




**THE INFLUENCE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL EMPOWERMENT AS
MODERATOR BETWEEN SERVANT LEADERSHIP AND
ORGANIZATIONAL IDENTIFICATION: A RESEARCH IN HOTEL
INDUSTRY**

**HİZMETKAR LİDERLİK İLE ÖRGÜTSEL ÖZDEŞLEŞME ARASINDA
DÜZENLEYİCİ OLARAK PSİKOLOJİK GÜÇLENDİRMENİN ETKİSİ:
OTEL ENDÜSTRİSİNDE BİR ARAŞTIRMA**

Gaye ONAN 

Dr. Öğr. Üyesi, Mersin Üniversitesi, Anamur UTİYO, Turizm İşletmeciliği Bölümü
gayeonan@mersin.edu.tr

Alper Bahadır DALMIŞ 

Doç. Dr., Türk Hava Kurumu Üniversitesi, Ankara Havacılık MYO, Hava Lojistiği Bölümü,
abdalmis@thk.edu.tr

Geliş Tarihi: 30.05.2024 **Kabul Tarihi:** 29.06.2024

Abstract: There have been numerous studies on servant leadership, which has been proven to have positive outcomes in the service-intensive hotel sector. This research examines the impact of servant leadership on organizational identification and the moderating role of psychological empowerment. The study was conducted with 452 participants working in five hotels in Ankara. The findings demonstrate a significant and positive effect of servant leadership on organizational identification, with psychological empowerment moderating this effect. The results are in line with the literature and indicate that conducting studies in different sectors and research designs would contribute to the existing body of knowledge. Additionally, the study highlights the importance for hotel managers to focus on servant leadership and psychological empowerment.

Keywords: Servant Leadership, Organizational Identification, Psychological Empowerment

Özet: Konaklama sektöründe hizmetkar liderlik üzerine çok sayıda çalışma yapılmış ve olumlu sonuçları olduğu kanıtlanmıştır. Bu araştırma, hizmetkar liderliğin örgütsel özdeşleşme üzerindeki etkisini ve psikolojik güçlendirmenin düzenleyici rolünü incelemektedir. Araştırma Ankara'daki beş otelde çalışan 452 katılımcıyla gerçekleştirilmiştir. Bulgular, hizmetkar liderliğin örgütsel özdeşleşme üzerinde anlamlı ve olumlu bir etkisi olduğunu ve psikolojik güçlendirmenin bu etkiyi hafiflettiğini göstermektedir. Sonuçlar literatürle uyumlu olup, farklı sektörlerde ve araştırma tasarımlarında çalışmaların yapılmasının mevcut bilgi birikimine katkı sağlayacağını göstermektedir. Ayrıca çalışma, otel yöneticilerinin hizmetkar liderliğe ve psikolojik güçlendirmeye odaklanmasının önemini vurgulamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Hizmetkar Liderlik, Örgütsel Özdeşleşme, Psikolojik Güçlendirme

INTRODUCTION

As hotels strive to provide exceptional service and memorable experiences to their guests, understanding the dynamics of the workforce becomes vital, as one of the most important resources is their employees (Al-Makhadmah and Al Najdawi, 2020). Research on organizational psychology in the hospitality industry, especially in hotels, is therefore important. By exploring these areas in depth, research can reveal effective strategies to attract, retain, and develop talented employees in the highly competitive hospitality industry. In this way, by integrating findings from academic studies, hotel professionals can adopt evidence-based strategies to gain competitive advantage and develop successful work environments that promote both wellbeing and guest satisfaction (Ali et al., 2023).

Systematic empirical studies are crucial to harnessing the potential of leadership research in generating compelling theories and meaningful policy implications (Hughes et al., 2018). Leadership styles have important implications for both the organization and its subordinates (Elkhwesky et al., 2018). Several studies have proven that leadership styles have different effects on organizational performance (Al Khajeh, 2018), organizational commitment, and employee turnover (Nanjundeswaraswamy and Swamy, 2014). Rabiul and Yean (2021) emphasized the need for research investigating leadership styles, especially in hotels.

One of the effective leadership styles that have come to the fore in recent years is servant leadership. The implementation of servant leadership not only improves employee performance but also fosters a positive organizational culture, leading to increased guest satisfaction and loyalty (Brownell, 2010). Hospitality organizations that adopt servant leadership can create a nurturing environment that values employee well-being and attracts top talent in a highly competitive industry (Wang et al., 2018). Ultimately, adopting the principles of servant leadership enables hospitality organizations to build a solid foundation for long-term success through high employee engagement, innovation, and a customer-centric approach to service delivery.

Organizational identification has a critical role in the hospitality industry, where employee performance and guest satisfaction are of great importance. Research shows that employees with organizational identification have lower turnover intentions (DeConinck, 2011). Moreover, high levels of organizational identification lead to increased employee commitment and job satisfaction (Mael and Ashforth, 1992), which positively affect service quality and guest experiences. Some research has highlighted the relationship between servant leadership and organizational identification in various sectors (Lythreathis et al., 2021; Lv et al., 2022). By practicing servant leadership that shows empathy, provides support, and involves employees in decision-making processes, leaders can promote belonging and a common purpose among employees and develop their organizational identity in the hotel industry (Zorlu et al., 2019). In this context, it becomes very meaningful to examine the impact of servant leadership on organizational identification.

