Applicability of work engagement as an antecedent to intention to quit, commitment and employee advocacy in different star-category hotels

**ABSTRACT**

This study was designed to explore and understand the relationship between Work Engagement, Organizational Commitment, Intention to Quit, Employee Advocacy and hotel categorization. This paper is an attempt to explain the utility of Work Engagement and the three aforementioned constructs in relation to the characteristics of hotels based on hotel categorization. Various statistical tools were applied to a sample of 185 employees (93 operating in three-star and 92 in five-star hotels) in order to test the validity and applicability of the model to different star category hotels. This study suggests that the model is applicable to both star categories.

**Keywords**: Work Engagement, Hotels, Intention to quit, Commitment, Employee Advocacy

According to Pfeffer (2018), renowned author and Stanford professor, workplaces are burdened with pressure and stress that can be linked to the rise of chronic diseases. Moreover, there are an increasing number of demands put on employees (Pfeffer, 2018). The hospitality industry is no exception to this type of an environment. Employees work long hours, suffer from loss of work-life balance and feel tremendous pressure to deliver service with the utmost attention to the customers’ ever-changing needs and wants (Hsieh et al., 2004).

How employees perform and perceive their individual and organizational factors in addition to their responses with regards to organizational dynamics (in which they are immersed) should be understand as employee Work Engagement and Organizational Commitment are instrumental for organizational success (Schaufeli, 2018). Most research on Work Engagement, with few exceptions, has not been focused on the relationship between standards of service, conceptualized through formal hotel classification/categorization, and employees’ experiences at work. This is what prompted this study to explore and study this research gap.

The rest of the paper proceeds as follows: Work Engagement and three constructs that it influences (Intention to Quit, Organizational Commitment and Employee Advocacy) will be discussed. An explanation of hotel star-ratings and this paper’s model follows. Finally, methods, results and discussion complete the paper.

Work Engagement

Numerous findings indicate that Work Engagement is favorable for employees and organizations alike. Schaufeli (2018), one of the leading authors in the field of work engagement, specifies that work engagement is linked to low sickness absence frequency, task and contextual performance, creativity and innovativeness, improved financial returns, service quality, workplace safety, and superior productivity (Schaufeli, 2018). The expectation that cultivated Work Engagement leads to positive employee performance outcomes and subsequent superior organizational results has been a subject of many research papers (Macey & Schneider, 2008 and Shuck, Reio, & Rocco, 2011).

According to Posner (2010), commitment, employee satisfaction and motivation can all be related to the degree of match between employees’ personal values and organizational values. The same study suggested that gender, educational level and department (of service) do not impact these relationships. However, years of experience (understood as age, managerial experience and hierarchical level) did make a difference. Božac et al. (2017) found that, especially in the hotel industry, the process of hiring should include the consideration of “harmony” between an employee’s personal values and the fundamental values of the organization so that the end result is positive for both entities.

The whole concept of work-related engagement is based on a positive psychological working condition that pushes employees to be enthusiastic in their work such that they invest themselves cognitively, emotionally and physically while at work (Rurkkhum, 2010). Also, work engagement is a motivational model that signifies active allocation of personal resources toward the tasks associated with the individual’s work role (Christian, Garza & Slaughter, 2011). Findings often portray engaged workers as individuals who are eager and resolute in carrying out their duties. In this concept, the positive employee emotional component is significant too, where they show willingness and determination, paired with strong involvement (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004 and Bakker & Demerouti, 2008).

Engagement is not defined as a momentary employee condition, but, rather, Work Engagement is described as a prevalent affective-cognitive state over a longer period of time that is not focused on a particular event, object, or individual. Schaufeli et al. (2002, 465) define Work Engagement as “*positive, fulfilling, and work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption. Vigor is characterized by high levels of energy and mental resilience while working and by the willingness and ability to invest effort in one’s work. Dedication is characterized by a sense of significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride, and challenge. The final dimension of engagement, absorption, is characterized by being fully concentrated and happily engrossed in one’s work, whereby time passes quickly, and one feels carried away by one’s job*.”

This is very much the case in hotel industry, where employees need to be stimulated to fully engage with guests in order to deliver top-class service quality and, above all, a unique guest experience. Hotel employees often combine discretionary and non-discretionary behaviors (smiling even when they are not emotionally/mentally in such a state of mind, controlling emotions when interacting with rude guest behavior, etc.). This becomes even more important since we know that guests appreciate and make note of added efforts that employees direct toward them (Mohr & Bitner, 1995).

