

Ebullient Supervision - Meeting A Tall Order! Exploring The Role Of Ebullient Supervision In Developing Happy, Perspective-Taking, Thriving, And Creative Employees

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Abstract

The main aim of this study is to explore the role of a recently introduced leadership style of ebullient supervision in shaping employee creativity, in the hospitality industry. Employing a purposive sampling approach, data were collected from 391 employees, working in hotels and restaurants; using a structured questionnaire. PLS-SEM was employed for data analysis. The findings show that ebullient supervision generated positive affect in the employees. Positive affect broadened cognitive skills by enhancing their perspective-taking which resulted in the building of psychological and intellectual resources in the shape of thriving at work. Thriving at work, then, stimulated employee creativity. These results, through broaden-and-build theory and affective events theory, empirically investigate and suggest a new antecedent of employee creativity in the shape of ebullient supervision which, through inducing positive emotions amongst employees, propels mental flexibility and builds their personal resources too. In doing so, being an original, this study makes novel contributions to literature and provides valuable insights for researchers and hospitality industry practitioners to stimulate employee creativity in the context of ebullient supervision.

Keywords: ebullient supervision, thriving at work, positive affect, perspective-taking, employee creativity

1. Introduction

The quality of an organization's human resources plays a pivotal role in determining its survival, let alone gaining of competitive advantage. Being people-oriented in nature, service organizations, particularly in the hospitality industry, are prone to frequent employee-to-employee and employee-to-customer interactions, requiring a range of psychological proficiencies. Contemporary service organizations require creative employees to meet the forever-changing expectations of customers and to remain

innovative (Oh & Jang, 2023). Employee creativity refers to the generation of ideas that are both new and useful (Jain & Jain, 2017). Employee creativity is a mainstream demand amongst contemporary organizations (Ouakouak & Ouedraogo, 2017; Raza, Saeed, & Iftikhar, 2022) as it enables timely responses towards unpredictable business environment changes and allows exploiting opportunities to grow and acquire competitive advantage (Lee and Tan, 2012). Thus, framing employee creativity in the hospitality industry has become a focal point of investigation for both researchers and

practitioners (Nasifoglu Elidemir, Ozturen, & Bayighomog, 2020).

Organizations also require happy employees as that equals happy customers which means repeated business and more profit (DiMaria, Peroni, & Sarracino, 2020). Moreover, the interpersonal nature of the service industry requires employees to acknowledge and manage different perspectives that diversity brings, which if not handled successfully, may lead to troublesome conflicts between relationships (Inegbedion, Sunday, Asaleye, Lawal, & Adebajji, 2020). Perspective-taking, being an active cognitive ability, enables individuals to become aware of the needs, preferences, emotions, and values of others (Ku, Wang, & Galinsky, 2015). Lastly, organizations seek thriving employees as they produce desirable performance and enable attaining competitive advantage (Y. Liu, Xu, & Zhang, 2020). Thriving at work represents the joint presence of learning and vitality (Kleine, Rudolph, & Zacher, 2019). However, hospitality literature on thriving at work is limited (Wu, Chen, & Wang, 2023). In sum, contemporary service organizations require happy, flexible thinking, thriving and creative employees to carry out operations effectively. This is, indeed, a tall order to meet highlighting the difficult challenges faced by service organizations in today's intensely competitive business environment. In this study, we propose that the recently introduced leadership style of ebullient supervision (Ford, Guzzo, Abbott, & Bowen, 2019) may meet this daunting task.

Leaders critically influence employee behaviors by influencing the work environment, task nature, and resource allocation (Ivcevic, Moeller, Menges, & Brackett, 2021). (Hughes, Lee, Tian, Newman, & Legood, 2018) in-depth critical leadership-creativity review recommends examining new leader behaviors that may influence employee creativity. While various leadership styles have been investigated with

employee creativity (see Lee et al., 2020), the influence of ebullient supervision is still underexplored. Ebullient supervision is a recently introduced positive leadership style by Ford et al. (2019) that intentionally, through his/her actions, creates a fun working environment. They do this by greeting employees, encouraging them to be playful at work, using an appropriate sense of humor, and attempting to make people laugh. They also use cheerful tones, smile and look for reasons to celebrate. Additionally, an ebullient supervisor is supportive, willing to share routine responsibilities, and goes out of the way to bring ease and make people feel enthusiastic about their work. Lastly, such supervisors give compliments and appreciate the achievements of employees.

