentido si se tiene en cuenta que, en el esquema mental occidental, ciertas ambigüedades en el comportamiento de un superior pueden despertar suspicacia entre sus trabajadores o interpretarse recelosamente como una falta de claridad intencionada. Sin embargo, el liderazgo paradójico sí resulta ser un antecedente del empoderamiento psicológico, como demuestran los datos del Capítulo 3, confirmándose la hipótesis de que el jefe paradójico centraliza el control, pero descentraliza la toma de decisiones de cuestiones menores. Esta tesis doctoral contribuye por tanto a la validación de dicha escala en un ámbito europeo, lo cual representa un hito necesario y destacable.

Por último, resaltar los novedosos resultados obtenidos en el Capítulo 4: se identifica el papel moderador del empoderamiento psicológico en la relación negativa existente entre ostracismo laboral y autoestima. Con ello, se ofrece una nueva visión del empoderamiento como herramienta útil para mitigar determinados conflictos y situaciones negativas que pueden tener lugar en el interior de las organizaciones turísticas, como la exclusión laboral.

5.2.2. Una nueva operacionalización del empoderamiento psicológico

Peterson (2014) pone de manifiesto la falta de consistencia existente en las investigaciones científicas respecto a la operacionalización del constructo *empoderamiento*. Pese a que la comunidad científica coincide en que se trata de un constructo multidimensional (compuesto por cuatro dimensiones diferenciadas: *significado, competencia autodeterminación e impacto*), su tratamiento a nivel operativo ha sido diverso. Así, determinados autores lo conciben como un constructo reflectivo multidimensional (Spreitzer, 1995), y otros lo operacionalizan como una combinación aditiva de sus dimensiones para obtener una medida global del grado de empoderamiento -de forma que cuanto mayor es esta cifra se entiende que mayor es el nivel de empoderamiento- (por ej. Albrecht y Andreetta, 2011; Fong y Snape, 2015; Quiñones et al., 2013; Zhang y Bartol, 2010).

Sin embargo, como sugiere Peterson (2014), es necesario realizar operacionalizaciones más precisas del empoderamiento, ya que teóricamente parece identificarse con un constructo de orden superior (*higher-order construct*). Los constructos formativos y compuestos (*composites*) se caracterizan porque sus indicadores de medida contribuyen de forma conjunta al significado conceptual del constructo. Son medidas endógenas, en las que los indicadores causan el constructo (no son un reflejo del mismo, como ocurre en el caso de los reflectivos); tampoco sus indicadores son conceptualmente intercambiables, ya que estos difieren entre sí en su contenido (Braojos-Gómez et al., 2015; Rigdon et al., 2014).

Por este motivo, y gracias a las funcionalidades para el tratamiento de constructos compuestos que brinda el programa *SmartPLS 3.2.3. Professional* (Ringle et al., 2015), se decidió explorar una conceptualización operativa más precisa del empoderamiento psicológico: concibiéndolo como un constructo reflectivo en el primer orden y compuesto en el segundo. De este modo, se ofrece una perspectiva mucho más completa del tema principal objeto de estudio de la tesis, aportando una visión complementaria al enfoque reflectivo tradicional. Esta nueva conceptualización del empoderamiento psicológico como constructo compuesto es ahora metodológicamente posible debido al recientemente desarrollo de programas como *SmartPLS o Adanco*.

En definitiva, esta tesis doctoral supone una contribución a los distintos campos de estudio en los que se circunscribe este trabajo, tanto desde el punto de vista teórico

como metodológico. Además, los antecedentes y consecuencias del empoderamiento psicológico identificados en esta investigación ofrecen directrices sobre cómo mejorar gestión de recursos humanos en empresas turísticas, lo cual tiene una clara implicación práctica que se detalla a continuación.

5.3. Implicaciones para la práctica empresarial

Esta tesis doctoral realiza diferentes aportaciones de interés para el ámbito empresarial, ya que ayuda a comprender mejor los mecanismos internos que tienen lugar en el seno de las organizaciones que logran generar empoderamiento psicológico y entusiasmo laboral.

Este trabajo señala a los directivos de empresas hoteleras la importancia de empoderar a sus empleados. El empoderamiento otorga a los trabajadores una serie de herramientas que facilitan la rápida resolución de ciertas contingencias surgidas durante la presentación del servicio – con la consiguiente satisfacción del cliente al ver sus necesidades inmediatamente satisfechas –, al tiempo que el propio trabajador se siente psicológicamente mejor al ser consciente de que su empresa confía en su criterio y le ha delegado autoridad para tomar determinadas decisiones. Es más, este estudio demuestra que es posible – y cómo – lograr entusiasmo laboral entre los trabajadores de un sector tan complicado como el hotelero: una actividad empresarial donde los índices de absentismo y rotación de personal suelen ser altos, dadas sus peculiaridades (falta de reconocimiento social, bajos salarios, fuerte carga laboral, turnos de trabajo cambiantes, etc. (Tongchaiprasit and Ariyabuddhiphong, 2016)). Los resultados señalan hacia el empoderamiento psicológico de los trabajadores como un estado psicológico estrechamente vinculado con el sentimiento de entusiasmo laboral. Por lo tanto, si se quiere contar con empleados entregados e implicados, debe dotárseles de poder.