Empowerment encompasses intrinsic motivation and employee rewards that contribute to improving working conditions (Aggarwal et al., 2018). Psychological empowerment, which includes elements such as self-efficacy, meaningful work, competence, and self-determination, significantly enhances employees' sense of empowerment (Aggarwal et al., 2019). Servant leaders aim to develop an empowering environment through their unique characteristics, such as valuing employees, building supportive relationships, and recognizing individual differences. Although research on servant leadership has increased significantly in recent years, little is still known about the mechanisms and outcomes of servant leadership (Ghalavi and Nastiezaive, 2020). Based on the existing literature, the main purpose of this study is to identify the impact of servant leadership on organizational identification and to

determine whether psychological empowerment acts as a moderator. By investigating these relationships, this study aims to advance knowledge on how servant leadership practices can enhance organizational identification and psychological empowerment in the workplace, thereby expanding the existing knowledge base.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

The concept of servant leadership was coined by Robert Greenleaf and gained inspiration from Hesse's novel "Journey to the East" in 1970. The concept is based on a moral foundation and is built upon a motivation to serve (Greenleaf, 1977). Meeting the needs of people is prioritized over personal gain and material possessions for servant leaders (Van Dierendonck, 2011). According to Canavesi and Minelli (2021), servant leaders create an organizational culture with ethical principles where they collaborate with their followers to achieve established organizational goals without imposing authoritarian power.

As per Ghannam and Taamneh (2017), organizational identification refers to the process where employees recognize and embrace the organization's values and characteristics, align themselves with its goals and values, and diligently fulfill their duties. It entails employees seeing themselves as part of the organization, using it as a guiding principle in their lives, and integrating the organization's identity into their own selves, leading to a stronger emotional connection and unity with the team (Ashforth et al., 2008). This process sets the stage for the organization to have a significant impact on employees, empowering it to achieve its management objectives and resulting in improved productivity, quality, and employee contentment (Ghannam and Taamneh 2017). Therefore, organizational identification plays a role in helping an organization swiftly reach its objectives and attain success (Hamzagić, 2018). Recognizing viewpoints on identity development and how individuals connect themselves with organizations can bring clarity to a complex array of literature. It also highlights research opportunities that could lead to insights (Brown, 2017).

Although there are not many studies directly examining the impact of servant leadership on organizational identification, previous studies investigating the impact of servant leadership behaviors on organizational identification levels among organizational members have revealed remarkable findings. Zhang et al. (2012) emphasized that servant leadership is positively related to organizational identification. Nart et al.'s (2018) study revealed the existence of a positive relationship between servant leadership and organizational identification. Similarly, Omanwar and Agrawal (2022) found that servant leadership has a positive relationship with organizational identification in their research with frontline hospital employees. With these perspectives and understandings in the literature, it is assumed that servant leadership will have a significant and positive effect on employees' organizational identification levels. Based on all these, the following hypothesis has been proposed:

H1: Servant leadership significantly and positively affects organizational identification.

The concept of psychological empowerment was first introduced by Bandura (1986) with self-efficacy, which means "an individual's awareness and belief in his or her own abilities and competence." Spreitzer (1995), another researcher who has conducted important studies on psychological empowerment, defines empowerment as "a management approach that enables employees to make decisions about their work without the intervention of senior management." Empowerment is a task-oriented motivation that reflects the individual's sense of control and active participation in their work (Meng and Sun, 2019). Employees who experience psychological empowerment tend to be highly productive and can positively affect both individual and organizational outcomes. Psychological empowerment is associated with

individuals' perceptions of their competence and capabilities in an empowered work environment (Meyerson and Kline, 2008). Individuals who feel competent to perform their jobs successfully exhibit higher satisfaction, stronger commitment, lower turnover rates, and better performance compared to those with lower levels of psychological empowerment. Employees' perceptions of psychological empowerment are likely to have an impact on their organizational identity. For example, Prati and Zani (2013) found that psychological empowerment affects organizational identification. Studies exploring the moderating role of empowerment in the relationship between servant leadership and employee outcomes are also emerging in the literature. Ghalavi and Nastiezaive (2020) discovered that servant leadership has a moderating effect on organizational citizenship behavior. Similarly, Khan and colleagues (2020) found that psychological empowerment moderates the effect of servant leadership on innovative work behavior.

Psychological empowerment is a motivational state that affects the cognitive and behavioral states of subordinates. According to research, a person's sense of empowerment may strengthen their identification with their organization (Ertürk, 2010; Kahaleh and Gaither, 2007). This perspective suggests that psychological empowerment can affect organizational identification through a reciprocal process: when employees feel empowered, they are pleased with their jobs, which may increase their tendency to identify with the organization (Prati and Zani, 2013). The servant leader will ensure that subordinates become psychologically stronger by strengthening their self-confidence, competence, independence, and influence. Finally, employees who feel more psychologically empowered will more identify with their organization. Based on all this, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: Psychological empowerment effects organizational identification.