In this study, drawing upon the affective events theory (AET) (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) and broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions (B&B) (Fredrickson, 2004), we propose that the recently introduced leadership style of ebullient supervision (Ford et al., 2019) acts as a channel to stimulate a positive affective process in employees that enables them to employ perspective taking and thrive at work which, then, translates into employee creativity. AET has provided a theoretical foundation for various studies on fun-at-work, while also playing a central role in understanding leadership (see Edosomwan, 2022; Fox, Smith, & Webster, 2023; Guillory, 2023; Tetteh, Dei Mensah, Opat, & Mensah, 2021; Z. Wang, Zhang, Cai, & Cui, 2023). AET advocates the generation of positive affective reactions through positive work events. As fun at work is a positive event, employees working in such an environment should experience positive affect (Fluegge-Woolf, 2014). Positive affect representing pleasurable feelings makes employees feel relaxed and safe, triggering their creative behaviors (Michel, Tews, & Allen, 2019). An ebullient supervisor intentionally creates fun at work (Ford et al., 2019), yet no studies exist examining this positive style of leadership with positive affect and

employee creativity. Accordingly, this study, drawing upon AET explores the role of ebullient supervision in stimulating positive affect which may later translate into employee creativity. Further, this study also employs B&B theory (Fredrickson, 2004) to explore the impact of ebullient supervision in inducing positive affect among employees which through broadening their cognition and building personal resources would shape their creativity. This theory advocates that upon experiencing positive affect, an individual's thinking scope expands. This happens because when work provides enjoyable experiences, positive affect expands the attention enabling individuals to push their limits in acquiring new multiple information and making unusual associations which, then, leads to them exhibiting creative behaviors (Fredrickson & Cohn, 2008; Fredrickson & Joiner, 2002).

By considering a recently introduced and underexplored leadership style of ebullient supervision, this study makes novel theoretical contributions to the management literature by proposing and empirically investigating new linkages. Additionally, since service organizations, particularly in the hospitality industry require happy, flexible-thinking, thriving, and creative employees; this study offers practical implications for hospitality managers. The current study's outcomes aid the hospitality industry practitioners in formulating a strategy to have happy employees, who can understand others' perspectives, are learning and feeling energetic, and exhibit creative behavior.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Ebullient Supervision and Employee Creativity

Recent literature (Gong, Zhao, Wang, & Yu, 2018; Hughes et al., 2018; Koh, Lee, & Joshi, 2019; Lee et al., 2020; Samsuddin Rahim & Samdin, 2022) advocates that leaders having positive characteristics produce employee

creativity. Ebullient supervision is a positive leadership style (Ford et al., 2019) that intentionally creates a fun working environment. Being a recently introduced leadership style, limited research on ebullient supervision suggests it is positively related to desirable work outcomes, such as work engagement, job satisfaction, organizational citizenship behavior, job satisfaction and reduced intention to leave (Ford et al., 2019); life satisfaction and workaholism (Hassan, Abid, Ali, Rehmat, & Zafar, 2021); and job crafting (Forbes, 2022). However, no prior literature exists investigating the relationship between ebullient supervision and employee creativity. Yet, since an ebullient supervisor intentionally creates fun at work, and fun at work is closely linked to creativity (Boekhorst, Halinski, & Good, 2021; F. R. Yang & Chen, 2023); we propose that ebullient supervision will positively influence employee creativity. Fun, being a need, is desired by employees (Glasser, 1999). Literature suggests that when leaders fulfill this need by creating fun at work, employees become more creative (Djastuti, 2019; Fluegge-Woolf, 2014; Sumayya, Amen, & Imran, 2021). Accordingly, based on the above arguments, it can be hypothesized that: H1. Ebullient supervision is positively associated with employee creativity.