Esta investigación puede ser de utilidad también para los responsables de recursos humanos de los hoteles, ya que pone de relieve la importancia de implementar prácticas de RH de alto rendimiento para la mejora – no sólo a nivel técnico, sino también a nivel actitudinal –, de los trabajadores en contacto directo con la clientela. En primer lugar, para lograr el empoderamiento psicológico, es necesario contar con un contexto organizacional halagüeño. Para ello, los responsables de personal de los

hoteles deben promover las prácticas de RH de alto desempeño. Así, se generarán entornos de trabajo participativos que faciliten la toma de decisiones sin miedo a las represalias. Igualmente, es importante que la política de RH de la empresa brinde determinada seguridad laboral y se apoye en un sistema de remuneración e incentivos en base al rendimiento individual y grupal. Asimismo, deben llevarse a cabo procesos de selección de personal exhaustivos que permitan contratar a los trabajadores más idóneos de acuerdo a los valores organizativos. En el marco de esta política de RH, los hoteles deben hacer también una clara apuesta por la formación continua en aras de fomentar el sentimiento de competencia y valía de su mano de obra, invirtiendo en el *capital psicológico* de la organización (Paek et al., 2015). Todo ello, con vistas a lograr una mayor autoeficacia del personal (Bandura, 1977), favoreciendo su autodeterminación (Ryan y Deci, 2000) y haciéndoles sentir valiosos en su trabajo. Como señalan Sun et al. (2007), este tipo de política de RH supone un importante desembolso para las organizaciones, pero ello debe verse más como inversión que como coste puesto que estos autores aseguran que realmente reeditúa en el medio plazo.

En segundo lugar, las percepciones sobre los comportamientos de los jefes –las distintas manifestaciones de sus estilos de liderazgo – juegan un papel crucial en el bienestar psicológico de los trabajadores. Esta tesis demuestra la asociación entre los estilos de liderazgo facilitador y servicial y el entusiasmo laboral; también la relación existente entre los comportamientos facilitadores y paradójicos de los líderes y el empoderamiento psicológico de sus subordinados. Por lo tanto, los jefes deben ser muy conscientes del impacto que tienen sus comportamientos en el bienestar psicológico, e incluso en el desempeño, de sus trabajadores. En esta línea, las empresas hoteleras han de ser conscientes del nuevo rol que deben asumir los jefes del siglo XXI. De acuerdo con Liden et al. (2014) y un reciente estudio de Deloitte (2014), la nueva fuerza laboral está mejor formada y preparada que antes y tiene altas expectativas laborales, por lo que no está tan dispuesta a aceptar jefes autocráticos. El jefe actual debería centrarse más en su papel de *coach*, como entrenador y motivador de su plantilla, en lugar de ejercer un control estricto y pormenorizado de toda la operativa diaria de su departamento. Para ello debe, sobre todo, rodearse de un buen equipo de profesionales en los que poder confiar y en quienes poder delegar responsabilidades y autoridad.

Observando los resultados de la presente investigación, se recomienda a las organizaciones turísticas que intensifiquen sus esfuerzos de reclutamiento y selección de personal, para lograr reclutar y formar directivos y mandos intermedios más democráticos y participativos que sepan emplear su poder con efectos positivos y también seleccionar y capacitar trabajadores con una alta autoestima que sean capaces de asumir todo tipo de responsabilidades para así garantizar una buena atención al cliente.

También se anima a los gerentes a desarrollar formación continua en todos los niveles jerárquicos de la organización, para que permee la filosofía del empoderamiento tanto en jefes como en empleados base. Con una adecuada capacitación los jefes dejarán de ver el empoderamiento como una amenaza: observarán que así los trabajadores son más capaces de atender y solucionar rápida y correctamente peticiones y quejas de los clientes en la operativa diaria del hotel (dejándoles a los jefes más tiempo para las tareas propias de gestión). Igualmente, debe formarse y recompensarse de alguna forma a los trabajadores que adopten esta nueva filosofía, puesto que muchos pueden mostrarse reticentes a asumir más responsabilidades sin recibir ningún incentivo para ello.

A nivel empresarial, es necesario promover un mayor conocimiento de los efectos positivos del empoderamiento y de la importancia de lograr la adecuada fusión entre empoderamiento psicológico y estructural. Este estudio puede servir de guía o impulso para aquellas organizaciones que se están planteando abrazar esta filosofía de gestión más participativa: tal vez pueda animarles a valorar lo adecuado de su implantación, además de facilitarles un esquema-modelo organizativo (en términos de prácticas de RH y estilos de liderazgo) que les facilite el proceso. Por otro lado, también está dirigido a aquellas empresas turísticas tradicionales y jerárquicas, aún reticentes a apostar por un cambio organizativo hacia el empoderamiento demostrándoles los múltiples *outputs* positivos que éste genera. Finalmente, los resultados presentados en esta tesis doctoral pueden ser de utilidad para aquellas compañías que han implantado un proceso de empoderamiento pero que ha resultado fallido: tal vez esta aportación les conduzca a la reflexión sobre elementos clave del proceso que quizás no hayan tenido en cuenta, o a pulir ciertos errores cometidos durante su implantación.

Esta investigación también señala una serie de factores organizativos y personales necesarios para que los empleados del sector servicios experimenten bienestar laboral

y puedan afrontar mejor situaciones negativas como el ostracismo laboral. Una de las grandes preocupaciones en las empresas actuales son las disfuncionalidades que se están produciendo en muchas organizaciones, resultado de mayores riesgos psicosociales como el estrés o la ansiedad -generados por la inestabilidad laboral-. No es de extrañar que surjan más conflictos internos entre trabajadores, experimentando algunos de ellos ciertas formas de acoso o exclusión por parte de sus propios compañeros. Esta investigación descubre el papel balsámico del empoderamiento psicológico en esos contextos, en base a la teoría de Ryan y Deci (2000); es decir, cómo empoderando a los trabajadores se satisfacen sus necesidades de *autonomía* y *competencia*, compensando en cierta manera el hueco de la *necesidad social*. Así, se insta a los empleadores a dotar de mayor poder y recursos a aquellos individuos más susceptibles de sufrir aislamiento laboral, y se recomienda que capaciten a los trabajadores, en la medida de lo posible, en habilidades de inteligencia emocional -como se sugiere en el Capítulo 4. En línea con Lee et al. (2016), llevar a cabo acciones que faciliten “experiencias de recuperación” de energía del personal (que tenga la posibilidad de tomar días libres si lo necesitan, ofrecerles flexibilidad horaria para que puedan practicar actividades al aire libre, etc.), pueden ser iniciativas muy interesantes para ayudar a los trabajadores a lidiar mejor con posibles situaciones de tensión en sus entornos laborales.