Servant leaders share information about business activities and overall goals, encourage the process of acquiring new skills, and give employees autonomy. At the same time, it involves employees in the decision-making process and makes employees aware of their roles in the organization (Amundsen and Martinsen, 2014). Research shows that servant leadership has a positive impact on followers' psychological capacities (Liden et al., 2008; Van Dierendonck and Nuijten, 2011). Leaders increase subordinates' sense of empowerment by enabling their personal development and focusing on their needs. They also increase their sense of autonomy through their perception of decision-making and help them understand the impact of their work on the organization. In other words, servant leaders help their subordinates to become psychologically stronger by strengthening their self-confidence, competence, independence and influence. It is known that psychologically stronger employees experience more identification (Ertürk, 2010; Kahaleh and Gaither, 2007). Based on all this, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3: Psychological empowerment moderates the relationship between servant leadership and organizational identification.

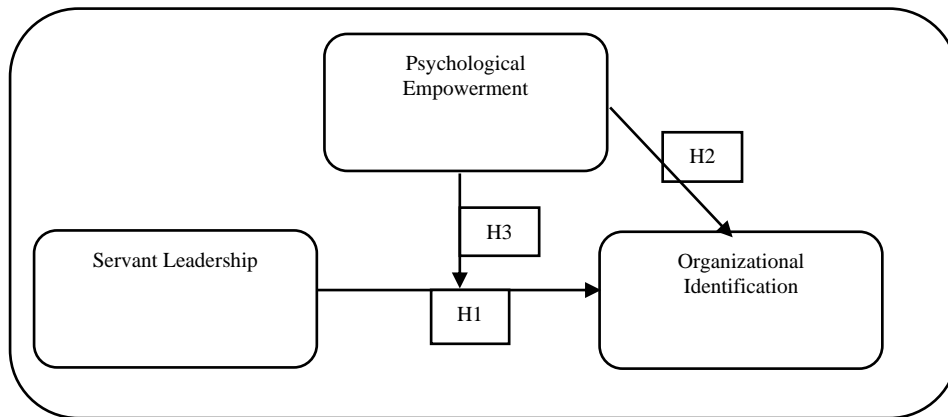
METHOD

Research Model

The study presents a conceptual framework that encompasses psychological empowerment, servant leadership, and organizational identification. The figure 1 visually represents the interconnections among these variables, providing a graphical depiction of the proposed model.

Figure 1.

Research Model



Sample and Data Collection

Research is limited to employees working in 5-star hotels located in Ankara. Data collection for the study occurred over a two-week period in February 2022. Prior to commencing the research, the researchers obtained permission from hotel managers to conduct their study. The participants consisted of employees from five hotels who agreed to participate and were given a closed-ended questionnaire. A total of 612 questionnaires (with 122 questionnaires per hotel) were distributed to the human resources department. At the end of the two-week period, the researchers collected the completed questionnaires in sealed envelopes from the human resources managers. After careful examination, 532 questionnaires were deemed suitable for analysis, while 80 questionnaires were excluded due to incompleteness (62 questionnaires) or incorrect completion (18 questionnaires). Thus, research was conducted based on 452 questionnaires, indicating a return rate of 74%. There were 167 male participants and 285 female participants. Among the participants, 136 were married, while 316 were single. (This study was carried out with the approval of the Mersin University of Social and Human Sciences Ethics Committee at its meeting dated 05.12.2023 and numbered 272). Table 1 shows the demographics of participants.

Table 1.

Demographics

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	167	37
	Female	285	63
Marital Status	Married	136	30
	Single	316	70
Age	Under 25	98	22
	25-34	180	40
	35-44	102	23

	45 and above	72	16
Experience	Less than 1 year	50	11
	1-5 years	150	33
	6-10 years	130	29
	More than 10 years	122	27

Scales

Servant Leadership: In the study, the 7-item Servant Leadership Scale developed by Liden et al. (2015) and adapted into Turkish by Kılıç and Aydın (2016) was used. The scale uses a 5-point Likert format and includes statements such as "My manager prioritizes my interests over his/her own interests". The Cronbach's alpha score of 0.870 indicates that the Turkish version of the servant leadership scale is a valid and reliable measurement tool.

Organizational Identification: The scale developed by Van Dick et al. (2004) was used to measure organizational identification. The scale consists of seven items that assess cognitive, affective, evaluative and behavioral aspects of identification. It is designed as a five-point Likert scale measuring the level of identification with the organization.

Psychological Empowerment: The Psychological Empowerment Inventory (PEI) developed by Spreitzer (1995) and consisting of four dimensions (meaning, competence, autonomy and influence) was used. Each dimension consists of three statements. The Turkish adaptation of this scale, which is graded on a 5-point Likert scale, was conducted by Sürgevil et al. (2013).

FINDINGS

Descriptive Statistics

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed to test the validity and reliability of the scales used in the research. For this purpose, it is first checked the normality distribution. The normality distribution of the data was tested with Kolmogorov-Smirnov Analysis, and the data was significant at the $p > .05$ level.

Table 2.

