How Transformational Leadership, Corporate Culture, and Intrinsic Motivation Shape Hospitality Employee Performance?

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Abstract

Objective: Guided by Self-Determination Theory (SDT), this study investigates the effects of transformational leadership, corporate culture, and company values on intrinsic motivation and employee performance in the hospitality industry.

Design/Methods/Approach: Data were collected from 277 hotel employees across multiple departments using structured surveys. Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) was employed to assess both direct and indirect effects among the variables.

Findings: The results demonstrate that transformational leadership, corporate culture, and company values have a significant influence on intrinsic motivation, which in turn enhances employee performance. Intrinsic motivation acts as a key mediating mechanism linking organizational factors to performance outcomes. A strong organizational culture and value congruence emerge as critical drivers of employee motivation and effectiveness in the hospitality context.

Originality/Value: This study contributes to the organizational behavior and human resource management literature by integrating multiple theoretical perspectives (SDT, Person–Organization Fit, and Full-Range Leadership Theory) into a unified model. The application of PLS-SEM provides robust insights into the psychological mechanisms that shape performance, particularly within service-intensive environments such as the hospitality sector.

Practical/Policy implication: The study offers actionable insights for hospitality managers, including the design of leadership development programs, embedding organizational values into operational routines, and fostering cultures that meet employees' psychological needs. These interventions are essential for sustaining engagement and performance in dynamic service settings.

Keywords: Transformational leadership; Corporate culture; Company values; Intrinsic motivation; Employee performance

JEL Classification: M12; M14; L83

1. Introduction

The global hospitality industry has emerged as a vital contributor to economic growth, employment, and service innovation in both developed and developing countries (Gholipour et al., 2021; McKenna et al., 2024). Despite its substantial role, the sector faces persistent and complex challenges, including high employee turnover, fluctuating visitor demand, and increasing pressure to maintain exceptional service standards (Dawson et al., 2023; Gitonga, 2023). These structural issues are further exacerbated by the rapid growth of international tourism, which places heightened demands on workforce capability and organizational adaptability. The report from Facts & Factors projects that the global hospitality market will grow from $3.953 billion in 2021 to $6.716.3 billion in 2028, with a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of approximately 10.24% (Facts & Factors, 2022). Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic has intensified these challenges, disrupting operations worldwide and underscoring the urgent need for organizational resilience, effective employee performance, and sustainable motivation systems (Paeffgen, 2022; Weber, 2023).

In high-contact service industries, such as hospitality, employee behavior and motivation have a direct influence on service quality and organizational success (Dorta Afonso et al., 2021; Wang & Jiang, 2024). Understanding the internal organizational factors that foster intrinsic motivation has thus become increasingly important (Suen, 2022). Leadership and corporate culture are frequently identified as central enablers of employee engagement, satisfaction, and sustained performance (Northouse, 2021; Schein, 2021). However, while prior research has examined these dynamics across various sectors such as healthcare, education, manufacturing, and finance (Bregenzer et al., 2020; Yalçınkaya et al., 2021; Sun et al., 2021; Ahmed et al., 2022), empirical studies focusing specifically on the hospitality sector, especially in emerging economies, remain scarce.

For example, in healthcare, transformational leadership has been shown to enhance staff engagement and reduce burnout (Al Maaitah et al., 2021; Wu et al., 2022; Tran et al., 2023). In education, leadership styles such as instructional and distributed leadership have been shown to influence teacher motivation and job satisfaction positively (Yalçınkaya et al., 2021; Collie, 2023; Dwiyono et al., 2024; Ravdansuren et al., 2024). In manufacturing, leadership supports safety, motivation, and innovation (Sun et al., 2021; Rodriguez et al., 2022), while in finance, ethical and transformational leadership have strengthened employee trust and motivation (Ahmed et al., 2022; Kumar & Singh, 2023). These sectoral insights underscore the importance of sector-specific investigations in the hospitality sector, where service quality is closely tied to employee attitudes and behaviors.

Organizational culture also plays a critical role in shaping innovation, performance, and psychological safety. A supportive culture can amplify the impact of leadership by fostering value alignment, trust, and intrinsic motivation (Aboramadan et al., 2020; Zhang et al., 2023). However, despite this recognition, empirical studies examining the joint influence of leadership, culture, and organizational values on motivation and performance within the hospitality industry remain limited. This assertion is supported by a comprehensive review of the literature, which highlights that most prior studies typically focus on isolated relationships (e.g., leadership and motivation, or culture and performance) rather than addressing these factors in an integrated and simultaneous manner. Consistent with Dewi and Ekowati (2025), who underscore the rarity of comprehensive empirical studies that explore multidimensional organizational relationships simultaneously, especially within specific industry contexts and geographical regions, our study explicitly fills this gap by providing an integrated analysis of these organizational variables within the context of the hospitality industry.

To address this gap, the present study draws on multiple theoretical perspectives to build an integrated conceptual framework. Self-Determination Theory (SDT) (Ryan & Deci, 2020) is employed to explain how fulfilling employees' basic psychological needs, autonomy, competence, and relatedness, enhances intrinsic motivation. Person-Organization Fit (P-O Fit) Theory (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005) emphasizes the importance of alignment between individual and organizational values in fostering engagement, satisfaction, and performance. Furthermore, Full-Range Leadership Theory (Bass, 1985) highlights how transformational leadership behaviors, idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration, act as key drivers of both individual and organizational outcomes.

Building on these theories, this study offers several key contributions. First, it provides an integrated analysis of how transformational leadership, corporate culture, and company values jointly influence intrinsic motivation and employee performance, specifically in the hospitality sector. Second, it advances the literature by combining multiple theoretical perspectives to explain not only direct effects but also the psychological mechanisms underlying these relationships. Third, it addresses a sector and geographic context, hospitality in emerging economies that has been underrepresented in prior research, offering practical insights for organizational development and human resource strategies in service-intensive environments.