Esta tesis doctoral tiene también interesantes implicaciones para los docentes, ya que les orienta sobre la necesidad de formar a futuros líderes en nuevas competencias profesionales asociadas con liderazgos más serviciales y facilitadores, y les señala la importancia de dar a conocer casos de éxito de empresas que abogan por el empoderamiento (ej. Semco, Semler (1989)).

En definitiva, esta tesis doctoral confirma la hipótesis de que es posible lograr trabajadores empoderados y, consecuentemente, entusiasmados en el sector hotelero, y apunta hacia las prácticas de recursos humanos de alto desempeño y hacia estilos de liderazgo más orientados hacia las personas (como el servicial, el paradójico y el facilitador), como piezas clave para que el mecanismo del empoderamiento empiece a rodar. En última instancia, la lógica de todo ello es simple: según la teoría de la Autodeterminación de Ryan y Deci (2000), son tres las necesidades básicas de todo individuo: competencia, autonomía y relaciones sociales, por lo que las actuaciones empresariales encaminadas a satisfacer alguna de esas necesidades (o, mejor aún, *todas* ellas), redundarán en un bienestar psicológico y laboral del trabajador.

5.4. Limitaciones y futuras líneas de investigación

A pesar de las importantes contribuciones teóricas y prácticas que realiza esta tesis doctoral la presente investigación no está exenta de limitaciones, las cuales pueden verse como áreas de mejora a considerar en futuros trabajos.

5.4.1. Reflexiones sobre las limitaciones en la investigación científica

Los resultados de este estudio – y, en líneas generales, los de cualquier investigación – deben observarse siempre con cautela, dado que presentan solamente una *aproximación parcial* a la realidad objeto de estudio. Como afirma MacCallum (2003: 118) “*el fenómeno empírico que da lugar a las varianzas y covarianzas en la población es demasiado complejo como para que sea posible capturarlo en su totalidad mediante un modelo lineal basado en una serie de factores comunes*”. En efecto, resulta materialmente imposible contemplar todos los posibles escenarios que explican las relaciones de asociación o causalidad entre variables, o tener en cuenta todas las variables predictivas y de control (*confounding*) que condicionan o influyen sobre las variables dependientes o endógenas del análisis.

En esta línea, y de acuerdo con la reflexión de Chin (2010), coincidimos con autores como Meehl (1990) al afirmar que cualquier modelo de investigación es siempre imperfecto, y que el concepto de *verosimilitud* varía mucho según la forma en que los estudios intentan acercarse a la realidad objeto de estudio. De hecho, existe cierta dificultad para reflejar la enorme complejidad que caracteriza “al mundo real”, el cual está lleno de contradicciones, difíciles de reflejar de forma exhaustiva en un modelo teórico. Tal es así, que Rozeboom (2005) insta a reconocer que las teorías científicas no son siempre completamente verídicas en todos sus aspectos; lo cual debe inducir al investigador a plantearse no tanto si su modelo es cierto, sino *en qué grado* lo es. De hecho, Blalock (1986) afirma que a la hora de formular teorías y modelos existe una incompatibilidad natural entre *generalización*, *parsimonia* y *precisión*, siendo necesario normalmente sacrificar alguna de esas tres características deseables en toda investigación.

Las limitaciones, por tanto, deben verse como algo inherente a la investigación científica, y especialmente en el ámbito de las Ciencias Sociales y Empresariales,

donde es frecuente que los conceptos centrales de estudio sean constructos latentes, no observables, cuya medición se basa en aproximaciones (=proxy) que los individuos hacen del fenómeno. Esta aproximación, o intento de operacionalizar un constructo no directamente observable, se realiza a través de una serie de ítems o elementos cuantificables no exentos de cierta carga subjetiva (ya que normalmente apelan a percepciones o sentimientos de los individuos).

Igualmente, existe el potencial de error dadas las propias características de la muestra, la cual generalmente está compuesta por *personas* – con sus consecuentes estados de ánimo cambiantes, con mayor o menor tendencia a responder lo “socialmente deseable”, con una predisposición positiva o negativa a contestar ciertas preguntas, etc.-. También el método elegido para la recolección de datos puede ejercer cierta influencia en el grado de precisión de la respuesta, incluso en la propia tasa de respuesta; así, pueden ser condicionantes: el lenguaje empleado en la redacción de las preguntas, la duración o extensión del instrumento de medición, e incluso el propio diseño del formato de respuesta. Es más, el propio encuestador puede también inducir sesgos en la recolección de datos, de manera más o menos intencionada. Pueden existir sesgos hasta en el tratamiento metodológico de los datos (como las limitaciones del propio *software* empleado para el análisis multivariante).

En definitiva, tal y como señalan Podsakoff et al. (2003) y Yüksel (2017), en cualquier trabajo de investigación, sobre todo en aquellos que miden actitudes o comportamientos, pueden converger multitud de sesgos. Dichos sesgos pueden emerger fruto del método de recolección de datos empleado, del equipo investigador, así como con de las propias características de los individuos bajo observación, por lo que, en cualquier caso, siempre existe la potencialidad de que algún sesgo altere en mayor o menor medida los resultados que arrojan los datos. Así, la *varianza del método* común hace referencia a aquella varianza atribuible al método de medida más que a los propios constructos que representan las medidas, la cual influye en las relaciones observadas entre constructos -aumentándolas o disminuyéndolas, -y puede derivar, en última instancia, en errores de Tipo I o II- (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Por lo tanto, los resultados de toda investigación deben interpretarse con cierta prudencia.

5.4.2. Precauciones metodológicas adoptadas para minimizar los sesgos

Si bien es cierto que ninguna investigación está exenta de determinado margen de error asociado con la medición del fenómeno, también lo es el hecho de que se pueden -y deben- adoptar una serie de precauciones para lograr minimizar dichos errores. En este sentido, lo que sí está al alcance del investigador es la adopción de una serie de medidas preventivas de carácter metodológico que reduzcan al máximo posible la influencia potencial de los distintos tipos sesgos. Dichas recomendaciones en cuanto al método, el instrumento y el proceso vienen excelentemente recogidas en el trabajo seminal de Podsakoff et al., (2003).