Correlations and KMO values

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>
1. Servant Leadership	3,92	0,94			
2. Organizational Identification	4,39	0,53	0,140*		
3. Psychological Empowerment	4,35	0,47	0,208**	0,367**	
Skewness			-0,225	-0,364	-0,339
Kurtosis			0,184	0,288	0,251

Note: * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$

According to KMO analysis, the data distribution revealed that the skewness and kurtosis values fell within the range of -1.5 to +1.5, indicating a normal distribution of the data (Tabachnick et.al., 2007). Pearson correlation coefficients were utilized for the correlation analysis. According to the correlation analysis, it was concluded that the servant leadership variable had a positive and significant relationship with organizational

identification ($r = 0.140$, $p < 0.05$) and psychological empowerment ($r = 0.208$, $p < 0.01$). When examining the relationship between organizational identification and psychological empowerment ($r = 0.367$, $p < 0.01$), a significant and positive relationship was observed between the two variables. These findings indicate that all the variables addressed in the study are positively and significantly related to each other. Table 2 shows descriptive statistics and correlations.

Cronbach's alpha reliability analysis was used to measure the reliability of the scales. Cronbach's alpha values of the scales were calculated as 0.87 for the Servant Leadership Scale, 0.83 for the Organizational Identification Scale, and 0.80 for the Psychological Empowerment Scale. A scale's Cronbach's alpha coefficient between 0.60 and 0.80 indicates that the scale is moderately reliable, and a coefficient between 0.80 and 1.00 indicates that the scale is highly reliable (Kılıç, 2016). Based on this, it can be said that the reliability results of all scales used in the research are high. Cronbach's alpha values of all scales are shown in Table 3.

Determining the validity and reliability of the scales is important when testing research hypotheses. For this purpose, the construct validity of the scales is also examined. To determine the construct validity of a scale, convergent (CR) and discriminant (AVE) validity values, which provide information about the fit of the items under the same factor in the scale, are considered. In this context, $AVE = 0.70$ / $CR = 0.91$ was calculated for servant leadership, $AVE = 0.71$ / $CR = 0.81$ for organizational identification, and $AVE = 0.66$ / $CR = 0.95$ for psychological empowerment. For construct validity, the AVE value must be greater than 0.5, and the CR value must also be greater than 0.7 (Gürbüz, 2021). These results show that the construct validity of the scale meets the criteria. Also, all factor loadings are above 0.50, indicating that each item represents its factor well. Table 3 shows the factor loadings, validity-reliability, and construct validity values of the scales.

Table 3.
Descriptive Statistics

Scale	Factor	Items	Loading	S.D	T-Value	R ²	CA	CR	AVE
Servant Leadership	Empathy	Item 1	0.72	1,15	24.10**	0.72	0,87	0,91	0,70
		Item 2	0.68	1,06	25.58**	0.67			
		Item 3	0.75	1,11	26.29**	0.70			
	Listening	Item 4	0.70	0,97	27.55**	0.73			
		Item 5	0.73	0,97	23.84**	0.64			
		Item 6	0.69	0,99	24.56**	0.65			
	Inspiring	Item 7	0.74	1,00	25.91**	0.67			
		Item 8	0.77	1,02	25.22**	0.71			
		Item 9	0.71	0,97	28.05**	0.73			
	Serving	Item 10	0.76	1,05	28.24**	0.63			
		Item 11	0.78	0,99	25.41**	0.67			
		Item 12	0.74	1,00	23.22**	0.68			
Organizational Identification	Identification with Organization	Item 1	0.78	1.02	25.88**	0.61	0,83	0,89	0,71
		Item 2	0.82	1.00	26.70**	0.73			
		Item 3	0.75	1.01	23.01**	0.76			
		Item 4	0.80	1.05	21.83**	0.56			
		Item 5	0.77	0.97	27.08**	0.76			
	Emotional Attachment	Item 6	0.70	1.00	27.38**	0.68			
		Item 7	0.73	1.05	27.35**	0.78			
		Item 8	0.76	1.03	27.19**	0.70			
		Item 9	0.74	1.03	25.81**	0.71			

		Item 10	0.71	0.99	24.87**	0.66			
Psychological Empowerment	Meaning	Item 1	0.80	0.98	21.58**	0.76			
		Item 2	0.82	0.97	25.60**	0.67			
		Item 3	0.78	0.97	24.11**	0.67			
	Competence	Item 4	0.75	1.00	23.53**	0.77			
		Item 5	0.77	0.97	28.88**	0.71			
		Item 6	0.79	0.99	29.83**	0.61	0,80	0,95	0,66
	Self	Item 7	0.74	0.98	25.35**	0.69			
	Determination	Item 8	0.76	0.98	26.10**	0.61			
		Item 9	0.72	0.98	22.56**	0.73			
	Impact	Item 10	0.81	0.99	23.78**	0.69			

S.D: Standard deviation; **CA:** Cronbach Alpha; **CR:** Composite Reliability; **AVE:** Average Variance Extracted