2.2 Ebullient Supervision and Positive Affect

Positive affect represents pleasant subjective feelings (Shiota, Sauter, & Desmet, 2021). Happy employees are sought by organizations because they make customers happy and generate more profit (Dhiman, 2017; Hogueve, Iseke, Derfuss, & Eller, 2017). Having fun at work involves pleasurable social activities that make employees happy (Owler & Morrison, 2020; Prabowo, Sari, Aprilianti, & Satrya, 2019). An ebullient supervisor intentionally creates a fun working environment by use of appropriate humor, encouraging employees to be playful, and

celebrating often (Ford et al., 2019). Moreover, an ebullient supervisor also is supportive by being willing to take on routine responsibilities, using cheerful tones, trying to make people feel better, and publicly appreciating the achievements of employees. Such supporting leaders develop a positive emotional environment at work which generates positive affect among their subordinates (Patzelt et al., 2021)(Men & Yue, 2019). Further, drawing upon affective events theory (Weiss and Cropanzano, 1996), fun at work is a positive event that may lead to positive affect in employees (Boekhorst et al., 2021; Jaussi, Knights, & Gupta, 2017). Accordingly, based on the above arguments, it can be hypothesized that:

H2. Ebullient supervision is positively associated with positive affect.

2.3 Positive Affect and Perspective Taking

Perspective-taking represents an active cognitive flexibility process in which an individual becomes aware of alternative points of view of others (Ku et al., 2015). Positive affect is an influencing factor that can boost broader thinking (Fredrickson, 2001). When positive affect is experienced, the momentary thought-action repertoires widen as individuals can develop multiple links between diverse variables and assimilate multiple information (Acar, Tadic, Myers, Van der Sman, & Uysal, 2021). Further, broaden-and-build theory (Fredrickson, 2004) argues that upon experiencing positive affect, thinking capacity expands. Positive affect brings cognitive flexibility, broadening the attentional scope which makes one aware of more opportunities and encourages unusual perspectives (Kühnel, Bledow, & Kiefer, 2022; J. Wang, Zhang, & Jia, 2017). Accordingly, based on the above arguments, it can be hypothesized that:

H3: Positive affect has a positive influence on perspective-taking.

2.4 Perspective Taking and Thriving at Work

Thriving at work represents the simultaneous presence of both vitality and learning in an individual (Porath, Spreitzer, Gibson, & Garnett, 2012). Literature, including meta-analytical studies and in-depth critical reviews (Goh et al., 2022; Kleine et al., 2019; Ku et al., 2015; D. Liu, Zhang, Wang, Xu, & Yan, 2021; Shahid, Muchiri, & Walumbwa, 2020) suggest that the relationship between perspective taking and thriving at work is an underexplored area. Drawing upon broaden-and-build theory (Fredrickson, 2004), we propose that perspective-taking will promote thriving at work. This theory advocates that as individuals thinking broadens due to experiencing positive emotions, they will build enduring personal resources (physical, psychological, intellectual, and social). Cognitive flexibility propels individuals towards self-development in which they seek new knowledge and learn (Fredrickson & Branigan, 2005). Thus, perspective-taking, which represents the broadening of cognition, promotes learning. Moreover, perspective-taking reduces perceptions of dissimilarity (Zappalà, 2014), which makes individuals feel more energetic and alive; i.e. feeling of vitality (Carmeli & Spreitzer, 2009). Hence, based on the above arguments, we propose that perspective-taking can lead to both learning and vitality at the same time, resulting in thriving at work. Accordingly, based on the above arguments, it can be hypothesized that:

H4: Perspective-taking has a positive influence on thriving at work.