To empirically test the proposed model, this study adopts a quantitative approach using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). Data were collected from 277 employees working in the hospitality sector through structured questionnaires using validated measurement scales. This approach enables the assessment of complex relationships between leadership, culture, values, intrinsic motivation, and performance.

The remaining sections of this paper present the literature review, research hypotheses, methodology, data analysis, discussion of results, and concluding remarks, including theoretical and managerial implications, study limitations, and suggestions for future research.

2. Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

2.1 Theoretical Background

This study adopts an integrated theoretical framework that combines Self-Determination Theory (SDT), Person-Organization Fit Theory (P-O Fit), and Full-Range Leadership Theory (FRLT) to explain how transformational leadership, corporate culture, and organizational values influence intrinsic motivation and employee performance in the hospitality sector. SDT (Deci & Ryan, 2000) suggests that intrinsic motivation arises when employees' needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness are fulfilled. In organisational contexts, this occurs when individuals feel ownership over their work, believe in their capabilities, and experience meaningful social connections. P-O Fit Theory (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005) reinforces this by highlighting that value congruence between employees and organisations fosters motivation, commitment, and performance. Perceived alignment enhances psychological safety and strengthens intrinsic drive. FRLT (Bass & Riggio, 2006) introduces the leadership perspective, emphasising that transformational leaders motivate followers by inspiring vision, encouraging innovation, and offering individual support. These behaviours help satisfy the psychological needs central to SDT. Together, these theories provide a comprehensive foundation for understanding how leadership, culture, and values collectively shape motivation and performance in service-intensive industries, such as hospitality.

2.2 Hypotheses Development

2.2.1 Transformational Leadership and Intrinsic Motivation

Burns (1978) was the first to define transformational leadership as a process in which leaders and followers engage in a way that raises one another to higher levels of morality and motivation. This concept was further developed by Bass (1985), who defined it as a leadership style in which leaders encourage, inspire, and motivate employees to innovate and create change that will help grow and shape the company's future success. In its modern application, transformational leadership is known as a style that inspires and empowers organizational members through four key dimensions: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Leaders who exhibit this style can encourage followers to recognize the importance and higher good of the task, motivating them to set aside their self-interest for the sake of the organization's mission (Bush, 2018).

Intrinsic motivation is defined as the act of doing something without any obvious external rewards, but rather because it is inherently interesting or enjoyable to the individual (Deci & Ryan, 2000). This motivation originates from within the person, driven by the satisfaction derived from performing the task itself. Thomas (2009) also describes it as the positive feelings that individuals get from their work, which are generated by a sense of meaningfulness, choice, competence, and progress. Therefore, intrinsically motivated individuals are motivated to act for the enjoyment or challenge entailed, rather than because of external pressures or rewards (Ryan & Deci, 2017).

Transformational leadership is widely regarded as having a positive and significant impact on the intrinsic motivation of followers. Previous studies consistently show a strong positive correlation between transformational leadership behaviors and the level of intrinsic motivation across various industries and cultures (Cheng et al., 2023; Løvaas et al., 2020). Leaders who successfully implement this style create a work climate that is more engaging and psychologically rewarding for their employees. The mechanism behind this relationship can be best explained through the lens of Self-Determination Theory (SDT). SDT posits that intrinsic motivation flourishes when the work environment fulfills three innate psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Deci & Ryan, 2000). A work environment that supports these needs enables employees to feel a more profound sense of purpose and engagement, shifting their motivation from external to internal sources. The core dimensions of transformational leadership are uniquely suited to satisfy these psychological needs. For instance, intellectual stimulation and empowering behaviors directly support the need for autonomy by encouraging employees to think independently and take ownership of their tasks. Individualized consideration, where leaders act as mentors, provides tailored feedback and support that enhances an employee's sense of competence and confidence.

Furthermore, inspirational motivation and idealized influence foster a strong sense of relatedness by connecting employees to a compelling organizational vision, making them feel like a valued part of a collective mission (Kim et al., 2025; Agazu et al., 2025; Liang & Hsieh, 2023). Therefore, by cultivating a work environment that fulfills these core psychological needs, transformational leaders directly enhance the internal drive of their employees. When individuals feel autonomous, competent, and connected at work, their motivation to perform stems from genuine interest and satisfaction, rather than from external directives. Based on the above statements, we propose:

H1: Transformational leadership has a significant positive effect on intrinsic motivation

2.2.2 Corporate Culture and Intrinsic Motivation

Corporate culture refers to the shared values, beliefs, and behavioral norms that shape how individuals behave and interact within an organization (Schein, 2010). A strong and positive corporate culture provides employees with a clear sense of identity and shared purpose, guiding not only external behaviors but also internal psychological states that influence engagement, commitment, and well-being (Fernandes et al., 2023). In contemporary organizations facing rapid

change and high-performance expectations, cultivating a supportive and empowering corporate culture has become essential in fostering not just compliance but genuine motivation among employees.

In this research, intrinsic motivation is defined as the inherent drive to engage in a task for the satisfaction, enjoyment, and personal fulfillment it provides, rather than for external rewards or pressures (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Individuals with high intrinsic motivation are more likely to pursue tasks with creativity, persistence, and engagement because they find the work itself meaningful (Ryan & Deci, 2017). This internal drive is crucial for organizations aiming to foster innovation, adaptability, and sustainable performance.