Although fit indices such as χ^2 , CFI, RMSEA, SRMR, TLI are used to decide whether the model is compatible with the theory (Stapleton, 1997), there is no clear consensus on which standard to accept (Şimşek, 2020). In this research model fit was assessed using various indices, including the chi-square test, standardized root means square residual (SRMR), root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), and comparative fit index (CFI). The Chi-Square (χ^2) value of the Servant Leadership Scale (250.32) shows that the model does not fit perfectly, but this statistic is quite sensitive to sample size. The goodness of fit values for this scale was calculated as RMSEA = 0.045, CFI = 0.95, TLI = 0.94, and SRMR = 0.035. The Chi-Square (χ^2) value of Organizational Identity Scale is (180.45) indicating that the model does not fit the data well. However, chi-square is sensitive to sample size. Other goodness of fit indices were calculated for the scale as RMSEA = 0.045, CFI = 0.97, TLI = 0.93, and SRMR = 0.035, respectively. Finally, the Psychological Empowerment Scale indices show that model fit indices suggest a good fit to the data. Values are respectively calculated as $\chi^2(120) = 220.15$, $p < 0.001$; RMSEA = 0.042; CFI = 0.94; TLI = 0.95; SRMR = 0.033. RMSEA and SRMR values are expected to be less than 0.08 (Şimşek, 2007). The normal value of CFI, which is based on the assumption that there is no relationship between the variables, is aimed to be above 0.95 (Şimşek, 2007). For the CFI index, values of 0.90 and above are values that can accept the model, while values of 0.95 and above reveal perfection (Sümer, 2000). The range of TLI value $0.97 \leq TLI \leq 1.00$ indicates a good fit, and the range $0.95 \leq TLI \leq 0.97$ indicates an acceptable value (Şimşek, 2020). In summary, it can be said that all goodness of fit values are acceptable.

Hypothesis Testing

To test the first hypothesis, a hierarchical regression analysis was conducted to assess the influence of servant leadership as an independent variable on organizational identification, the dependent variable. Control variables such as gender, age, and marital status were included in the analysis, followed by the examination of the effects of the independent variable. The results of the hierarchical regression analysis, in Table 4, provide insights into the impact of servant leadership on organizational identification.

The control variables (gender, age, and marital status) accounted for approximately 1% ($R^2=0.007$) of the variance in organizational identification. However, none of these control variables (gender: $\beta= 0.093$, $p<0.05$; age: $\beta= -0.087$, $p<0.05$; marital status: $\beta= 0.072$, $p<0.05$) had a significant impact on organizational identification.

In the second model, after including servant leadership in the regression analysis, approximately 7% of the variance in organizational identification could be explained ($R^2=0.070$). When the control variables were removed, it was observed that servant leadership accounted for 6% of the variance in organizational identification ($\Delta R^2= 0.063$).

The analysis revealed a significant and positive effect of servant leadership ($B= 0.149$, $p<0.05$) on organizational identification. Therefore, the first hypothesis of the study was confirmed.

Table 4.

Results of the hierarchical regression analysis conducted to examine the impact of servant leadership on organizational identification

Variables	Model-1		Model-2			
	<i>B</i>	<i>S.H.</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>S.H.</i>	β
Gender	0,079	0,053	0,093	0,076	0,052	0,088
Age	-0,031	0,011	-0,087	-0,026	0,011	-0,086
Marital Status	0,029	0,012	0,072	0,021	0,011	0,070
Servant Leadership				0,127	0,056	0,149*
R	0,088			0,278		
R ²	0,008			0,071		
Adj. R ²	0,007			0,070		
ΔR^2	0,007			0,063		

* $p<0,05$; ** $p<0,01$

A moderating variable can influence the relationship between variables, impacting both the direction and magnitude of the relationship. To establish moderation, it is important to demonstrate that the moderating variable affects the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. In the following analysis, organizational identification is the dependent variable, servant leadership is the independent variable, and psychological empowerment is the moderating variable. The analysis includes a hierarchical regression using the independent and moderating variables in the first model, while the second model incorporates an interaction value obtained by multiplying psychological empowerment and servant leadership.

Table 5 shows the results of the hierarchical regression analysis with the moderating variable. The analysis reveals that psychological empowerment has a significant and positive effect on organizational identification ($B = 0.167$, $p<0.01$). The first model accounts for 8% of the variance in organizational identification ($\text{Adj. } R^2= 0.080$), confirming the second hypothesis.

Examining the results of the second model, it is evident that psychological empowerment plays a moderating role in the impact of servant leadership on organizational identification ($B = 0.321$, $p<0.01$). The analysis using the interaction value demonstrates that approximately 3.2% of the variance in organizational identification ($\Delta R^2= 0.032$) is explained. In other words, psychological empowerment contributes to the explanation of organizational identification by 3.2% through its moderating role. Hence, the third hypothesis of the study is supported.

Overall, the results indicate that psychological empowerment significantly influences organizational identification and serves as a moderating factor in the relationship between servant leadership and organizational identification.

Table 5.