2.5 Thriving at Work and Employee Creativity

Thriving at work is a well-established antecedent of employee creativity (Kleine et al., 2019; Shahid et al., 2020; Zhang, Kang, Jiang, & Niu, 2022). As an employee experiences thriving at

work, they learn new skills and knowledge which boosts their confidence to take initiative; while vitality provides them with mental and physical energy to explore new work methods and problem-solving techniques, leading to employee creativity (Carmeli & Spreitzer, 2009; Y. Yang, Li, Liang, & Zhang, 2021). Thriving employees are propelled toward self-development which enables them to recognize problems and come up

with creative responses (Amabile, 1998). Individuals exhibit risk-taking creative behaviors when they feel thrilled about tasks at work (T. Wang, Wang, & Liu, 2021). Accordingly, based on the above arguments, it can be hypothesized that:

H5: Thriving at work positively influences employee creativity.

Figure 1 illustrates the theoretical foundation for the proposed relationships.

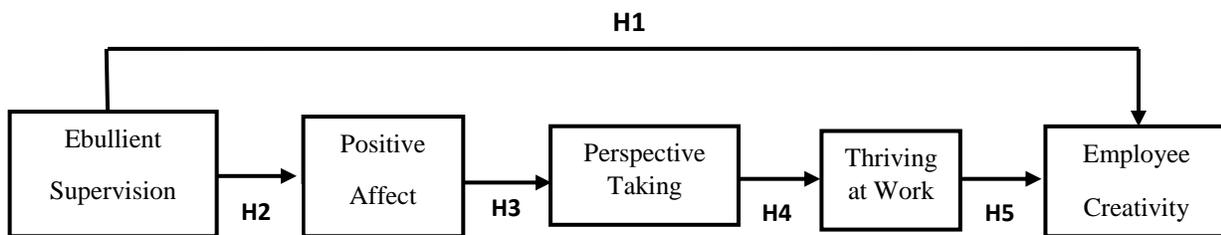


Fig. 1. The hypothesized model

3. Method

3.1. Sample and Data Collection Procedure

Being consistent with recent literature (Sarwar & Muhammad, 2020a, 2020b), in this study, data were collected from employees working in hotels and restaurants in Pakistan. After HR managers consent for participation, during regular working hours, questionnaires were distributed. To avoid common method bias, Podsakoff et al. (2012) suggest collecting two source data (supervisor and subordinate) were employed. Accordingly, two separate questionnaires were designed, one for supervisors (rating employee creativity) and one for the subordinates (rating ebullient supervision, positive affect perspective taking, and thriving at work). A purposive sampling method was employed where two eligibility criteria existed for subordinates' participation. First, they need to have creative work roles (e.g., supervisors, floor managers, chefs, sous chefs, receptionists), and secondly, they had been

working under the immediate supervisor for at least 6 months so their creativity could be judged.

Data collection was spread over two-time lags (with 4 weeks intervals). 500 questionnaires were distributed at T1 amongst the supervisors (measuring employee creativity) and subordinates (measuring ebullient supervision). Out of the 410 returned questionnaires, 6 were incomplete and, thus, rejected. 404 questionnaires were distributed at T2 amongst the subordinates (measuring positive affect, perspective taking, and thriving at work). Out of 404, 13 questionnaires were discarded for incomplete information. Hence, 391 complete questionnaires were used for data analysis, accounting for a 78.2% useable response rate. The respondents were informed that information being collected under this study would remain confidential and would only be used for research purposes. Lastly, they were guided that there are no right or wrong answers and participation was

voluntary, hence, they could refuse to continue participating at any time.

3.2. Measurement Instruments

3.2.1. Employee Creativity

Zhou and George's (2001) 13 items scale of employee creativity were adopted, measured on a five-point scale (1 = not at all characteristic, 5 = very characteristic). The supervisor rated this questionnaire.

3.2.2. Ebullient Supervision

Ford et al. (2019) 13 items of ebullient supervision were adopted, measured on a seven-point scale (1 = never, 7 = always). Subordinates rated this questionnaire.

3.2.3. Positive Affect

Watson, Clark, and Tellegen's (1988) 10 items scale of positive affect were adopted, measured on a five-point scale (1 = very slightly or not at all, 5 = extremely).

3.2.4. Perspective Taking

Davis's (1983) 7 items scale of perspective taking was adopted, measured on a five-point scale (1 = does not describe me well, 5 = describes me well).