Esas precauciones metodológicas se han tenido muy presentes a lo largo de este trabajo, tanto en la elaboración y diseño del instrumento de medición como en el subsiguiente proceso de recolección de datos. Algunas de las medidas adoptadas, en línea con investigaciones similares (Alfes et al., 2013; Hsiao et al., 2015; Paek et al., 2015), han sido ya especificadas en los Capítulos 3, 4 y 5, pero se resumen de forma global a continuación:

- Uso de escalas existentes y previamente validadas en la literatura, que han demostrado elevados niveles de fiabilidad y validez.
- Inclusión de preguntas en reversa, redactadas de forma negativa, para verificar el grado de atención de los encuestados al responder.
- Inclusión de explicaciones claras y sencillas para los participantes en el trabajo de campo.
- Empleo de distintas instrucciones como barrera psicológica para cada bloque de preguntas.
- Presentación de las variables del estudio en un orden distinto del de las hipótesis, para que los encuestados no pudieran discernir el modelo bajo estudio y condicionar sus respuestas de algún modo.
- Máxima Pulcritud en la redacción de los ítems, de forma que sean fáciles de entender y estén escritos de la forma más objetiva y aséptica posible, sin que induzcan a una respuesta determinada ni generen ambigüedades en su

interpretación. Dichos ítems tampoco contienen términos confusos o poco comunes para el encuestado. (El método sugerido por Brislin (1980) de traducción y traducción inversa de cuestionarios, junto con la aplicación de una versión inicial del cuestionario en una muestra piloto de trabajadores de hotel, fueron procesos claves para la obtención de una versión depurada del instrumento de medición, perfectamente comprensible en un contexto español).

- Garantía de anonimato y confidencialidad de las respuestas (por ejemplo, mediante la puesta a disposición del encuestado de un sobre cerrado para la entrega de su respuesta, que fue recogido directamente por el equipo de investigación).
- Comprobación *ad hoc* de la inexistencia del sesgo de método común mediante técnicas estadísticas: factor único o test de Harman (Podsakoff y Organ, 1986), y la inclusión de una variable latente común en el modelo para comparar la varianza sustancial con la del método (Matzler et al., 2016).

5.4.3. Limitaciones de esta investigación y futuras líneas de investigación

Pese a las precauciones metodológicas adoptadas, y en consonancia con lo expuesto en el primer punto de este Capítulo 5, esta tesis doctoral tiene una serie de limitaciones, las cuales pueden verse como oportunidades de mejora que pueden inspirar futuras investigaciones.

5.4.3.1. Muestra de conveniencia.

En primer lugar, una de las mayores limitaciones del estudio es la selección de una **muestra de conveniencia**.

El uso de muestras de conveniencia es una práctica común en la investigación en ciencias empresariales (Ferris et al., 2015), siendo aún más frecuente en estudios que conjugan las disciplinas de turismo y recursos humanos -centrados normalmente en medir percepciones y comportamientos de trabajadores base (por ejemplo: Deng et al., 2013; Garg y Dhar, 2016; Kong et al., 2016; Lee et al., 2016; Macinga et al., 2015; Ro y Chen, 2011)-.

Lo anterior puede que se deba a la dificultad de delimitar con precisión la población objeto de estudio, por lo que se complica la subsecuentemente realización de procesos de muestreo estadístico aleatorio o estratificado. Los estudios cuya población de estudio se centra en la cúspide directiva son relativamente más sencillos de acotar al identificar un solo individuo por empresa al que dirigirse (normalmente el director general), o un solo mando intermedio por departamento (ej. jefe del departamento de Recursos Humanos) -datos en mayor o menor medida accesibles en las principales bases de datos empresariales-.

Sin embargo, el objeto central del presente estudio era conocer la percepción y los sentimientos de los *trabajadores de niveles jerárquicos inferiores* respecto a los estilos de liderazgo de sus jefes y a las prácticas de recursos humanos de su organización, así como sus niveles de empoderamiento, implicación, autoestima y ostracismo. Por lo tanto, la población de interés para esta investigación abarcaba empleados de la industria hotelera que tuvieran un supervisor inmediato en el organigrama empresarial, y que, a su vez, mantuvieran un contacto directo y frecuente con la clientela - bien cara a cara, o por teléfono- (al evaluarse también sus *comportamientos extra-rol* en la atención al cliente). Es decir, la población de este estudio comprendía: recepcionistas, conserjes, comerciales, agentes de reservas, así como mandos intermedios - jefes de recepción, responsables de reservas, etc.-. La no existencia de una base de datos o directorio público que contenga los datos de todos los trabajadores del sector hotelero español, junto con la dificultad de acceder a esa información dentro de cada hotel sin que se vulnerara la Ley Orgánica de Protección de Datos (L.O.P.D.), complica la tarea de cuantificar la población total de los trabajadores de hotel, y dificulta también un acceso homogéneo e individualizado a dicho personal.

Autores como Ferris et al., (2015) utilizaron métodos más creativos para la selección de sus participantes, como la publicación de anuncios en cafeterías concurridas y redes sociales, ofreciéndoles un incentivo económico por su participación. Otros como Li-Yun et al., (2007), Sun y Law (2007), o Van Dierendonck et al., (2014) recurrieron a sus contactos personales y/o a la técnica “bola de nieve” (contactos de contactos) para conformar su muestra. Sin embargo, la mayoría de los estudios con un planteamiento similar al de esta tesis doctoral emplean la muestra de conveniencia, seleccionando a los participantes en función de la facilidad de acceso a los mismos y de su predisposición a colaborar en el estudio (Garg y Dhar, 2016; Kim, 2008; Kong et al., 2016; Luo et al., 2016). Esta forma de selección de participantes impide la

generalización de resultados a la población general (normalmente desconocida), por lo que futuras investigaciones deberían utilizar formas más precisas de muestreo estadístico de los participantes para poder inferir los resultados al total poblacional. Cabe añadirse, además, que esta investigación se ha llevado a cabo en un ámbito geográfico determinado (tres centros turísticos de gran importancia en España) y en un subsector empresarial específico (hotelería). Sería por lo tanto interesante examinar las mismas hipótesis en otros contextos culturales y otros sectores económicos para obtener una mayor generalización de los resultados.