Results of the hierarchical regression analysis conducted to determine the moderating role of psychological empowerment

Variables	Model-1			Model-2		
	<i>B</i>	<i>S.H.</i>	β	<i>B</i>	<i>S.H.</i>	β
Servant Leadership	0,136	0,068	0,167**	0,148	0,067	0,180**
Psychological Empowerment X Servant Leadership				0,226	0,029	0,321**
R	0,286			0,337		
R ²	0,081			0,113		
Adj. R ²	0,080			0,112		
ΔR^2	0,080			0,032		

*p<0,05; **p<0,01

CONCLUSIONS

The human element plays a very important role in hotel businesses operating as a service-oriented business. Managing and integrating this important factor effectively is vital for maintaining service quality and organizational efficiency. The integration and identification of individuals with the organization leads to organizational identification, where individuals adopt and identify themselves in relation to the organization. In order to ensure long-term sustainability, customer satisfaction and new customer acquisition, hotel businesses need to encourage their employees to display attitudes and behaviors that demonstrate their identification with the hotel and sincerely embrace the goals and objectives of the organization. Organizational identification as a psychological factor in the employee-organization relationship has an important potential in shaping the attitudes and behaviors of individuals (Demir et al., 2015).

Many studies have been conducted on organizational identification, servant leadership and psychological empowerment in the hotel sector. Demir and Demir (2019) found the effect of psychological capital on employees' organizational identification levels in their research in the hotel sector. Similarly, Güllüce and Kahyaolu's study in 2016 revealed that there is a relationship between perceived organizational justice and organizational identification in the hotel sector. Öztürk et al.'s study in 2021 revealed the positive effect of servant leadership on job commitment and satisfaction. Elche et al. (2020) provided evidence of the impact of servant leadership on organizational citizenship behavior. However, there is no study that examines all variables at the same time and analyzes the moderating effect of organizational identification.

Eva et al. (2019) found that servant leadership has a significant effect on organizational identification. Nart et al. (2018), Zorlu et al. (2019) and Omanwar and Agrawal (2022) investigated the impact of servant leadership on organizational identification and psychological empowerment. The findings demonstrate the relationship between these characteristics and the importance of servant leadership in influencing organizational identification. Similarly, the results of this study show that servant leadership and psychological empowerment have a significant effect on organizational identification. These findings are in line with similar studies in the literature.

Finally, this study makes three important theoretical contributions to the servant leadership literature. First, it is confirmed that servant leadership has a statistically significant

and positive effect on organizational identification. This result is consistent with other studies that found that servant leadership increases employees' sense of identification (Zhang et al., 2012; Nart et al., 2018; Omanwar and Agrawal, 2022). Another contribution is the finding that psychological empowerment contributes to employees' identification with the organization. As Prati and Zani (2013) and Ghalavi and Nastiezaive (2020) found, the sense of empowerment in employees increases identification with the organization. Finally, another important contribution of the research to the literature is the determination that psychological empowerment plays a moderating role in the relationship between servant leadership and organizational identification. Although servant leadership research has gained importance in recent years, there are still areas to be explored about its mechanisms of influence. In this respect, this study differs from similar ones.

Implications

The research has important implications for hotels. Hotel management should prioritize the recruitment and development of leaders with servant leadership qualities and integrate them into selection and promotion processes to foster a servant leadership culture within the organization. It is also recommended to invest in training programs to develop servant leadership skills among current and future leaders.

Creating a positive psychological environment is crucial for employees to develop a strong sense of organizational identity. Management can support this by encouraging open communication, building trust and prioritizing employee well-being. It can also enhance the psychological environment and strengthen the bond between employees and the organization by providing resources for personal and professional development and supporting employee initiatives. Recognition and appreciation of employees' contributions through recognition programs is also important for the development of corporate identity. In summary, the research suggests that the hotel industry should focus on selecting and developing servant leaders, providing training programs, creating a positive psychological environment, and implementing recognition initiatives to enhance employees' sense of corporate identity.

Limitations

The study has some limitations that need to be acknowledged. The use of a cross-sectional design limits the ability to find causality and understand the dynamic nature of the relationships studied. A longitudinal study would provide more comprehensive and accurate information. In addition, potential biases such as common method bias and social desirability may have affected the results. Reliance on self-reported data collected cross-sectionally from the same sources increases the likelihood of these biases. Future research could use alternative data collection methods or combine multiple data sources to reduce these biases and increase the validity of the findings. It was assumed that participants responded honestly to the questionnaire as they were assured that the results would only be used for scientific purposes. It was also assumed that the participants understood all the survey questions correctly. The absence of face-to-face delivery of the questionnaires to the employees in the study could have led to more reliable results. In addition, the limitations of the study include the special focus on the hospitality sector and its application in Ankara. Overcoming these limitations and making a significant contribution to the understanding of organizational identification can be achieved by selecting different concepts and conducting studies in different industries or in different locations in future research.

Ethics Committee Approval

This study was carried out the decision of Mersin University of Social And Human Sciences Ethics Committee at its meeting dated 05.12.2023 and numbered 272.