3.2.5. Thriving at Work

Porath et al. (2012) 10 items of thriving at work were adopted, measured on a five-point Likert scale (1= strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree).

4. Data Analysis & Findings

4.1. Demographics characteristics

In this study, 391 employees working in hotels and restaurants in the hospitality industry of Pakistan participated. The demographics of the participants are shown in Table 1. While 85.9% of employees were male, female employees accounted for 14.1%. Male domination in this industry has been reported in recent studies (Sarwar & Muhammad, 2020a, 2020b). The majority of the participants were 25-30 years of age (40.9%) and had worked for 1-5 years under their current supervisor (47.8%).

Table 1. Demographic details

Demographics	Frequency	Percentage
Subordinate (n=391)		
Gender		
Male	336	85.9
Female	55	14.1
Age		
<25	78	19.9
25-30	160	40.9
31-34	94	24.0
35-40	41	10.5
41-44	12	3.1
45 and above	6	1.5
Qualification		
Intermediate	106	27.1
Bachelors	188	48.1
Masters	72	18.4
Doctorate	2	.5
Others	23	5.9
Experience		
6 months to 1 year	134	34.3
1 to 5 years	187	47.8
5 years and above	70	17.9

PLS-SEM was employed for data analysis which involves two stages of model evaluation. The measurement model was assessed first to examine the scales reliability and validity. Later, hypotheses were tested using the structural model.

4.2. Measurement model

Table 2 exhibits the outer loadings (OL), composite reliability (CR), and average variance extracted (AVE). A threshold of 0.7 is deemed satisfactory for both OL and CR (Hair, Risher, Sarstedt, & Ringle, 2019; Muhammad, Mahadi,

& Hussin, 2017; Sarwar & Muhammad, 2020a, 2020b). Accordingly, ES13 from ebullient supervision; PA5 and PA6 from positive affect; C3, C7, and C9 from employee creativity were removed as they had less than 0.65 loadings. The measurement model was reassessed. CR values for all constructs were above 0.80. Construct validity is made up of convergent validity (assessed by AVE) and discriminant validity. Table 2 shows that AVE for all constructs was above the minimum requirement of 0.50. Accordingly, OL, CR, and AVE threshold values were met in the measurement model.

Table 2: Outer loadings, composite reliability, and convergent reliability

Measures	OL	CR	AVE
Ebullient Supervision		0.961	0.696
ES1 Greets employees in passing	0.847		
ES2 Goes out of his/her way to brighten the day at work	0.849		
ES3 Uses a cheerful tone when speaking with subordinates	0.782		
ES4 Attempts to make people laugh	0.816		
ES5 Will gladly take on routine task responsibilities (e.g., schedules, meetings)	0.855		
ES6 Finds uses for appropriate humor at work	0.832		
ES7 Helps people feel enthusiastic about their jobs	0.847		
ES8 Tries to put people at ease	0.841		
ES9 Smiles when someone enters his/her office for any meeting or discussion	0.873		
ES10 Lets people know that it's OK to be playful at work	0.825		
ES11 Praises individual wins	0.859		
ES12 Compliments employees in front of others	0.779		
Positive affect		0.906	0.599
PA1 Interested	0.816		
PA2 Excited	0.752		
PA3 Strong	0.783		
PA4 Enthusiastic	0.764		
PA7 Inspired	0.723		
PA8 Determined	0.803		
PA9 Attentive	0.774		
PA10 Active	0.771		
Perspective taking		0.928	0.696
PT1 Before criticizing somebody, I try to imagine how I would feel if I were in their place.	0.890		
PT2 If I'm sure I'm right about something, I don't waste much time listening to other people's arguments.	0.848		
PT3 I sometimes try to understand my friends better by imagining how things look from their perspective.	0.784		
PT4 I believe that there are two sides to every question and try to look at them both.	0.799		
PT5 I sometimes find it difficult to see things from the "other guy's" point of view.	0.862		
PT6 I try to look at everybody's side of a disagreement before I make a decision.	0.828		
PT7 When I'm upset at someone, I usually try to "put myself in his shoes" for a while.	0.824		