Research on Work Engagement as a distinct concept can be described as dynamic and has been studied continuously with diverse perspectives in mind. Eldor (2016) is proposing that in finding answers to perplexing realities of today’s organizations, Work Engagement offers solutions to the mutual needs of organizations and employees’, hence it deserves the attention of both practitioners and researchers alike.

Intention to Quit

Today’s hotel industry is shaped by high labor intensity, heavy human interaction and dependence on positive work environment /colleagues (Galičić & Laškarin, 2016). The industry continually faces a shortage of labor and having a labor force that is considering leaving adds to the problem even further. Employees are not accidentally assigned to work-related situations, but, rather, they look for situations that are attractive or favorable to them. If not, they will leave. The *situation* in this context is defined and it refers to the employee’s work environment.

Working in an organization, an employee possesses and exhibits a connection to that particular organizational situation. As such, employees are attracted differently to careers as a function of their own interests and personalities. Price and Mueller (1981)classified the intention to remain as an assessed probability that a worker will continue to work in a particular organization. Intention to Quit may also refer to the employee’s conscious and deliberate decision to leave or stay (Tett & Meyer, 1993).

In order to analyze turnover, one often uses historic data where one must adequately differentiate between voluntary and involuntary terminations. In voluntary turnover, the employee is in control of whether he/she will stay or leave the organization (Mobley, 1982). Involuntary turnover, on the other hand, is a situation in which the company initiates the cessation and, in effect, terminates the employee’s employment. The problem for hotels is when undesirable, unwanted voluntary turnover of valued employees occurs. When talented and performing employees quit, their skills, knowledge and experience leave too (Abbasi & Hollman, 2000). Mobley (1982) claims that employee-initiated turnover is especially dysfunctional and can be harmful to the organization. If consequences of such turnover are negatively affecting the guest relations or disrupting business processes, then this is undoubtedly dysfunctional for an organization.

Mobley (1982), on the other hand, concludes that voluntary turnover may have positive effects as well when, for example, a non-performing employee decides to leave and the organization may hire a new employee that can positively contribute to organizational performance (Dalton & Todor, 1979). Park and Shaw (2013) concluded that voluntary turnover rates will be negatively related to organizational performance. Reviewed literature does not offer consistent conclusions that would suggest that intention to quit is a definitive predictor of actual turnover.

Research has shown that high levels of intention to quit are strong predictors of employee turnover (Porter & Steers, 1973; Tett & Meyer, 1993; Igbaria & Greenhaus, 1992 and Parasuraman, 1982). Yet, Kirschenbaum and Weisberg (1990) did not fully agree with these conclusions. Intention to Quit doesn’t have to turn into actual employee departure since their final decision may be influenced by other factors such as unfavorable labor market conditions. However, there is a reasonable level of agreement that employees leaving do imply negative consequences on performance such as productivity, customer satisfaction, absenteeism, and safety (Park & Shaw, 2013).

The use of Intention to Quit as a concept may be helpful for organizations since they may explore employees’ intentions while they are still employed. This provides an opportunity for companies to adjust and develop strategies to prevent employees from leaving (Thompson & Terpening, 1983). Emiroğlu et al. (2015), in their study of the relationship between turnover intention and demographic factors, concluded that the hospitality industry should better understand some of the drivers of high turnover since age, gender and education are predictors for turnover intention. Wang (2017) agrees with Emiroğlu et al. (2015) as to some of the demographic factors (wage) and for others there is a disagreement. Gender in Wang’s (2017) case was not a factor determining turnover intention.

According to Prasannakumar (2014), the hospitality industry must pay careful attention to the management of manpower since the customer is paying for much more than a tangible service. Therefore, there is a need not only to increase the salaries and benefits in the hospitality industry, but to also offer training in order to sustain service standards.

Commitment

Meyer and Allen (1991) classified several groups of Organizational Commitment definitions and brought forward their own model of Organizational Commitment that included three commitment elements: affective, continuance, and normative commitment. Employees that are affectively committed work in a company because they simply wantto. In continuance commitment, an employee evaluates whether leaving the organization would be to his/her personal loss or gain. This is also known as cost orientation commitment. Normative commitment considers commitment as a duty or moral obligation to stay in the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Caldwell, Chatman, and O’Reilly (1990) also considered commitment as a multidimensional concept.