REFERENCES

- Aggarwal, A., Dhaliwal, R. S., and Nobi, K. (2018). Impact of structural empowerment on organizational commitment: The moderating role of women's psychological empowerment. *Vision*, 22, 284–294.
- Aggarwal, A., Mittal, A., and Rasheed, M. A. (2019). A thematic analysis of employee competencies in an uncertain business environment: a study on the Indian infrastructure sector. *J. Adv. Res. Dyn. Control Syst.* 11, 1289–1301.
- Al Khajeh, E. H. (2018). Impact of leadership styles on organizational performance. *Journal of Human Resources Management Research*, 1-10.
- Ali, U., Arasli, H., Arasli, F., Saydam, M. B., Capkiner, E., Aksoy, E., & Atai, G. (2023). Determinants and impacts of quality attributes on guest perceptions in Norwegian Green Hotels. *Sustainability*, 15(6), 2-29.
- Al-Makhadmah, I. M., Al Najdawi, B. M., & Al-Muala, I. M. (2020). Impact of psychological empowerment on the performance of employees in the four-and five-star hotel sector in the Dead Sea–Jordan tourist area. *Geo Journal of Tourism and Geosites*, 30, 896-904.
- Amundsen, S., & Martinsen, Ø. L. (2014). Linking empowering leadership to job satisfaction, work effort, and creativity: The role of self-leadership and psychological empowerment. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies*, 21(3), 281-292.
- Ashforth, B. E., Harrison, S. H. & Corley, K. G. (2008). Identification in organizations: An examination of four fundamental questions. *Journal of Management*, 34(3), 325-374.
- Bandura, A. (1986). The explanatory and predictive scope of self-efficacy theory. *Journal Of Social And Clinical Psychology*, 4(3), 359-373.
- Brown A.D. (2017) Identity work and organizational identification. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 19(3), 296-317.
- Brownell, J. (2010). Leadership in the service of hospitality. *Cornell Hospitality Quarterly*, 51 (3), 363-378.
- Canavesi, A., & Minelli, E. (2022). Servant leadership and employee engagement: A qualitative study. *Employee Responsibilities and Rights Journal*, 34(4), 413-435.
- DeConinck, J. B. (2011). The effects of ethical climate on organizational identification, supervisory trust, and turnover among salespeople. *Journal of Business Research*, 64(6), 617-624.
- Demir M, Demir Ş.Ş. & Nield K. (2015). The relationship between person-organization fit, organizational identification and work outcomes. *Journal of Business Economics and Management*, 16 (2), 369-386.
- Demir, M., & Demir, Ş. Ş. (2019). The effects of psychological capital on employees' organizational identification in hotels. *Journal of Tourism Theory and Research*, 5(3), 355-369.
- Elche, D., Ruiz-Palomino, P., & Linuesa-Langreo, J. (2020). Servant leadership and organizational citizenship behavior: The moderating effect of empathy and service climate. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 32(6), 2035-2053.
- Elkhwesky, Z., Salem, I. E., & Barakat, M. (2018). Age diversity management in five-star hotels: Importance-implementation analysis. *Journal of Tourism Research*, 20, 74-88.
- Ertürk, A. (2010). Exploring predictors of organizational identification: Moderating role of trust on the associations between empowerment, organizational support, and identification. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 19, 409–441.
- Eva, N., Robin, M., Sendjaya, S., Van Dierendonck, D., & Liden, R. C. (2019). Servant leadership: A systematic review and call for future research. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 30(1), 111-132.
- Ghalavi, Z., & Nastiezaie, N. (2020). Relationship of servant leadership and organizational citizenship behavior with regulation of psychological empowerment. *Eurasian Journal of Educational Research*, 20(89), 241-264.
- Ghannam, A. A. & Taamneh, M. M. (2017). The impact of organizational identification on organizational commitment among governmental employees in Jordan. *International Review of Management and Business Research*, 6(3), 1026-1034.
- Greenleaf, R. K. (1977). *Servant Leadership: A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness*. Paulist Press, Mahwah, NJ.