According to SDT, intrinsic motivation flourishes when individuals' basic psychological needs—autonomy (the need to feel control over one's actions), competence (the need to feel effective and capable), and relatedness (the need to feel connected to others) are satisfied (Deci & Ryan, 2000). A supportive corporate culture directly nurtures these needs by creating an environment where employees are trusted to make decisions, provided with meaningful feedback and opportunities for growth, and encouraged to collaborate in an atmosphere of psychological safety (Wang et al., 2020). When these conditions are present, employees are more likely to internalize organizational values, experience a sense of purpose, and engage in their work for intrinsic reasons (van Tuin et.al., 2021). Empirical studies consistently confirm this theoretical logic. For instance, organizations characterized by strong, ethical, and empowering cultures have been found to significantly increase employees' intrinsic motivation and psychological engagement (Huhtala et al., 2015; Duy et al., 2024). Such cultures enable employees to go beyond mere compliance or external incentives, fostering sustained motivation that is essential for long-term performance and job satisfaction. Moreover, a values-driven culture ensures alignment between individual and organizational goals, enhancing feelings of authenticity and meaningfulness, which are central components of intrinsic motivation (Kim & Beehr, 2018; Fridan & Maamari, 2024). Therefore, based on both theoretical reasoning and empirical evidence, it is proposed that organizations with a positive and supportive corporate culture are more likely to foster higher levels of intrinsic motivation among employees, leading to increased engagement and proactive behaviors. Hence, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: Corporate culture positively influences Intrinsic Motivation

2.2.3 Value of the Company and Intrinsic Motivation

The value of the company refers to the core principles, beliefs, and guiding philosophies that define an organization's identity and shape its operations, both internally and externally (Ozolina et al., 2024). These values serve as the ethical and cultural foundation that influences decision-making, behaviors, and interactions in the workplace. When employees perceive that their values align with those upheld by the organization, they are more likely to experience a more profound sense of purpose, belonging, and commitment to their work.

This alignment between personal and organizational values is often conceptualized as Person-Organization Fit (P-O Fit), which reflects the degree to which an individual's values, beliefs, and personality align with the organization's culture and mission (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). According to P-O Fit Theory, when such alignment is present, employees are more likely to feel a strong psychological connection to the organization, enhancing their intrinsic motivation, engagement, and job satisfaction. Intrinsically motivated individuals tend to approach their work with enthusiasm, persistence, and creativity because they perceive the work as meaningful and aligned with their values (Ryan & Deci, 2017). The relationship between company values and intrinsic motivation can also be understood through Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000). SDT posits that intrinsic motivation is enhanced when three basic psychological needs — autonomy, competence, and relatedness — are satisfied. A values-driven organization that promotes ethical behavior, empowerment, and social contribution helps create a supportive environment where these needs are fulfilled (Van Tuin et al., 2022; Park, 2023). This alignment strengthens employees' internal motivation by reinforcing the meaning and purpose of their work. Empirical evidence supports this theoretical perspective. Studies have consistently shown that organizations with clearly communicated, ethically grounded values foster higher levels of intrinsic motivation, employee engagement, and well-being (Huhtala et al., 2015; Schwepker et al., 2021; Ozolina et al., 2024). Such environments not only meet material needs but also nurture deeper psychological fulfillment by aligning individual and organizational goals. Based on this reasoning, we propose the following hypothesis:

H3: The Value of the Company positively influences Intrinsic Motivation

2.2.4 Intrinsic Motivation and Employee Performance

Individuals who are intrinsically motivated are driven by a genuine interest in the task itself, and this internal drive sustains their persistence, creativity, and engagement in the workplace (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Such individuals are more likely to approach their work with enthusiasm, take initiative, and maintain high levels of effort even in the face of challenges. Intrinsically motivated employees are not only more engaged but also tend to exhibit higher levels of organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and discretionary effort, all of which are crucial for sustained high performance (Trivellas, 2011; Shanen et al., 2024).

In this study, employee performance refers to the extent to which individuals fulfill role requirements, contribute to organizational goals, and engage in behaviors that support organizational effectiveness (Campbell, 1990; Motowidlo & Van Scotter, 1994). This includes both task performance and contextual performance, such as helping behaviors and proactive contributions beyond formal job descriptions.

A growing body of empirical research supports this theoretical reasoning. Studies have shown that employees with high intrinsic motivation tend to perform better, meet goals more efficiently, and deliver higher-quality outputs compared to those who rely primarily on external incentives (Sulistama et al., 2023; Sitorus, 2024). Intrinsic motivation also fosters innovation and adaptability, as motivated employees are more willing to take on challenging tasks and propose creative solutions without requiring constant supervision (Shounobi, 2016). Furthermore, evidence suggests that intrinsic motivation enhances not only individual performance but also contributes to broader organizational outcomes by promoting psychological engagement, reducing turnover intention, and improving resilience (Salamah, 2021). In addition, intrinsic motivation has been linked to increased organizational commitment, which in turn positively influences job performance (Trivellas, 2011; Shanen et al., 2024). When employees derive satisfaction and meaning from their work, they are more likely to develop an emotional attachment to their organization, which in turn further reinforces their willingness to exert extra effort. Based on this rationale, we propose:

H4: Intrinsic Motivation positively influences employee performance

2.2.5 Transformational Leadership and Employee Performance

Transformational leaders demonstrate four key behaviors: idealized influence (role modeling), inspirational motivation (articulating vision), intellectual stimulation (encouraging innovation), and individualized consideration (addressing individual needs) (Lin, 2023). Through these behaviors, leaders enhance employees' organizational commitment, which contributes to improved performance (Hutagaluh & Indayani, 2024). Transformational leadership positively influences performance by shaping how employees think and act in their work. By fostering psychological safety, leaders create environments where employees feel confident to take risks and innovate (Alwahhabi et al., 2023). Intellectual stimulation promotes problem-solving and critical thinking, while individualized consideration makes employees feel valued, boosting their enthusiasm and motivation. This sense of engagement and emotional connection enhances persistence, creativity, and work quality (Helalat et al., 2023). The impact of transformational leadership is amplified in cultures that value innovation, collaboration, and fairness. When workplace systems are perceived as fair, leadership influence on performance is further strengthened. Based on this rationale, we propose:

H5: Transformational Leadership positively influences employee performance

2.2.6 Corporate Culture Influences Performance

Corporate culture refers to the shared values, norms, and behaviors that shape how employees interact and perform within an organization (Schein, 2010). A strong and positive culture fosters alignment between individual goals and organizational objectives, creating an environment where employees feel valued, supported, and engaged (Chatman & O'Reilly, 2016; Fernandes et al., 2023). The positive influence of corporate culture on employee performance stems from the fact that employees derive a sense of identity and belonging from their association with an organization, which in turn enhances their motivation, commitment, and willingness to contribute beyond formal job requirements (Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Huhtala et al., 2015). Empirical studies consistently support this relationship, showing that positive and ethical cultures foster higher employee engagement, innovation, and productivity (Zhang et al., 2023; Fridan & Mamari, 2024; Aggarwal, 2024). Therefore, we propose:

H6: Corporate culture positively influences employee performance

2.2.7 Value of the Company Influences Employee Performance

Company values not only serve as the moral compass of the organization but also shape behavioral expectations, decision-making, and daily interactions. When employees perceive alignment between their values and the organization's core values, they are more likely to internalize organizational goals, experience role clarity, and exert discretionary effort (Kellermanns et al., 2021). This alignment fosters a shared sense of purpose, strengthens psychological safety, and enhances organizational identification.