Thriving at work		0.940	0.641
L1 I find myself learning often	0.867		
L2 I continue to learn more and more as time goes by	0.833		
L3 I see myself continually improving	0.835		
L4 I am not learning	0.779		
L5 I have developed a lot as a person	0.741		
V6 I feel alive and vital	0.810		
V7 I have energy and spirit	0.831		
V8 I do not feel very energetic	0.726		
V9 I feel alert and awake	0.821		
V10 I am looking forward to each new day	0.746		
Employee creativity (This employee....)		0.959	0.717
C1 ...suggests new ways to achieve goals or objectives.	0.891		
C2 ...comes up with new and practical ideas to improve performance.	0.884		
C4 ...suggests new ways to increase quality.	0.675		
C5 ...is a good source of creative ideas.	0.831		
C6 ...is not afraid to take risks.	0.816		
C8 ...exhibits creativity on the job when given the opportunity to.	0.861		
C10 ...often has a new and innovative idea.	0.856		
C11 ...comes up with creative solutions to problems.	0.872		
C12 ...often has a fresh approach to problems.	0.877		
C13 ...suggests new ways of performing work tasks.	0.880		

Notes: OL= Outer Loadings, CR = Composite reliability, AVE – Average variance extracted

The latest approach of heterotrait–monotrait ratio (HTMT) was employed to assess discriminant validity. Table 3 exhibits the results showing that all constructs values were below the 0.90

requirement (Henseler, Hubona, & Ray, 2016). Accordingly, satisfactory discriminant validity was present.

Table 3: Discriminant validity (HTMT)

Constructs	EC	ES	PA	PT	TW
EC					
ES	0.639				
PA	0.798	0.560			
PT	0.784	0.501	0.781		
TW	0.844	0.657	0.738	0.804	

Notes: ES = Ebullient supervision; EC = Employee creativity; PA = Positive affect; PT = Perspective taking; TW = Thriving at work

4.3. Structural model

Hypotheses were tested through structural model evaluation, following the guidelines by Ringle, Sarstedt, Mitchell, and Gudergan (2020). Ebullient supervision impact on employee creativity (H1) ($\beta = 0.186, p < 0.001$), ebullient supervision impact on positive affect (H2) ($\beta =$

$0.524, p < 0.001$); positive affect impact on perspective taking (H3) ($\beta = 0.716, p < 0.001$); perspective taking impact on thriving at work (H4) ($\beta = 0.750, p < 0.001$); and lastly, thriving at work impact on employee creativity (H5) ($\beta = 0.687, p < 0.001$) were all supported. Outcomes are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Results of structural model analysis (hypotheses testing)

Hypothesis	Relationships	β	t-values	p-value	Decision
H1	ES -> EC	0.186	3.532	0.000	Supported
H2	ES -> PA	0.524	11.739	0.000	Supported
H3	PA -> PT	0.716	23.585	0.000	Supported
H4	PT -> TW	0.750	21.614	0.000	Supported
H5	TW -> EC	0.687	14.069	0.000	Supported

Notes: * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$

ES = Ebullient Supervision; EC = Employee Creativity; PA = Positive Affect; PT = Perspective Taking, TW = Thriving at work

Figure 2 illustrates the confirmation of the proposed relationships.