5.4.3.2. *Un único encuestado para todas las variables*

En segundo lugar, todas las variables (tanto las independientes como las dependientes) se han obtenido de **un mismo encuestado** (*self-report*), así como en un mismo contexto y momento del tiempo.

Si bien es cierto que es el propio trabajador quien mejor puede responder sobre sus percepciones y sentimientos relativos a conceptos como su *empoderamiento psicológico*, su nivel de *implicación*, su *autoestima*, o sus percepciones sobre los *comportamientos de su jefe*, también es verdad que otras variables como su *ostracismo laboral* o su *comportamiento extra-rol* pueden ser perfectamente evaluados por compañeros de trabajo o sus propios jefes (tal y como demuestran los estudios de: Ferris et al., 2015; Fong y Snape, 2015; Zhang y Bartol, 2010); es más, la *atención al cliente extra-rol* tal vez debiera incluso evaluarse por los propios clientes (Salanova y Agut, 2005). Asimismo, la variable de *prácticas de recursos humanos de alto rendimiento* podría reportarse por el director del hotel o el jefe del departamento de recursos humanos. Sin embargo, en esta investigación lo que se pretende, en líneas generales, es evaluar la *percepción* del trabajador sobre las principales variables -que puede o no coincidir con la visión general que tengan sobre las mismas la dirección de la empresa o sus compañeros de trabajo-.

En cualquier caso, para futuras investigaciones se recomienda el empleo de múltiples fuentes en la recogida de datos. Según Podsakoff et al., (2003), lo realmente deseable para reducir la potencialidad de sesgos en investigaciones similares a la de esta tesis doctoral es la recogida de las *variables predictoras* y *criterio* de fuentes distintas, además de con una separación temporal en el proceso de recolección de datos.

5.4.3.3. *Enfoque transversal.*

El enfoque transversal en la recogida de datos plasma una situación en un momento determinado pero no recoge su posible variación en el tiempo, ni tampoco ofrece la posibilidad de identificar tendencias -a diferencia de los estudios con carácter longitudinal (Hsiao et al., 2015)-.

El uso de datos de corte transversal permite analizar una situación puntual, tal vez transitoria en la organización, pero no sirve para detectar los cambios o evolución de las variables a lo largo de un tiempo, lo cual dificulta en gran medida el poder establecer relaciones de causalidad. Por ejemplo, los efectos de las prácticas de recursos humanos de alto rendimiento pueden ser más acusados, o incluso cambiar por algún motivo, con el transcurso del tiempo (por ejemplo, tener un efecto incluso negativo a largo plazo, que quizás haga que el trabajador baje su rendimiento al sentirse con mayor seguridad o estabilidad laboral). Por todo lo anterior, un diseño de investigación longitudinal (realizando distintas mediciones de las mismas variables a lo largo del tiempo) podría proporcionar una mayor comprensión de los beneficios del uso de esas prácticas *a largo plazo*; también así se podría valorar mejor la evolución del impacto de esa u otras variables -como los diferentes *tipos de liderazgo* del jefe- en el grado de *implicación, autoestima y empoderamiento psicológico* de los trabajadores.

5.4.3.4. *Incorporación de otras variables organizacionales e individuales.*

Distintas circunstancias, distintos contextos organizacionales y diversas características personales influyen de forma directa o indirecta en las experiencias laborales y en el bienestar psicológico de los trabajadores. Por este motivo, la inclusión de otras variables individuales y organizacionales en los modelos de análisis puede contribuir a una mejor comprensión de las condiciones específicas bajo las cuales el empoderamiento psicológico, el ostracismo laboral, los tipos de liderazgo (paradójico, servicial y empoderante), las prácticas de recursos humanos de alto rendimiento y la implicación son más o menos frecuentes o efectivas, y/o desencadenan distintos resultados.

Por lo tanto, en lo que respecta a futuras líneas de investigación, se sugiere la incorporación de determinadas variables de personalidad en los análisis, similares a los estudios de Kim y Agrusa (2011) y Spielmann y Babin (2011). Tal vez así se podría

identificar mejor si existe algún rasgo de personalidad -de entre las cinco grandes tipologías (*Big Five*)- predominante en los trabajadores que manifiestan mayor empoderamiento psicológico e implicación; con este descubrimiento los procesos de selección empresarial en la industria hotelera serían tal vez más precisos.

Por otro lado, quizás también sería muy interesante evaluar -bajo el paradigma del *Intercambio Líder-Miembro* (LMX, Scandura y Graen, 1984)- si el tipo de relación existente entre jefe y empleado es un aspecto clave que influye en el nivel de autoestima del trabajador, en su grado de empoderamiento psicológico o en su comportamiento extra-rol. Asimismo, podría ser interesante introducir una perspectiva de género en el estudio, considerando como variable de control el sexo del supervisor, y observando si existen diferencias en los resultados entre las distintas diadas: jefa-subordinada, jefa-subordinado, jefe-subordinada y jefe-subordinado.

Otras variables recientemente introducidas en la literatura académica sobre hotelería son las *experiencias para la recuperación* de los trabajadores (Lee et al., 2016) y también el cuidado del *capital psicológico* (Paek et al., 2015). Estos constructos resultan de especial interés para el ámbito de estudio de esta tesis doctoral dado su impacto potencial en el bienestar psicológico y en el desempeño de los trabajadores. Se recomienda su integración en estudios similares en futuras investigaciones.