The Meyer-Allen (1991) model suggests that connections mentioned earlier do not mutually exclude each other. For example, a worker may at the same time feel a strong desire (affective commitment) and a pronounced need to remain in an organization since leaving may be costly (continuance commitment), but has little moral responsibility to do so (normative commitment); another employee may feel less desire, a moderate need, and a strong obligation to stay. Solinger, van Olffen, and Roe (2008) concluded that the vital part of the Meyer-Allen model is the attitude toward a certain type of behavior, where attitude directly leads to an intention to carry out a certain behavior. This conjecture largely agrees with Ajzen’s (1991) Theory of Planned Behavior, built on Bagozzi, Baumgartner, and Yi’s (1989) premise (that intentions are the best predictor of behavior), that stipulates that Attitude (how one feels about a certain behavior) acts as one of three antecedents to Intentions, which, in turn, predicts actual behavior.

Affective commitment has been well studied and reinforced with empirical data (Meyer et al., 2002 and Solinger, van Olffen, & Roe, 2008). Findings imply that employees with higher organizational affective commitment are emotionally connected to the organization: they show lower rates of absenteeism, work harder (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990), and exhibit higher overall job performance (Meyer & Allen, 1991) Continuance and normative portions of the model remain divisive. Researchers even argued that normative and continuance commitment should no longer be seen as integral parts of commitment but as separate employee motivations to remain employed (Klein, Molloy, & Brinsfield, 2012 and Solinger, van Olffen, & Roe, 2008).

Employee Advocacy

Employee Advocacy may be viewed as the marketing of an organization by its employees, where employees act as the voice of and for the company. Hotels and organizations in general, may expect, wish, or request their employees to promote the company. However, the most persuasive Employee Advocacy entails sincere employee trust in the organization. Reichheld (2003) introduced a metric called an Employee Promoter Score (EPS). However, the HR related “employee-promoter score” is originally derived from the “Net Promoter Score” concept or NPS (Reichheld, 2003). Essentially, employees are asked two simple questions: “How likely are you to recommend your company’s products or services to a friend or family member?” and “How likely are you to recommend a job at your company to a friend or family member?” As Reichheld (2003) argues, EPS can be regarded as the single most important number required for growth. In literature we can find that authors used different terms describing employee positive recommendations such as: employee advocacy and employees as promoters. Davenport, Harris, and Shapiro (2010) advocated that employees can become promoters of the organization and help the company attract human resources. Legerstee (2013) sees no limitation to use the concept in different setting; in each unique setting or industry, employees are asked the same questions about their organizations.

*Hotel star rating and categorization*

Hotel star rating systems are meant to provide an accurate and objective assessment of accommodations according to established criteria and guidelines. Grossman (2004), however, argues that guests must be very careful with star rating systems and its weight on decision making since different countries use different star ratings systems. Additionally, such systems are often not properly regulated or in some instances completely unregulated. Research done by the European Consumer Centre (2010) compared hotel star systems in all EU member countries and concluded that EU countries have vastly different star rating systems and therefore hindering transparency and growth. There are efforts, such as Hotrec (2018) an association that is representing European hotel industry, to build a structure of hotel star rating that would finally standardize the hotel star rating methodology across the EU. With all its limitations, hotel star ratings still act as a critical element for both guests and accommodation providers, and major investments in star category upgrades are considered important.

According to Qi and Qiang (2013), categorizing hotels is of an utmost importance for hotels as categorizing a hotel has an effect on pricing. Hotel classification in fact is an indicator of quality and a measurement of level of service standards. Guests predominantly attribute the quality of hotels to their star level (or whatever other rating system hotel is using that are country specific). Usually, hotels with higher star rankings are higher priced compared to those in a lower star category. Also, customers assume that hotels with higher star ranking have higher levels of service quality (Qi & Qiang, 2013).