- Güllüce, A. C., & Kahyaoglu, M. (2016). Correlation between organizational justice perception and organizational identification: a case study in the hotels of the Urartu culture and tourism development region. *International Journal of Business Administration*, 7(3), 123-131.
- Gürbüz, S. (2021). *AMOS ile yapısal eşitlik modellemesi*. Ankara: Seçkin Yayıncılık.
- Hamzagić, E. (2018). The importance of the organizational identification in forming organizational perception. *International Review* (1-2), 31-38.
- Hughes, D. J., Lee, A., Tian, A. W., Newman, A., & Legood, A. (2018). Leadership, creativity, and innovation: A critical review and practical recommendations. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 29(5), 549- 569.
- Kahaleh, A., & Gaither, C. (2007). The effects of work setting on pharmacists' empowerment and organizational behaviors. *Research in Social and Administrative Pharmacy*, 3, 199-222.
- Khan, N. A., Khan, A. N., Soomro, M. A., & Khan, S. K. (2020). Transformational leadership and civic virtue behavior: Valuing act of thriving and emotional exhaustion in the hotel industry. *Asia Pacific Management Review*, 25(4), 216-225.
- Kılıç, S. (2016). Cronbach'ın alfa güvenirlik katsayısı. *Journal of Mood Disorders*, 6(1), 47-48.
- Kılıç, K. C., & Aydın, Y. (2016). Hizmetkâr liderlik ölçeğinin Türkçe uyarlaması: Güvenirlik ve geçerlik çalışması. *KMÜ Sosyal ve Ekonomik Araştırmalar Dergisi*. 18 (30), 106 –113.
- Liden, R. C., Wayne, S. J., Zhao, H., & Henderson, D. (2008). Servant leadership: Development of a multidimensional measure and multi-level assessment. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 19(2), 161-177.
- Liden, R. C., Wayne, S. J., Meuser, J. D., Hu, J., Wu, J., & Liao, C. (2015). Servant leadership: Validation of a short form of the SL-28. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 26(2), 254-269.
- Lv, W. Q., Shen, L. C., Tsai, C. H. K., Su, C. H. J., Kim, H. J., & Chen, M. H. (2022). Servant leadership elevates supervisor-subordinate guanxi: An investigation of psychological safety and organizational identification. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 101, 103114.
- Lythreitis, S., Mostafa, A. M. S., Pereira, V., Wang, X., & Del Giudice, M. (2021). Servant leadership, CSR perceptions, moral meaningfulness and organizational identification-evidence from the Middle East. *International Business Review*, 30(5), 101772.
- Mael, F., & Ashforth, B. E. (1992). Alumni and their alma mater: A partial test of the reformulated model of organizational identification. *Journal of organizational Behavior*, 13(2), 103-123.
- Meng, Q. & Sun, F. (2019). The impact of psychological empowerment on work engagement among university faculty members in China. *Psychology Research and Behavior Management*, 18(12), 983-990.
- Meyerson, S. L. & Kline, T. J. B. (2008). Psychological and environmental empowerment: Antecedents and consequences. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 29(5), 444-460.
- Nanjundeswaraswamy, T. S., & Swamy, D. R. (2014). Leadership styles. *Advances in Management*, 7(2), 57-62.
- Nart, S., Yaprak, B., Yıldırım, Y. T., & Sarihan, A. Y. (2018). The relationship of diversity management and servant leadership with organizational identification and creativity in multinational enterprises. *Finans Politik ve Ekonomik Yorumlar*, (637), 31-47.
- Omanwar, S. P., & Agrawal, R. K. (2022). Servant leadership, organizational identification and turnover intention: an empirical study in hospitals. *International Journal of Organizational Analysis*, 30(2), 239-258.
- Öztürk, A., Karatepe, O. M., & Okumus, F. (2021). The effect of servant leadership on hotel employees' behavioral consequences: Work engagement versus job satisfaction. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 97, 102994.
- Prati, G., & Zani, B. (2013). The relationship between psychological empowerment and organizational identification. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 41(7), 851-866.
- Rabiul, M. K., & Yean, T. F. (2021). Leadership styles, motivating language, and work engagement: An empirical investigation of the hotel industry. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 92, 102712.
- Schuh, S. C., Egold, N. W. & Dick, R. V. (2012) Towards understanding the role of organizational identification in service settings: A multilevel study spanning leaders, service employees, and customers. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 21 (4), 547-574
- Spreitzer, G. M. (1995). Psychological empowerment in the workplace: Dimensions, measurement, and validation. *Academy Of Management Journal*, 38(5), 1442-1465.

- Stapleton, C. D. (1997). *Basic concepts and procedures of confirmatory factor analysis*. Texas A&M University.
- Sürgevil, O., Tolay, E., & Topoyan, M. (2013). Yapısal güçlendirme ve psikolojik güçlendirme ölçeklerinin geçerlilik ve güvenilirlik analizleri. *Journal of Yasar University*, 8(31), 5371-5391.
- Sümer, N. (2000). Yapısal eşitlik modelleri: Temel kavramlar ve örnek uygulamalar. *Türk Psikoloji Yazıları*, 3 (6), 49-54.
- Şimşek, Ö. F. (2007). *Yapısal Eşitlik Modellemesine Giriş, Temel İlkeler ve LISREL Uygulamaları*. Ankara: Ekinoks Eğitim ve Danışmanlık Hizmetleri
- Şimşek, Ö. F. (2020). *Yapısal eşitlik modellemesine giriş: Temel ilkeler ve LISREL uygulamaları*. Ankara: Ekinoks Eğitim ve Danışmanlık Hizmetleri
- Tabachnick, B. G., Fidell, L. S., & Ullman, J. B. (2007). *Using multivariate statistics (Fifth ed.)*. Boston, MA Allyn and Bacon.
- Van Dick, R., Wagner, U., Stellmacher, J. & Christ, O. (2004). The utility of a broader conceptualization of organizational identification: Which aspects really matter? *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 77, 171-191.
- Van Dierendonck, D. & Nuijten, I. (2011). The servant leadership survey: Development and validation of a multidimensional measure. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 26(3), 249–267.
- Wang, Z., Xu, H. and Liu, Y. (2018). Servant leadership as a driver of employee service performance: Test of a trickle-down model and its boundary conditions. *Human Relations*, 71 (9), 1179-1203.
- Zhang, H., Kwan, H. K., Everett, A. M., & Jian, Z. (2012). Servant leadership, organizational identification, and work-to-family enrichment: The moderating role of work climate for sharing family concerns. *Human Resource Management*, 51 (5), 747–768.
- Zorlu, Ö., Avan, A., & Baytok, A. (2019). The effect of servant leadership on psychological empowerment and organizational identification. *İşletme Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 11(1), 293-309.