Beyond shaping individual attitudes, company values are a core element of organizational culture, which significantly influences workplace dynamics and organizational effectiveness. As highlighted by Tadesse Bogale and Debela (2024), organizational culture affects how employees interact, are managed, and perceive their roles, which are factors that directly impact engagement, innovation, and performance. When organizational values promote orientations such as teamwork, result-driven behavior, and innovation, they create a culture that motivates employees to perform beyond formal expectations. This positive relationship can be further explained through the lens of Person-Organization Fit (P-O Fit) Theory (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). When employees perceive that their values align with those of the

organization, they are more likely to experience psychological comfort, foster stronger commitment, and engage in proactive behaviors that enhance performance. Kellermanns et al. (2021) found that value alignment enhances engagement and effectiveness. Similarly, Cao and Zhang (2023) demonstrated that congruence enhances enthusiasm and work engagement, while Zhang and Zhou (2022) and Zhao et al. (2022) highlighted the role of cultural alignment in driving organizational agility, productivity, and performance. Taken together, these insights suggest that when employees perceive a strong alignment between their values and those of the organization, they are more likely to demonstrate the attitudes and behaviors required for superior performance. Therefore, we propose:

H7: The Value of the company has a significant positive effect on Employee Performance

2.2.8 The Mediating Role of Intrinsic Motivation in the Relationship Between Transformational Leadership, Corporate Culture, and Value of the Company on Employee Performance

While leadership, organizational culture, and company values are recognized antecedents of performance, recent theoretical and empirical advancements highlight the crucial role of intrinsic motivation as a psychological mechanism that explains how these factors contribute to improved employee outcomes (Pradhan & Jena, 2016). Intrinsic motivation arises when individuals' basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness are satisfied (Ryan & Deci, 2000; 2017). Transformational leadership, characterized by vision, inspiration, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration (Bass, 1985; Burns, 1978), plays a crucial role in fulfilling these needs by creating an empowering and meaningful work environment. Similarly, a positive corporate culture and alignment between personal and organizational values foster psychological safety, mutual respect, and shared purpose, all of which strengthen intrinsic motivation (Tadesse Bogale & Debela, 2024; Cao & Zhang, 2023; van Tuin et al., 2021).

Employees who are intrinsically motivated are more likely to engage in their work with enthusiasm, persistence, and creative behaviors, leading to higher task efficiency and proactive contributions beyond formal job descriptions (Thomas, 2009; Manzoor et al., 2021). This mediating role is supported by empirical studies, which show that intrinsic motivation explains how transformational leadership (Putra & Dewi, 2019), organizational culture (Aggarwal, 2024), and value congruence (Cao & Zhang, 2023) enhance employee performance across diverse contexts. The fulfillment of psychological needs not only improves performance but also contributes to greater job satisfaction, engagement, and organizational commitment (Arifin & Johanes Lo, 2020).

In summary, while transformational leadership, corporate culture, and company values are vital predictors of employee performance, it is the presence of intrinsic motivation shaped by these organizational factors that ultimately drives superior outcomes. Therefore, this study proposes that intrinsic motivation significantly mediates the relationships between transformational leadership, corporate culture, and the value of the company on employee performance. Based on this reasoning, we propose the following hypothesis:

H8a: Intrinsic motivation significantly mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and employee performance
H8b: Intrinsic motivation significantly mediates the relationship between corporate culture and employee performance
H8c: Intrinsic motivation significantly mediates the relationship between the value of the company and employee performance
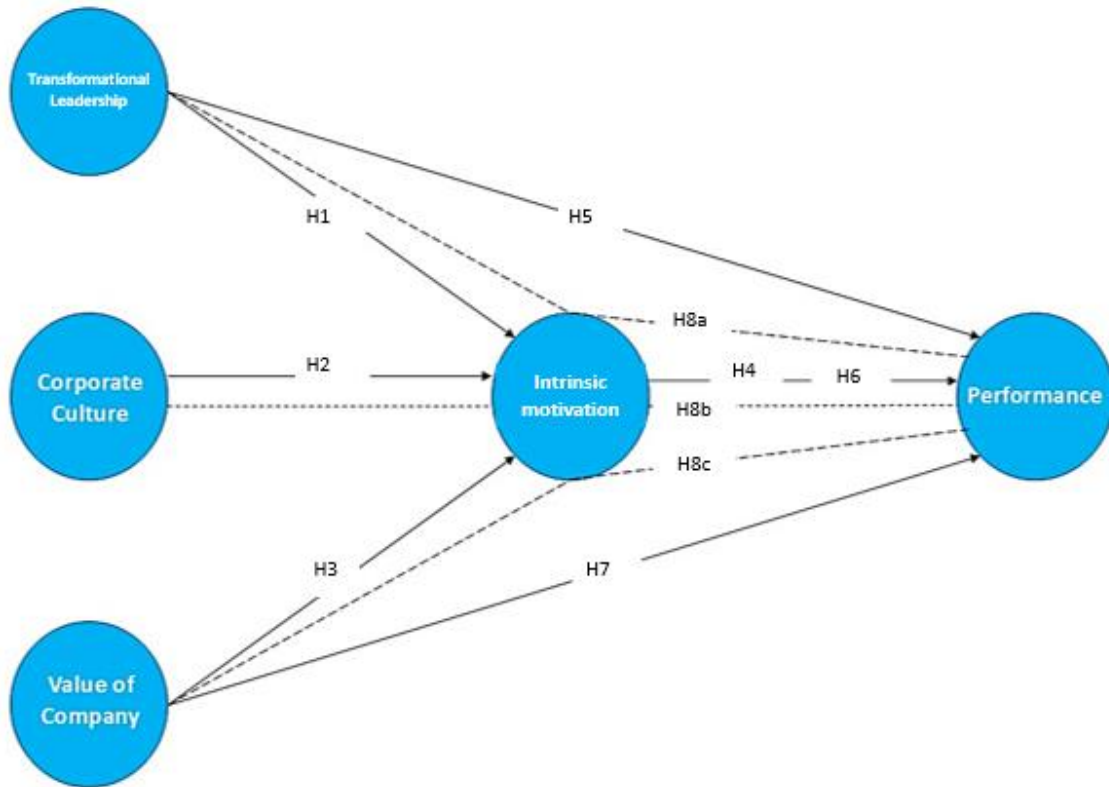
Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