Due to the fact that the hotel industry highly depends on the quality of work performed by its employees during moments of truth, Nayar (2010) emphasizes the need to put “employees first” and customers second. In their effort to prove the Service Profit Chain theory, Walker & Kužnin (2018) found that there is a positive and significant relationship between job satisfaction of an employee and the job performance, thus confirming the old adage “*happy employee equals happy customer”.*

In their study conducted in three and five-star rated hotels in Nairobi, Kenya, Kuria et al. (2011) found that the issue of high turn-over is a global issue affecting not only organizational growth and profitability but customer satisfaction as well. The research they conducted indicated that labor turnover was higher (68%) in three-star rated hotels than in five-star hotels (13%).

*Proposed Model*

Through literature review there are some clear indications with regard to Work Engagement and various constructs employed. For example, Simons and Buitendach (2013) concluded that there was a significant positive relationship between Work Engagement and Organizational Commitment. In fact, their research suggested that Work Engagement is the only significant predictor of commitment. However, this study’s objective is to further contribute to the understanding of the relationship between Work Engagement and a set of attitudes/behaviors such as Intention to Quit, Organizational Commitment, and Employee Advocacy. While previous research showed empirical support for specific links among constructs that are included in this study’s model (Figure 1), none of the previous research attempted to relate Work Engagement, the three aforementioned constructs and hotel star rating.

This research, then, exploratory in nature, builds on Božac et al.’s (2017) work by applying it to different categories of hotels. Specifically, answering that paper’s call for further research into the model, this paper seeks to determine if the Božac et al. (2017) model is equally applicable to different hotel categories. From an applied science standpoint, hoteliers (practitioners as opposed to researchers) will want to know if the model and its associated implications and recommendations matter to them specifically.

A screenshot of a map

Description automatically generated

Figure 1: Proposed Model of Work Engagement, and Their Outcomes

Source: Authors

*Method*

There were several basic criteria that this study used for selecting and including hotels and hotel employees in this research. Ultimately, the study included 185 employees from eleven three and five-star Croatian hotels, coming from three major tourist regions (Dalmatia, Istria, and Zagreb). Only hotels with 100+ employees were considered and only full-time employees were asked to participate (part-time and seasonal employees were not included in this research). Hotel HR departments assisted in the research process by allowing authors to have a sample that mirrored a typical ratio of the type of employees (department wise) in the hotel industry. Food and Beverage (F&B) and Housekeeping employees dominated in terms of number of employees at 43.8% (Table 1) of the total number of employees in this research. Besides F&B and Housekeeping, other hotel divisions and all levels of hotel employees were included in the research. Table 1 provides an overview of socio-demographic and occupational characteristics of participants. Statistical analysis was performed by the IBM SPSS and Microsoft Excel statistical packages.

Table 1: Socio-demographic and Occupational Characteristics of Respondents (one decimal point)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Socio-demographic data | *n* | *%* |
| **Sex** | | |
| Male | 74 | 40% |
| Female | 111 | 60% |
| **Age** | | |
| up to 30 years | 34 | 18.4% |
| 31–40 years | 56 | 30.3% |
| 41–50 years | 51 | 27.6% |
| older than 51 | 44 | 23.8% |
| **Years of service in the organization** | | |
| less than 5 years | 51 | 27.6% |
| 5–10 years | 50 | 27.0% |
| 11–15 years | 19 | 10.3% |
| more than 15 years | 65 | 35.1% |
| **Total number of years of service** | | |
| less than 5 years | 23 | 12.4% |
| 5–10 years | 36 | 19.5% |
| 11–15 years | 31 | 16.8% |
| more than 15 years | 95 | 51.4% |
| **Level of education** | | |
| Three years of high school and less | 11 | 5.9% |
| High school education | 104 | 56.2% |
| College education | 28 | 15.1% |
| University degree or higher | 42 | 22.7% |
| **Department** | | |
| Sales and Marketing | 16 | 8.6% |
| Food and Beverages | 81 | 43.8% |
| Housekeeping/Maintenance | 44 | 23.8% |
| Reception | 26 | 14.1% |
| Human Resources/Personnel | 7 | 3.8% |
| Finance/Accounting | 4 | 2.2% |
| Managing Director’s Office | 5 | 2.7% |
| Other | 2 | 1.1% |
| **Total** | 185 | 100.0% |

Source: Authors

Based on star level, employees were represented as follows (Table 2):

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents by Hotel Category

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| *Category (Stars)* | *N* | *%* |
| three | 93 | 50.3% |
| five | 92 | 49.7% |
| **Total** | 185 | 100.0% |
|  |  |  |

Source: Authors

Measurement Instruments

The questionnaire used had a total of forty two questions/statements in the following five groups: Work Engagement, Organizational Commitment, Intention to Quit, and Employee Advocacy. Work Engagement was measured with an integral version of the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). A composite score was calculated by determining the arithmetic mean of all 17 items. A higher score indicates higher Work Engagement.