5.4.3.5. *Enfoque meramente cuantitativo.*

Por último, mencionar que en esta investigación se ha optado por un enfoque meramente cuantitativo, obviando la mayor riqueza en cuanto a la comprensión de fenómenos que ofrecen los enfoques mixtos o triangulados (aquellos que emplean tanto análisis cuantitativo como cualitativo). Los datos cualitativos indudablemente contribuyen a una mayor profundidad en la interpretación de los contextos y las causas que perfilan el marco de la investigación.

La investigación cualitativa es más inductiva y permite una mejor comprensión de los elementos y del sentido de sus relaciones. Especialmente en el caso de estudios sobre personas, el enfoque cualitativo proporcionaría una explicación mucho más exhaustiva de los distintos casos y variables, ayudando a comprender en mayor medida las situaciones en las que se producen inconsistencias matemáticas (irregularidades en el campo estadístico) o por qué hay predicciones que no se cumplen.

El uso de ambos paradigmas (enfoque mixto) facilitaría sin duda una visión más holística de los fenómenos analizados.

5.5. Consideraciones finales

Pese a las carencias detectadas en la presente investigación se trata de un trabajo novedoso en el ámbito académico y de interés para la industria hotelera, dado su enorme potencial de aplicación empresarial.

En una era caracterizada por la mecanización de los servicios y la tecnificación de los procesos, esta investigación pone en valor el recurso humano, señalando la importancia de su bienestar laboral y psicológico. Este trabajo es, por tanto, un recordatorio de que “*las organizaciones son las personas*”, y de que las ventajas competitivas se basan, normalmente, en aquellos *componentes intangibles* (como las actitudes y comportamientos de los trabajadores) que determinan la forma en la que se presta un servicio y que configuran la experiencia hotelera: en *aquello* que no es fácilmente copiable ni imitable (Barney et al., 2001) .

Como reconocía el director de Operaciones de la cadena hotelera Ritz-Carlton: **el 10% del éxito en el servicio son las instalaciones, la *plataforma*,... el resto se debe al personal** (Robison, 2006).

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APÉNDICE.
CUESTIONARIO





**UNIVERSIDAD
DE GRANADA**

Estimado compañero/a

Soy una estudiante del Programa de Doctorado en Ciencias Empresariales de la Universidad de Granada y actualmente me encuentro en la fase de recolección de datos para mi tesis doctoral. Mi estudio trata sobre la gestión de Recursos Humanos en empresas del sector turístico.

Me dirijo a usted solicitando por favor su colaboración rellenando el cuestionario adjunto (15 minutos). Su participación es realmente valiosa y puede contribuir a la mejor comprensión del fenómeno estudiado: la influencia de ciertas prácticas de recursos humanos y estilos de liderazgo en determinadas actitudes del trabajador y su experiencia en el trabajo.

Las tres primeras secciones presentan una serie de frases con las que tendrá que expresar su grado de acuerdo o desacuerdo según su entorno laboral. La última parte recoge aspectos demográficos solamente para cálculos estadísticos.

Dado el carácter personal de la encuesta **no existen respuestas correctas ni incorrectas**. Así que lea cuidadosamente cada frase y responda por favor de forma honesta según su propia experiencia

La **confidencialidad y anonimato están totalmente garantizados**: en ningún caso se identificará al individuo o la organización en el estudio, sino que se obtendrán resultados de forma agregada y anónima.

Para cualquier consulta sobre el propósito del estudio o sobre la forma de responder el cuestionario puede ponerse en contacto conmigo en el teléfono +34 68602xxxx o por email: hirev@correo.ugr.es.

Muchas gracias por su colaboración! Agradezco mucho su ayuda

Irene Huertas
Dpto. de Organización de Empresas
Facultad de Ciencias Económicas y Empresariales
Campus Universitario de Cartuja s/n C.P.18071
Granada (España)

Indique su puesto de trabajo actual en la empresa:

Mando Intermedio

▪ Jefe del Dpto. de Recepción

▪ Jefe de Alimentos y Bebidas

▪ Jefe de Reservas

▪ Responsable de Eventos/reuniones

▪ Otro (indicar) _____

Empleado base

▪ Recepcionista

▪ Ayudante de recepción

▪ Conserje

▪ Agente de reservas

▪ Otro (indicar) _____

¿Cuánto tiempo lleva trabajando en su puesto actual en este hotel? _____
(años y meses).

Indique el puesto de su supervisor inmediato _____

SECCIÓN 1: PERCEPCIÓN DE PRÁCTICAS DE RECURSOS HUMANOS

Aquí se detallan ciertas prácticas que las empresas pueden emplear para la gestión de sus recursos humanos. **Indique su grado de acuerdo o desacuerdo para cada frase según se aplique dicha práctica en su hotel para la gestión del personal en contacto directo con el cliente.**

Use la siguiente escala para puntuar:

Totalmente en desacuerdo ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ Totalmente de acuerdo

A la hora de contratar personal, se pone un gran esfuerzo en el proceso selectivo para escoger a la persona correcta.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Se buscan empleados con potencial a largo plazo.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Se le otorga mucha importancia al proceso de selección de personal.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Se pone mucho esfuerzo en la selección del nuevo personal.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