3. Method

This study employed a purposive sampling technique to select participants based on specific criteria relevant to the research objectives. The respondents were employees working in the hospitality industry, specifically hotel employees in Indonesia, as this sector heavily relies on human capital, leadership, organizational culture, and shared values to enhance performance Participants were selected if they met the following criteria: (1) currently employed in hotels in Indonesia, (2) have at least six months of continuous work experience in the current organization, (3) occupy staff, supervisory, or middle management positions, and (4) are aged between 18 and 45 years, representing the productive workforce contributing to daily operations and service excellence. The sample size was determined based on Hair et al. (2010), which recommends a sample size of ten times the number of measurement indicators. With 27 indicators, a minimum of 270 respondents was required. This study successfully collected 277 valid responses from hotel employees across various types of hotels.

3.2 Data Collection and Measurement

The data collection process was conducted systematically to ensure validity and reliability. Primary data were collected through an online survey using structured questionnaires distributed to hotel employees in Indonesia who met the research criteria. The survey was disseminated through professional hospitality associations and internal WhatsApp groups managed by hotel supervisors to reach participants actively working in the hotel sector. Data were collected over 60 days, and respondents were invited to voluntarily complete the questionnaire by selecting responses that best reflected their experiences. Confidentiality was assured, and informed consent was obtained prior to participation. The questionnaire was administered via Google Forms, yielding 277 valid responses, which exceeded the minimum required sample size of 250.

3.3 Measure

This study measured transformational leadership using five items adapted from Bass and Riggio (2006), reflecting key behaviors such as inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Cheng et al., 2023; Shafi et al., 2020). Corporate culture was assessed through four items adapted from Schein (2010), focusing on shared values, ethical practices, and alignment between organizational and personal values (Aggarwal, 2024; Zhang et al., 2023). Company values were measured using five items, based on Cao and Zhang (2023) and van Tuin et al. (2022), which emphasized value alignment, purpose, and recognition. Intrinsic motivation was assessed using seven items that reflected autonomy, competence, relatedness, and meaningfulness, following the principles of Self-Determination Theory

(Ryan & Deci, 2017; Gagné et al., 2018). Employee performance was measured through five items assessing both task and contextual performance, including meeting goals, quality of work, proactivity, teamwork, and job satisfaction (Campbell et al., 1990; Helalat et al., 2023). All variables were measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

Table 1. Definition and Measurement

Variable	Operational Definition	Variable Measurement (Items)	Sources
Transformational Leadership	Transformational leadership refers to a leadership style where leaders inspire, motivate, intellectually stimulate, and individually consider employees to achieve higher performance.	**TL1**: My leader instills pride and earns my respect. **TL2**: My leader articulates a clear and inspiring vision. **TL3**: My leader encourages creativity and innovation. **TL4**: My leader challenges me to think critically. **TL5**: My leader provides individualized support and care.	Bass & Riggio, 2006; Cheng et al., 2023; Shafi et al., 2020
Corporate Culture	Corporate culture refers to the set of shared values, norms, and behaviors within an organization that shape how people interact and work, ultimately impacting motivation and performance.	**CC1**: Our culture emphasizes ethical values and responsibility. **CC2**: My workplace fosters continuous learning and improvement. **CC3**: The organization supports work-life balance. **CC4**: There is alignment between my personal values and the organization's values. **CC5:** The organization encourages collaboration and teamwork.	Schein, 2010; Aggarwal, 2024; Zhang et al., 2023
Value Of Company	The value of a company is the core guiding principles and ethical standards that shape organizational decisions, behaviors, and employee alignment with the mission and vision.	**VOC1**: The organization communicates clear values that guide behavior. **VOC2**: I feel that the company's values align with my personal values. **VOC3**: The company promotes purpose and responsibility. **VOC4**: Employee contributions are valued and recognized. **VOC5:** The organization demonstrates social and environmental responsibility.	Cao & Zhang, 2023; van Tuin et al., 2022; Le Thi Viet Ha et al., 2025
Intrinsic Motivation	Intrinsic motivation refers to the internal desire to engage in work for its inherent satisfaction, enjoyment, and personal meaning, rather than external rewards.	**M1**: I feel empowered and autonomous in my job. **M2**: I feel competent and capable in performing my work. **M3**: I feel connected to others in my workplace, which motivates me. **M4**: I find my work personally meaningful and satisfying. **M5:** I am enthusiastic about the tasks I perform. **M6:** I feel excited when I solve work challenges. **M7:** I enjoy learning and growing through my work.	Ryan & Deci, 2017; Gagné et al., 2018

Employee Performance	Employee performance is the extent to which individuals fulfill role requirements, contribute to organizational goals, and engage in behaviors that support organizational effectiveness, including both task and contextual performance.	**P1**: I consistently meet or exceed my performance targets. **P2**: I deliver high-quality results that support organizational success. **P3**: I proactively seek ways to improve my work. **P4**: I actively collaborate with others to achieve team goals. **P5:** I adapt effectively to changing work demands.	Campbell et al., 1990; Helalat et al., 2023

4. Result and Discussion

Table 2 presents the characteristics of the respondents in this study. Out of the total 277 respondents, 142 (51.3%) were male and 135 (48.7%) were female. In terms of age, 68 respondents (24.6%) were under 20 years old, 110 respondents (39.7%) were between 21 and 30 years old, and 99 respondents (35.7%) were over 30 years old. Regarding work experience, 64 respondents (23.1%) had less than 1 year of work experience, 98 respondents (35.4%) had between 2 and 5 years of experience, and 115 respondents (41.5%) had more than 5 years of work experience. This data shows a relatively balanced distribution in terms of gender and age, with most respondents being young and having more than two years of work experience.