Organizational Commitment was measured by Meyer and Allen’sOrganizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ), with 18 items measuring affective, continuance and normative commitment. The commitment score is calculated as the arithmetic mean of the 18 items, in which a higher score indicates a more committed employee.

Intention to Quit was assessed by five items derived from an instrument developed by Maslić-Seršić (1999) referring to the respondent’s intention to seek new employment. The composite score is calculated as the arithmetic mean for all statements, in which a higher score indicates a more pronounced intention to leave the organization.

Employee Advocacy was assessed with two items, examining employees’ willingness to speak positively about their organization. In the recommendation questionnaire the respondents could choose a value for each item on a Likert scale ranging from one (definitely not) to five (definitely yes). The composite score is calculated as the arithmetic mean of the two statements. Higher scores indicates higher employee advocacy.

*Methods and Results*

This paper’s model (Figure 1) has been validated in prior research (Božac et al, 2017). This paper strives, then, to advance the understanding of the model by providing greater granularity to it by determining if it is equally applicable to different star category hotels. As such, this paper’s model (Figure 1) was applied to samples of three and five-star hotels in Croatia, seeking to identify potential differences between the individual constructs in the model as well as their linkages.

Means, standard deviations (SD) and correlations for model constructs can be found in Table 2. An examination of the four model constructs was conducted via t-tests to determine if any significant differences exist between three and five star hotels as related to the model’s four constructs (Work Engagement, Commitment, Intention to Quit and Employee Advocacy). The only significant difference (at p<.10) was found in Intention to Quit, with five-star employees more likely to quit. Please see Table 3 for a complete listing of the t-test results.

Looking at correlations, one finds, as the model suggested, that the associations between Work Engagement and Organizational Commitment and Employee Advocacy were positive and found to be moderate to high. Also as expected, the association between Work Engagement and Intention to Quit was negative (as Work Engagement increases, it is expected that one’s Intention to Quit decreases) and observed to be moderate.

When examining the correlations between model constructs (between Work Engagement and the following three constructs, Organizational Commitment, Intention to Quit and Employee Advocacy), it is interesting to note that the correlation is always stronger in the five-star sample. Further examination of this effect can be found via regression analysis. When considering the r-squared value associated with the relationship between Work Engagement and the other three constructs, it is seen that the value is always higher in the five-star case (Table 4). Also note that for both three-star and five-star hotels, regression analysis shows that the relationships between Work Engagement and the other three constructs are valid at p<.001.

Table 2: Descriptive statistics and correlations for model constructs

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Descriptive Statistics | | Correlations | | | |
| Model Construct | Mean | SD | Work Engagement | Commitment | Intention to Quit | Employee Advocacy |
| Work Engagement | 3.975  3.966 | .700  .672 | 1 | .583  .688 | -.374  -.522 | .536  .613 |
| Commitment | 3.489  3.443 | .636  .684 |  | 1 | -.611  -.646 | .603  .482 |
| Intention to Quit | 1.873  2.172 | 1.090  1.248 |  |  | 1 | -.426  -.489 |
| Employee Advocacy | 4.086  4.147 | .896  .948 |  |  |  | 1 |

*Note: the top half cell value is for 3-star hotels and the bottom half cell value for 5-star hotels*

*Note: are correlations are significant at p<.001*

Table 3: T-test p-values for 3 vs. 5 star hotels

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Model Construct | T-test p-value |
| Work Engagement | .927 |
| Commitment | .636 |
| Intention to Quit | .085\* |
| Employee Advocacy | .655 |

*\*: significant at p<.10*

Table 4: Model r-squared values for three and five-star hotels

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Independent  Variable | Dependent  Variable | R-squared  value |
| Work Engagement | Commitment | .334  .468 |
| Intention to Quit | .131  .264 |
| Employee Advocacy | .279  .369 |

*Note: the top cell value is for 3-star hotels and the bottom cell value for 5-star hotels*

***Conclusions and Discussion***

While a considerable body of research related to work engagement has significantly contributed to the understanding of its importance in terms of both individual and organizational outcomes, we still do not have a comprehensive or accurate explanation of Work Engagement, its antecedents or impact. Research, including this one, suggests that Work Engagement is positively related to many organizational aspects and work-related measures, but it tells us little of the complex social context in which engagement occurs.