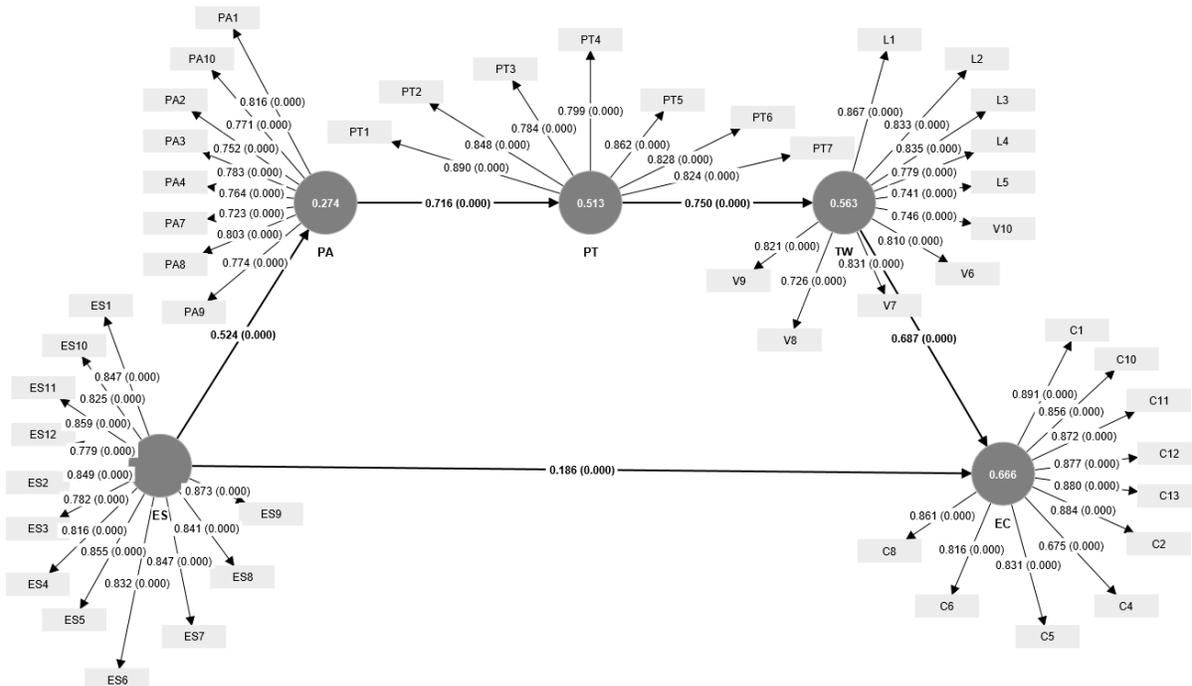


Fig. 2. The structural model

5. Discussion and theoretical implications

The present study aimed to explore the role of a recently introduced leadership style of ebullient

supervision in stimulating employee creativity in the hospitality industry. Drawing upon the affective events theory and broaden-and-build theory, this study explores the affect-cognition-

resource-outcome pathway through which ebullient supervision transfers its impact on employee creativity. In doing so, this study empirically examined new linkages, making it an original, and adding novel contributions to the management literature. This opens up opportunities for scholars to develop research in the underexplored area of ebullient supervision. Further, this study provides a new pathway to stimulate positive affect, perspective-taking, thriving at work, and, ultimately, employee creativity in the hospitality industry by encouraging a leadership style that promotes having fun at work.

The results show that ebullient supervision positively influenced employee creativity (H1). This is a novel finding, and thus a contribution to the literature. Although fun at work is known to lead to employee creativity (e.g., Boekhorst et al., 2021; F. R. Yang & Chen, 2023), no previous study had empirically examined a leadership style that intentionally creates fun at work in the context of employee creativity. This finding lends support to the literature promoting the importance of positive leadership in stimulating employee creativity (see Lee et al., 2020). Results also show that ebullient supervision generated a positive affect in employees (H2). This is again a novel finding as previously this relationship has not been studied. AET (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) and fun at work literature (see Michel et al., 2019) advocate the generation of positive affect when the fun is experienced at work. However, this study provides the first empirical evidence of the ability of a leadership style that, intentionally creates fun at work, in stimulating positive affect in employees. This is an important finding because organizations seek happy employees as they produce desirable individual and organizational outcomes (see Diener, Thapa, & Tay, 2020). Accordingly, hotel industry practitioners may encourage their existing supervisors to become ebullient by greeting employees, being cheerful,

and supportive, appreciating and celebrating achievements; using appropriate humor, and making people laugh. This will boost the positive affect, leading to employee creativity.