Table 2. Respondent Characteristic

Respondent Characteristic	Total
Gender	
Male	142
Female	135
Age	
< 20 years	68
21-30	110
> 30 years	99
Working	
< 1 year	64
2 -5	98
> 5 years	115

Outer Model

The analysis results show that most items in the model have satisfactory loading factors above 0.7, indicating that these items are reliable in measuring their respective constructs. Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability also demonstrate excellent values, with most constructs exceeding 0.7, indicating good internal consistency (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). AVE (Average Variance Extracted) values are above 0.5 for most constructs, indicating that these constructs exhibit good convergent validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Regarding discriminant validity (based on the Fornell-Larcker criterion), all AVE values are greater than the correlations between related constructs, demonstrating that the constructs are sufficiently distinct from each other (Hair et al., 2017). For VIF (Variance Inflation Factor), most items have values below 5, indicating no significant multicollinearity issues between the items in the model (Diamantopoulos & Siguaw, 2006). Overall, the results indicate that this model is both valid and reliable.

Table 3. Loading Factor and AVE

items	Loading factor	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
TL1	0.834	0.879	0.912	0.674
TL2	0.842			
TL3	0.777			
TL4	0.832			
TL5	0.818			

items	Loading factor	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
CC1	0.775	0.877	0.912	0.675
CC2	0.863			
CC3	0.888			
CC4	0.863			
CC5	0.704			
VOC1	0.813	0.890	0.919	0.694
VOC2	0.843			
VOC3	0.850			
VOC4	0.817			
VOC5	0.841			
IM1	0.744	0.839	0.851	0.551
IM2	0.711			
IM3	0.737			
IM4	0.797			
IM5	0.781			
IM6	0.707			
IM7	0.705			
EP1	0.839	0.898	0.924	0.709
EP2	0.853			
EP3	0.831			
EP4	0.851			
EP5	0.837			

Table 4. Discriminant Validity (Fornell-Larcker Criterion)

	Corporate Culture	Employee Performance	Leadership	Motivation	Value of Company
Corporate Culture	**0.822**				
Employee Performance	0.129	**0.842**			
Transformational Leadership	0.459	0.546	**0.671**		
Intrinsic Motivation	0.133	0.821	0.544	**0.977**	
Value of Company	0.151	0.150	0.222	0.160	**0.833**

Table 5. Outer VIF Values

items	VIF
CC1	1.824
CC2	2.878
CC3	2.334
CC4	2.483
CC5	1.476
EP1	2.379
EP2	2.475
EP3	2.269
EP4	2.499
EP5	2.215
L1	2.112
L2	2.266
L3	1.776
L4	2.182
L5	2.011

items	VIF
M1	1.038
M2	1.546
M3	2.698
M4	2.478
M5	1.660
M6	2.482
M7	2.210
VOC1	2.185
VOC2	2.246
VOC3	2.274
VOC4	1.982
VOC5	2.199

Inner Model

The R-squared value, also known as the coefficient of determination, measures the extent to which the independent latent variable influences the dependent latent variable (Hair et al., 2017). The R-Square values indicate the proportion of variance explained by the model for each dependent variable. For Employee Performance, an R-Square value of 0.956 suggests that the model explains 95.6% of the variance in employee performance, which is a very high level of explanatory power, indicating that the predictors in the model have a strong influence on employee performance. On the other hand, Intrinsic Motivation has an R-Square value of 0.455, meaning that the model explains 45.5% of the variance in intrinsic motivation. While this is a moderate level of explanation, it suggests that other factors, not included in the model, may also contribute significantly to intrinsic motivation. Overall, the results demonstrate that the model fits well for employee performance but may need refinement for intrinsic motivation.

Table 6. R-Square

	R Square
Employee Performance	0.956
Intrinsic Motivation	0.455

The f-square value is used to measure the impact of each independent latent variable on the dependent latent variables in the research model. Higher f-square values indicate a greater effect size of the independent latent variable on the dependent latent variable. The correlation matrix shows the relationships between the various constructs in the model. Corporate Culture has a moderate correlation with Employee Performance (0.476) and a weak correlation with Intrinsic Motivation (0.258), indicating that corporate culture has a significant impact on employee performance. However, its influence on intrinsic motivation is weaker. Employee Performance shows a moderate correlation with Intrinsic Motivation (r = 0.330), suggesting that employee performance is influenced by intrinsic motivation. Transformational Leadership has moderate correlations with both Employee Performance (r = 0.405) and company value (r = 0.530), indicating a meaningful relationship with both employee performance and company value. Overall, the correlations reveal a considerable relationship between corporate culture and employee performance, as well as the influence of transformational leadership on both employee performance and company value.

Table 7. F-Square

	Corporate Culture	Employee Performance	Intrinsic Motivation	Transformational Leadership	Value of Company
Corporate Culture		0.476	0.258		
Employee Performance					
Intrinsic Motivation		0.330			
Transformational Leadership		14.486	0.405		
Value of Company		0.342	0.530		

The Q-square values, also known as predictive relevance values, provide insights into the model's predictive power for various endogenous constructs (Hair et al., 2017). The Q² values represent the predictive relevance of the

model for each dependent variable. For Employee Performance, a Q² value of 0.672 suggests that the model has strong predictive relevance, indicating that the predictors in the model effectively explain and predict employee performance. On the other hand, Intrinsic Motivation has a Q² value of 0.125, indicating a low level of predictive relevance. This suggests that the model does not predict intrinsic motivation as effectively, and other factors outside the model may play a more significant role in influencing intrinsic motivation. Overall, the results indicate that the model performs better in predicting employee performance than in predicting intrinsic motivation.