This paper seeks to build on Božac et al.’s (2017) model pertaining to the relationships among Work Engagement with Intention to Quit, Organizational Commitment and Employee Advocacy by exploring whether or not the model may be universally applied to hotels of all types. Specifically, do three and five-star hotels behave similarly when considering Božac et al.’s (2017) model?

This paper’s results suggest that the model is applicable (valid) in both three and five-star hotels as model defined linkages were statistically significant in both hotel categories. Of some note, however, is the observation that all of the model’s linkages are, in fact, stronger in five star hotels. In other words, Work Engagement explains more of employees’ Intention to Quit, Organizational Commitment and Employee Advocacy in five-star hotels than it does in three star hotels.

This difference might be examined through both a theoretic (or academic) as well as a practical (or operational) lens. From a theoretical standpoint, a number of questions present themselves pertaining to the stronger model linkages in five-star hotels. Why is it that Work Engagement more strongly influences the other three constructs in five star hotels? Note that three and five star hotels have almost identical Work Engagement levels (arithmetic mean values of 3.975 and 3.966 respectively), but Work Engagement yields greater influence in five star hotels. We argue that more research should be conducted in this field where vital features such as perception of fairness, reward systems, hotel brand standards and expectations would be examined and cross-referenced. Employees are surrounded with these constructs and addressing them may help us understand why some employees engage while others don’t.

From a practical (or operational) standpoint, an obvious question arises as the whether or not this study’s observed difference in the model matters to hoteliers. Three and five-star properties provide different types as well as levels of service to guests, creating an overall different customer experience. Whichever different moderating factors exist in three and five-star hotels, they are not influential enough such that the model’s underlying logic is invalidated. Managers at both three and five-star hotels, based on this study, should be confident that positive movement in their employees’ Work Engagement will result in the positive changes in the other three constructs. The effect is stronger in five-star hotels, but still valid in three-star hotels.

Another interesting outcome of this study is that of its four studied constructs (Work Engagement, Intention to Quit, Organizational Commitment and Employee Advocacy) evaluated in the two hotel categories (three and five-star), a significant difference was only observed in Intention to Quit, with employees in the five-star category having higher intentions to quit. And, again, note that three and five-star hotels had almost identical Work Engagement values, implying that something other than Work Engagement, namely, hotel category, influenced Intention to Quit. Hotel category, in this study, however, did not act as a moderating factor on the other constructs.

A further examination of the significant difference in Intention to Quit (comparing three star to five-star hotels) revealed that this study’s five-star hotel sample had a significantly younger employee population than did the three-star hotel (a chi-squared analysis of the four age categories was performed; p-value of 0.0000243). This finding supports Emiroğlu et al.’s (2015) findings that age is a predictor of Intention to Quit.

Overall, this study supports the use of Božac et al.’s (2017) model in a range of categories of hotels. While the strength of the model’s linkages varies between categories, the model structure and propositions were found to be valid in the studied categories. As a further step in this area, researchers are advised to explore what other mediators and moderators influence the model’s constructs (Work Engagement, Intention to Quit, Organizational Commitment, and Employee Advocacy).

***Limitations and Suggestions***

This study has some limitations and at the same time some recommendations for future research as well. The research was limited to Croatian hotel employees only and can, therefore, contain specific cultural bias or any other non-work-related factor that may have influenced the research results. Also, certain questions should be further tested in future research, such as the importance of interaction between societal forces surrounding the hotels and employee work engagement. Such interdependence is often neglected and yet it may have a critical influence on employee work engagement. Additionally, hotel specific details such as goals and objectives (hotel financial or customer satisfaction related performance indicators), or ownership (private, public), brand affiliation (branded, not branded hotels) were not included in the study. These attributes can potentially reveal some distinctive conclusions. Finally, research could be conducted in other service jobs and in other service organizations (e.g. restaurants, travel companies etc.) to test the invariance of the proposed model.

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