Consistent with literature and B&B theory (Fredrickson, 2004), results show that positive affect relationship with perspective taking (H3) was supported. As employees become happy, their cognition becomes flexible which allows them to integrate information in new ways, enabling understanding of others' points of view, needs, and feelings. Accordingly, since being social, the hospitality industry is characterized by frequent interactions between employees to employees and employees to customers (Siyal et al., 2023). These frequent interpersonal interactions can lead to detrimental conflicts if different perspectives are not handled properly. Hence, according to the finding of this study, hotel practitioners should provide such a working environment that induces positive affect in employees, making them happy which will result in the enhancement of their perspective taking.

The results show that perspective-taking positively influenced thriving at work (H4). This relationship was underexplored in the literature, and hence, a novel contribution by this study. This study empirically exhibits that once employees experience cognitive flexibility, they become more open to learning, gaining new information, feel alive and energetic. In line with B&B theory, this result suggests that perspective-taking, as a cognitive broadening process, can simultaneously stimulate both learning and vitality, thus, building the personal resource of thriving at work. This is an important finding because organizations seek thriving employees due to their ability to propel an organization toward competitive advantage (Y. Liu et al., 2020). Lastly, results show that thriving at work positively influenced employee creativity (H5) which is consistent with previous literature advocating thriving at work as a well-established

predictor of employee creativity (Kleine et al., 2019; Shahid et al., 2020; Y. Yang et al., 2021).

In sum, these findings endorse promoting such leadership styles that are positive, encourage having fun at work, and are supportive; to make employees feel happy, to bring flexibility in their thinking patterns, to make them feel alive, energetic and learn at the same time; and to propel their creativity. According to this study, hospitality practitioners should encourage ebullient supervision to induce a positive affect in employees, to enhance their perspective-taking, and to make them thrive at work. This would ultimately enhance employee creativity.

6. Managerial implications

This study offers some practical implications for framing employee creativity in the hospitality industry. First, as this industry is prone to forever changing expectations, it needs creative employees to remain relevant (Krskova & Breyer, 2023). This study encourages the top management to support leadership styles, such as ebullient supervision, that promote having fun at work as that leads to employee creativity. Top management should encourage their supervisors to be ebullient by promoting being playful during tasks, celebrating and appreciating the achievements of employees, using appropriate humor, and providing support.

Second, the hospitality industry is a people-oriented sector where interpersonal interactions determine the success of operations. Emotions are contagious, and thus, happy employees matter as that will make customers happy. Hence, this study highlights the importance of having happy employees. Accordingly, hospitality managers should introduce such activities and working environments that make employees alert, excited, inspired, active, interested, and enthusiastic. Having an ebullient supervisor is one such way, as per the findings of this study.

Third, this study endorses the B&B theory advocating that as positive affect is experienced,

employees' mental flexibility will enhance, allowing multiple pieces of information to be accumulated, integrated, and processed in new ways. This, in turn, will help generate personal resource of thriving at work, in which employees will learn and feel alive at the same time. This broadening of cognition and development of resources will lead to the achievement of critically desirable employee creativity, which is crucially essential for service sector efficiency (AlQhaiwi & Abukaraki, 2021). Thus, hospitality managers need to endorse an ebullient supervision style of leadership to develop happy, flexible in thinking, learning, energetic, and creative employees.

7. Limitations and future research

Although making novel contributions, this study had some limitations. This study employed two-time lag data collection. To enhance the generalizability of results, future researchers may opt for experimental design to examine the before and after impact of ebullient supervision on employee creativity. Second, since ebullient supervision is a recently introduced leadership style, much remains to be explored regarding its antecedents, mediating mechanisms, and outcomes. Future research should focus on investigating ebullient supervision's impact on other work outcomes, how this impact is transferred; in addition to what influences it. E.g. future research may examine whether ebullient supervision helps to attract and retain retention since fun at work is a basic requirement for young employees (Alatalo et al., 2018), who seems to be in the majority in the service industry. Moreover, it would be interesting to explore whether any dark side exists to ebullient supervision that may lead to undesirable individual or work outcomes. Could there be any situation in which ebullient supervision leads to negative affect or hampers employee creativity? Perhaps, the moderating role of gender can be investigated since men and women approach humor differently (Bensaber,

2020). Such endeavors present exciting opportunities for future research.

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