A los trabajadores de mi departamento se les proporciona una amplia formación específica.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Generalmente, los trabajadores reciben cursos de formación de la empresa cada pocos años.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
En la empresa existen programas de formación establecidos que enseñan a los nuevos empleados las habilidades necesarias para realizar su trabajo.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Se ofrecen a los trabajadores programas formativos para mejorar sus posibilidades de promoción profesional en esta empresa.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Los trabajadores tienen pocas posibilidades de ascender profesionalmente en esta empresa.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Los trabajadores no tienen futuro profesional en esta empresa.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
En esta empresa, los ascensos en la categoría profesional se basan en la antigüedad del trabajador.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Los trabajadores tienen claras trayectorias profesionales dentro de esta empresa. (<i>trayectoria profesional</i> = una carrera profesional definida dentro de la empresa)	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Los empleados que aspiran a un ascenso tienen más de un puesto potencial al que promocionar.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
En este departamento, los empleados pueden esperar seguir trabajando en la empresa tanto tiempo como deseen (= continuidad laboral).	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
La seguridad de permanencia laboral está prácticamente garantizada para los empleados en este trabajo.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Las tareas de este trabajo están claramente definidas	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Existe una descripción actualizada de las tareas de este puesto.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
En la descripción de cada puesto de trabajo se detallan con precisión todas las actividades que realizan los trabajadores.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
El rendimiento del trabajador se mide frecuentemente mediante resultados objetivos y cuantificables.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
La evaluación del desempeño del trabajador se basa en datos objetivos cuantificables.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Las evaluaciones de los trabajadores destacan los logros duraderos y grupales.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Los trabajadores en este puesto reciben bonificaciones económicas basadas en el beneficio de la empresa.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
El salario está bastante relacionado con los logros individuales o grupales.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
En este puesto de trabajo, el supervisor pide con frecuencia a los empleados que participen en las decisiones.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
En este trabajo se permite que los empleados tomen decisiones.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Los empleados tienen la oportunidad de sugerir mejoras en la forma de hacer las cosas.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
En este trabajo los jefes mantienen una comunicación abierta con los empleados.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

SECCIÓN 2: EMPLEADO

Puntúe su grado de acuerdo o desacuerdo con las siguientes frases reflexionando sobre cómo se siente usted (tus sentimientos, actitudes y comportamientos) en su entorno laboral actual.

Use la siguiente escala para puntuar:

Totalmente en desacuerdo ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ Totalmente de acuerdo

El trabajo que hago es muy importante para mí.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Mis actividades laborales son personalmente significativas para mí.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
El trabajo que hago es valioso para mí.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Tengo confianza en mi capacidad para hacer mi trabajo.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Estoy seguro de mí mismo/a acerca de mis capacidades para realizar las actividades de mi trabajo.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
He adquirido las habilidades necesarias para mi trabajo.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Tengo bastante autonomía para decidir cómo hacer mi trabajo.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Puedo decidir por mí mismo/a cómo voy a realizar mi propio trabajo.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Tengo bastantes oportunidades de independencia y libertad en la forma de hacer mi trabajo.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Mi influencia sobre lo que ocurre en mi departamento o área es alta.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Tengo mucho control sobre lo que sucede en mi departamento.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Tengo bastante influencia sobre lo que ocurre en mi departamento.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Con frecuencia pienso en tener más autonomía sobre mi trabajo.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Me considero claramente un trabajador que desea tener mayor poder para tomar decisiones.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
El tener cierto grado de poder y capacidad de decisión forma una parte importante de mi identidad.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Sentiría como una carencia no tener capacidad de decisión en absoluto en mi trabajo.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
En mi trabajo me siento lleno de energía.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Noto que tengo fuerza y vitalidad en mi trabajo.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Cuando me levanto por las mañanas tengo ganas de ir a trabajar.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Estoy entusiasmado con mi trabajo.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Mi trabajo me inspira.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Estoy orgulloso del trabajo que hago.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

Soy feliz cuando estoy enfocado en mi trabajo.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
En mi trabajo, estoy inmerso en las tareas.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Mi grado de concentración es alto en mi trabajo.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Siento que soy una persona valiosa, al menos tanto como los demás.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Siento que tengo bastantes buenas cualidades.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
En general, tiendo a pensar que soy un fracaso.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Soy capaz de hacer las cosas tan bien como la mayoría de la gente.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Siento que no tengo mucho de lo que sentirme orgulloso.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Adopto una actitud positiva hacia mí mismo.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
En general, estoy satisfecho conmigo mismo.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Me gustaría poder tener más respeto por mí mismo.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Verdaderamente me siento inútil a veces.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
A veces pienso que no soy bueno en nada.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Mi rendimiento laboral influye en mi autoestima.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Me siento mejor conmigo mismo cuando sé que lo estoy haciendo bien en el trabajo.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Hacer bien mi trabajo me da una sensación de respeto por mí mismo.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Me siento mal conmigo mismo cuando mi desempeño laboral es bajo.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
La opinión que tengo de mí mismo no está relacionada con cómo hago mi trabajo.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Atiendo de manera voluntaria a los clientes aunque implique hacer más de lo requerido por mi trabajo.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Ayudo a los clientes a solucionar sus problemas por encima de lo que se espera o requiere.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Sirviendo a los clientes, con frecuencia hago cosas más allá de mis obligaciones.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Con gusto hago más de lo que me corresponde para que el cliente quede satisfecho.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Con frecuencia sobrepaso los límites de mis funciones para ayudar a un cliente.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Me he sentido ignorado por algunos compañeros en el trabajo.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Ciertos compañeros han abandonado alguna dependencia del trabajo porque yo entraba.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
A veces no he obtenido respuesta tras saludar en el trabajo.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
En el trabajo, me he sentado a comer solo, sin quererlo, en un comedor lleno de gente.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
En el trabajo, algunos compañeros me han evitado.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Me he dado cuenta de que algunos compañeros no me han dirigido la mirada en el trabajo.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

Algunos compañeros me han excluido de conversaciones en el trabajo.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Algunos compañeros han evitado hablar conmigo en el trabajo.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Algunos compañeros en el trabajo han actuado como si yo no existiera.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Algunos compañeros no me han invitado a acompañarlos en un descanso, o no me han preguntado si yo quería algo cuando han ido a por un café.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

SECCIÓN 3: PERCEPCIÓN SOBRE EL LIDERAZGO DEL JEFE

Este apartado contiene distintos comportamientos que describen el estilo de liderazgo de un superior. Piense en su JEFE DIRECTO e indique su grado de acuerdo o desacuerdo con cada frase. (Tenga en cuenta que cada afirmación plantea dos comportamientos a la vez).