Table 8. Q-Square

	Q²
Employee Performance	0.672
Intrinsic Motivation	0.125

The evaluation of the path coefficients involves examining both the t-statistics and p-values to determine the significance of the proposed hypotheses. The t-statistics indicate the strength of the relationship between variables, while the p-values help assess the statistical significance of the relationship. According to standard guidelines, a p-value of less than 0.05 is considered statistically significant in this study.

Table 10. Hypotheses Test Result

Variable	Original Sample	t-Statistics	P Values	Result
H1: Transformational Leadership → Intrinsic Motivation	0,178	2,967	0,003	Supported
H2: Corporate Culture → Intrinsic Motivation	0,618	10,349	0,000	Supported
H3: Value of Company → Intrinsic Motivation	0,476	9,529	0,000	Supported
H4: Motivation → Employee Performance	0,346	6,528	0,000	Supported
H5: Transformational Leadership → Employee Performance	0,084	3,973	0,000	Supported
H6: Corporate Culture → Employee Performance	0,364	5,732	0,000	Supported
H7: Value of Company → Employee Performance	0,743	21,389	0,000	Supported
H8a: Transformational Leadership → Intrinsic Motivation → Employee Performance	0,059	4,444	0,000	Supported
H8b: Corporate Culture → Intrinsic Motivation → Employee Performance	0,242	8,564	0,000	Supported
H8c: Value of Company → Intrinsic Motivation → Employee Performance	0,077	4,925	0,000	Supported

Based on Table 10, all hypotheses are supported as they meet the significance threshold. Hypotheses H1, H2, and H3 confirm that Transformational Leadership, Corporate Culture, and Value of Company positively influence Intrinsic Motivation, with Original Sample values of 0.178 (t = 2.967, p = 0.003), 0.618 (t = 10.349, p = 0.000), and 0.476 (t = 9.529, p = 0.000), respectively. These results underscore the importance of leadership, organizational culture, and shared values in promoting employees' intrinsic motivation. Leadership style, organizational culture, and company values contribute significantly to motivation, which in turn drives better performance and organizational success.

Hypothesis H4 reveals that Intrinsic Motivation significantly improves Employee Performance, with an Original Sample value of 0.346 (t = 6.528, p = 0.000). This suggests that employees driven by intrinsic motivation perform more effectively in their roles. Hypothesis H5 demonstrates that Transformational Leadership also directly influences employee performance, with an Original Sample value of 0.084 (t = 3.973, p = 0.000), indicating a positive effect of inspirational leadership. Additionally, Corporate Culture (H6) and Value of Company (H7) both have significant positive effects on performance, with Original Sample values of 0.364 (t = 5.732, p = 0.000) and 0.743 (t = 21.389, p = 0.000), respectively, supporting the idea that a supportive organizational environment and aligned company values contribute significantly to employee success.

The mediation hypotheses (H8a, H8b, H8c) are also supported, showing that Intrinsic Motivation mediates the relationship between transformational leadership, corporate culture, and company values with Employee Performance. Specifically, H8a (Original Sample = 0.059, t = 4.444, p = 0.000), H8b (Original Sample = 0.242, t = 8.564, p = 0.000), and H8c (Original Sample = 0.077, t = 4.925, p = 0.000) confirm that intrinsic motivation plays a central role in translating leadership, organizational culture, and shared values into better performance outcomes. These findings underscore the crucial role of intrinsic motivation in mediating the impact of organizational factors on performance, ultimately driving overall organizational effectiveness.

4.1. Discussion

The results of this study reveal that transformational leadership exerts a significant positive effect on intrinsic motivation (H1). This finding is consistent with previous studies by Cheng et al. (2023) and Shafi et al. (2020), which demonstrate that transformational leaders foster an environment that enhances employees' internal drive through vision, inspiration, and individualized support. This intrinsic motivation, in turn, significantly influences employee performance (H4), confirming the theoretical assumptions of Self-Determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Employees who perceive autonomy, competence, and relatedness at work exhibit greater persistence, creativity, and performance outcomes (van Tuin et al., 2021).

Similarly, corporate culture shows a significant positive relationship with both intrinsic motivation (H2) and employee performance (H6). These results align with findings from Aggarwal (2024) and Tadesse Bogale & Debela (2024), which emphasize that a positive organizational culture—characterized by shared values, psychological safety, and learning support—enhances not only motivation but also task and contextual performance. The strong alignment between personal and organizational values strengthens individuals' affective commitment and engagement (Cao & Zhang, 2023).

Additionally, the study confirms that company values have a positive impact on both intrinsic motivation (H3) and employee performance (H7). This finding supports the perspective of Cao & Zhang (2023) and Le Thi Viet Ha et al. (2025), who argue that value congruence between employees and the organization fosters a shared sense of purpose, driving intrinsic engagement and higher work effectiveness. Employees who perceive that their organization upholds values consistent with their own tend to demonstrate greater job satisfaction and higher performance quality.

The direct impact of transformational leadership on employee performance (H5) is also supported, consistent with Bass & Riggio (2006) and Helalat et al. (2023), who highlight that transformational leaders not only inspire but also shape behaviors that contribute to organizational success. Similarly, the direct influence of corporate culture (H6) and company values (H7) on performance echoes prior research underscoring the role of shared beliefs and values in enhancing both individual and team outcomes (Schein, 2010; Aggarwal, 2024).

Furthermore, the mediation hypotheses reveal that intrinsic motivation significantly mediates the relationships between transformational leadership (H8), corporate culture (H9), and company values (H10) on employee performance. These findings align with previous research by Putra & Dewi (2019), Manzoor et al. (2021), and Arifin & Johanes Lo (2020), which emphasizes the central role of intrinsic motivation as a psychological mechanism that translates organizational factors into improved performance. This confirms the proposition of Self-Determination Theory that environments fulfilling psychological needs lead to sustainable high performance (Ryan & Deci, 2017).

The consistently significant results across all hypotheses in this study underscore the importance of creating organizational environments that not only implement transformational leadership and positive culture but also cultivate intrinsic motivation through alignment of values and empowerment strategies. These results hold important implications for managers seeking to enhance employee engagement, creativity, and performance in an increasingly dynamic work environment.

5. Conclusion

5.1 Theoretical Implications

This study provides empirical evidence that transformational leadership, corporate culture, and company values have a significant influence on intrinsic motivation, which in turn enhances employee performance. By confirming the mediating role of intrinsic motivation, the study enriches the application of Self-Determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000) in the workplace context, particularly by demonstrating that fulfilling basic psychological needs, autonomy, competence, and relatedness, leads to both higher task performance and contextual performance.

Furthermore, this research extends Person-Organization Fit Theory by highlighting how the alignment between employees' personal values and organizational values fosters stronger intrinsic motivation and performance outcomes. The findings also reinforce the relevance of Full-Range Leadership Theory (Bass, 1985) by illustrating how transformational leadership behaviors can shape employees' psychological engagement and behavioral outcomes.

In addition to contributing to the broader leadership and motivation literature, this study offers context-specific insights for the hospitality industry, where service excellence and employee engagement are essential for achieving a competitive advantage. The integrated model proposed in this research addresses the literature gap by explaining not only direct effects but also the underlying psychological mechanisms through which leadership, culture, and value alignment translate into enhanced employee performance.

Future research is encouraged to build on these findings by exploring additional mediating variables, such as psychological capital, affective commitment, or work engagement, and by investigating potential generational differences in motivation and performance within the hospitality and other service-oriented industries.

5.2 Managerial Implications

Based on the empirical findings, this study offers actionable managerial implications specifically tailored to the hospitality industry, focusing on enhancing employee performance through leadership, culture, value alignment, and intrinsic motivation.

First, the study finds that transformational leadership has a positive influence on both intrinsic motivation and employee performance. Therefore, hospitality human resource managers should invest in strengthening transformational leadership across all managerial levels. This can be achieved by establishing structured leadership training programs that focus on hospitality-specific leadership competencies, such as service empathy, inspirational communication, and crisis responsiveness, through leadership bootcamps designed for hotel supervisors. In addition, implementing mentoring and coaching systems where senior hotel managers guide junior supervisors in adopting transformational behaviors, such as active listening and personalized support, can reinforce leadership values. Daily briefings or 'service huddles' can also serve as platforms for leaders to share motivational goals and recognize outstanding employee contributions, thereby cultivating a culture of appreciation and inspiration.

Second, the findings show that corporate culture significantly shapes employee motivation and performance. As such, hospitality managers should actively build a culture rooted in ethical service, collaboration, and employee development. This can be operationalized by embedding value-based standard operating procedures (SOPs) that reflect hospitality principles, such as warmth, integrity, and responsiveness, particularly in frontline staff protocols. Cross-departmental events such as team-building retreats or service innovation workshops can foster learning and synergy. In contrast, structured learning programs and certifications in customer handling and service excellence will reinforce both individual growth and organizational effectiveness.

Third, this study reveals that alignment between a company's values and those of its employees enhances intrinsic motivation and engagement. To ensure this congruence, HR leaders in hospitality firms should integrate value orientation into onboarding processes, such as value-based storytelling about the hotel brand during employee induction. Internal campaigns that highlight how employees' daily actions reflect core service values—through newsletters or spotlight stories—can reinforce this alignment. Moreover, involving employees in co-creating meaningful service rituals, such as personalised guest greetings or local cultural service moments, will foster shared ownership of organisational values.

Fourth, the research confirms that intrinsic motivation serves as a psychological mechanism linking leadership, culture, and employee performance. Managers should thus create work environments that support employees' needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness. This includes allowing frontline staff more autonomy in service personalization (e.g., authorizing check-in agents to offer upgrades to loyal guests), providing regular performance feedback linked to skill mastery (e.g., "Employee of the Month" awards based on competencies), and establishing peer support systems or buddy programs to promote a sense of inclusion and community.

In summary, hospitality organisations can enhance employee performance by developing transformational leadership capacities, fostering a collaborative and ethical workplace culture, promoting value alignment between the organisation and its individuals, and sustaining intrinsic motivation by fulfilling basic psychological needs. These strategies can help hotels, resorts, and travel providers build engaged teams, reduce staff turnover, and consistently deliver exceptional guest experiences aligned with organisational excellence.

5.3 Limitations and Future Research Agenda

This study has several limitations that offer directions for future research. First, the focus on Indonesian employees limits the generalizability of the findings. Future studies should include cross-cultural or multi-country samples to validate the model in diverse settings. Second, the use of self-reported data may introduce bias; future research could use multi-source data or objective performance measures. Third, the cross-sectional design limits our understanding of how these relationships evolve; therefore, longitudinal studies are recommended.

Additionally, exploring other mediating or moderating variables, such as psychological capital or organizational justice, could enrich the theoretical model. Examining generational differences, particularly with the rise of Generation Z, would provide deeper insights into these trends. Lastly, expanding the sample to include a broader range of industries, such as technology and healthcare, could enhance the applicability of the findings across different organizations.

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Author Contributions

Author 1: conceptualized the research framework and supervised the overall project.
Author 2: contributed to the design of the methodology, data collection, and initial analysis.
Author 3: conducted the data validation process and supported the statistical analysis using PLS-SEM techniques.
Author 4: responsible for the literature review, manuscript drafting, and visualization of the research model.

All authors contributed to the interpretation of the findings, critically reviewed the manuscript for intellectual content, and approved the final version of the manuscript for submission.

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Conflict of Interest
The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

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