Use la siguiente escala para puntuar:

Totalmente en desacuerdo ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ Totalmente de acuerdo

Tiene un planteamiento justo tratando a todos los subordinados de forma uniforme pero también con consideración individual.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Trata a sus subordinados por igual, pero considera sus características individuales o personalidades.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Se comunica con los subordinados de forma homogénea sin discriminación, pero varía su estilo de comunicación según las características individuales o necesidades de cada trabajador.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Dirige a todos sus subordinados de la misma forma, pero considerando las necesidades individuales de cada trabajador.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Asigna la misma carga de trabajo a todos, pero tiene en cuenta los puntos fuertes y las capacidades de cada uno para hacer frente a las distintas tareas.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Muestra un deseo de liderar, pero permite que otros compartan el rol de líder.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Le gusta ser el centro de atención, pero permite que otros destaquen también.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Exige respeto, pero también muestra respeto hacia los demás.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Tiene un elevado concepto de sí mismo, pero es consciente de sus propios defectos y del valor de otras personas.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Se muestra seguro respecto a sus opiniones e ideas personales, pero reconoce que puede aprender de los demás.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

Mantiene el control de asuntos laborales importantes, pero permite que los subordinados se encarguen de ciertos aspectos.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Toma la decisión final, pero permite a sus subordinados controlar procesos específicos del trabajo.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Toma decisiones sobre asuntos relevantes, pero delega a sus subordinados otras cuestiones menores.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Mantiene el control global, pero concede la suficiente autonomía a sus trabajadores.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Enfatiza el cumplimiento de las normas en el desempeño de tareas, pero permite excepciones.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Especifica los requerimientos del trabajo pero no <i>microgestiona</i> (microgestionar = supervisar personalmente hasta los pequeños detalles).	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Es muy exigente en cuanto a la conducta laboral pero sin ser excesivamente crítico.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Quiere las cosas muy bien hechas, pero es condescendiente con los errores de los trabajadores.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Reconoce la diferencia jerárquica entre jefe y empleado, pero no actúa con superioridad en su rol de líder.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Guarda cierta distancia respecto de sus empleados pero sin resultar frío.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Considera las diferencias jerárquicas, pero defiende el respeto por los subordinados.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Mantiene cierta distancia con sus subordinados en el trabajo, pero muestra al mismo tiempo un trato afable.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

¿Cuál es el sexo de su jefe inmediato sobre el que acaba de responder?

Hombre Mujer

¿Cuánto tiempo lleva trabajando con su jefe actual? _____ (años y meses)

Este apartado contiene distintos comportamientos que describen el estilo de liderazgo de un superior. **Piense en su jefe directo e indique su grado de acuerdo o desacuerdo con cada frase.**

Totalmente en desacuerdo ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ Totalmente de acuerdo

Mi jefe percibe si algo va mal en el trabajo.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Para mi jefe, mi desarrollo profesional es una prioridad.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Pediría ayuda a mi jefe si tuviera un problema personal.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Mi jefe remarca la importancia de revertir, aportar algo a la sociedad.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

Mi jefe antepone mis intereses a los suyos.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Mi jefe me da libertad para manejar situaciones difíciles de la forma que yo crea más conveniente.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Mi jefe no vulneraría principios éticos por conseguir éxito.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Mi jefe me ayuda a comprender cómo mis metas y objetivos están relacionados con los de la empresa.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Mi jefe me ayuda a comprender la relevancia de mi trabajo para la efectividad global de la empresa.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Mi jefe me ayuda a comprender cómo mi trabajo contribuye a nivel global.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Mi jefe toma muchas decisiones de forma conjunta conmigo.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Mi jefe con frecuencia consulta conmigo decisiones estratégicas.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Mi jefe pide mi opinión sobre decisiones que pueden afectarme.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Mi jefe cree que soy capaz de realizar tareas complicadas.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Mi jefe cree en mi capacidad de mejorar incluso cuando cometo errores.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Mi jefe confía en mi aptitud para hacer un muy buen trabajo.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Mi jefe me permite que haga mi trabajo a mi manera.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Mi jefe mantiene normas y procedimientos sencillos y así facilita que se trabaje con eficiencia.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
Mi jefe me deja que tome rápidamente decisiones importantes para satisfacer las necesidades de los clientes.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

SECCIÓN 4: ASPECTOS DEMOGRÁFICOS

Por último, por favor proporcione la siguiente **información demográfica** sobre usted. Estos datos son necesarios **solamente para fines estadísticos**. En ningún caso se emplearán para identificarle a usted o a su empresa.

Su grupo de edad:

- 20 o menos de 20
 21-25
 26-30
 31-35
 36-40
 41-45
 46-50
 51-55
 Por encima de 55

Sexo: Hombre Mujer

Nacionalidad _____

Nivel más alto de estudios terminado:

- Enseñanza media (Secundaria o menos).
- Enseñanza superior (Bachillerato o Enseñanzas técnicas)
- Estudios universitarios de grado (diplomatura, licenciatura).
- Posgrado (Máster, Doctorado)
- Otro (indicar)_____

Tipo de contrato que tiene en esta empresa:

- Tiempo completo
- Tiempo parcial
- Indefinido
- Temporal

¿Cuánto tiempo lleva trabajando en este mismo hotel? _____ (años y meses)

Número de trabajadores total en el hotel (con usted incluido) _____

Respecto de su hotel, por favor indique:


Número de habitaciones que tiene el hotel donde trabaja_____

Número de estrellas _____ País _____ Ciudad _____

¿De qué manera opera su establecimiento? Cadena hotelera/ Franquicia/Consortio/
Independiente/ otro (indicar)

Nombre del hotel (opcional)_____ (Sólo se empleará para agregar datos de
los trabajadores del mismo hotel e incrementar la validez de las respuestas).

MUCHÍSIMAS GRACIAS! ☺



*“No nos atrevemos a hacer muchas cosas
porque son difíciles, y son difíciles porque
no nos atrevemos a hacerlas”.*

(Séneca)

*“It is not because things are difficult that
we do not dare, it is because we do not dare
that they are difficult”.*

(Seneca)



