The Growth Satisfaction in Job among hospitality employees: The role of transformational leadership, interpersonal communication satisfaction and trust

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Introduction

Due to its intensely competitive business environment, the hospitality industry workers are subjected to unplanned or unforeseen peaks in their working environments, emotional demands and these conditions place great demands on the leadership ability of hospitality executives and managers (Gill et al., 2010; Salem, 2015; Jung & Yoon, 2016; Teoh, Wang & Kwek, 2019). For delivering high-quality customer service and coping with ever dynamic conditions in the hospitality industry, it is important to build respectful, trustful, and fair leader-follower relationships (Hon & Lu, 2013). Over the last half-century, the changes recorded in leadership theory and practice illustrates the evolution of approaches in understanding the relationship between leaders and followers in hospitality organizations (Brownell, 2010). In this regard, there has been an upsurge in the number of studies that specifically examine the positive influence of transformational leadership behavior on followers in context of hospitality industry (Zopiatis & Constanti, 2010; Gill et al., 2006; Chen & Wu, 2017; Liang et al, 2016; Patiar & Mia, 2009; Rothfelder et al., 2013; Salem, 2015; Tracey & Hinkin, 1996; Wang, Tsai & Tsai, 2014; Boamah et al., 2018).

It has been emphasised that middle and low level managers in the hospitality oriented organizations should be informed about the adoption and implementation of transformational leadership practices and approaches to derive benefits (Gill et al.,

2006). Salem (2015) and Tracey and Hinkin (1996) recommend leaders in the hospitality industry to adopt a change-oriented or transformational style of leadership for developing a strong sense of vision to clarify and communicate organizational objectives to the followers and create a working environment that fosters motivation, commitment, and continuous improvement. Apparently, transformational leadership in the context of hospitality sector has been found to be positively associated with non-financial performance, which, in turn, was positively associated with the financial performance of the departments (Patiar & Mia, 2009). More importantly, given that employee turnover is a constant challenge and a risk in the hospitality industry (Brown et al., 2015; Solnet & Hood, 2008; Santhanam et al., 2015), several studies tried to explore whether transformational leadership had a negative influence on employee turnover. The results of these studies suggested that transformational leadership not only directly weakened employee turnover, but also positively influenced employee job satisfaction, personal accomplishment, organizational commitment, creative-efficacy, creativity and trust – all these outcomes are known to abate turnover intentions (Chen & Wu, 2017, Zopiatis & Constanti, 2010, Wang et al., 2014, Rothfelders, 2013).

Further exploration of extant literature confirms that the ineffective employer-employee relationships and lack of opportunity for advancement in jobs are key factors among others that result in high employee turnover among the hospitality sector employees (Walsh & Taylor, 2007). This indicates that besides monetary awards, perks and others, the employees in hospitality industry might also be looking for the fulfilment of higher order needs (Cai et al., 2018) like a challenging job, sense of accomplishment in the job and personal development etc., all characterized as growth satisfaction in a

job. Hackman and Oldham (1980) observed growth satisfaction as one of the important predicted outcome variables relating to three psychological states (other being general satisfaction, internal motivation and work effectiveness). Interestingly, to date numerous studies have reported only a positive association between transformational leadership and follower job satisfaction (Salem, 2015), but much remains to be learned regarding the link between transformational leadership and followers' growth satisfaction. Growth satisfaction in job can be overviewed specifically with employees' satisfaction with higher order needs (i.e., personal growth, development, worthwhile accomplishment and challenge in the job) (Hackman & Oldham, 1980). Growth satisfaction in job encapsulates the elements of the personal development of the person and accomplishment in the job that can be closely attributed to leader-follower interaction (Yuan et al., 2016). Previous research suggests that an employee's higher order need satisfaction influences work motivation, commitment and job performance (Hackman & Lawler, 1971; Hackman & Oldham, 1976). Given that limited personal growth and development opportunities appear to be one of the factors for employee turnover (Walsh & Taylor, 2007) in the hospitality industry, further exploration of the link between transformational leadership and followers' growth satisfaction may be the much-needed impetus for resolving this issue.

Previous research also suggests that followers who trust their supervisor are more satisfied in their jobs and experience high levels of care and consideration (Braun et al., 2017; Yang & Mossholder, 2010). Gill (2008) investigated trust in the context of the hospitality industry and observed a positive relationship between employee's perceived trust with managers and job satisfaction. Further examining the definition of

trust more closely, as given by Giffin (1967) - '*reliance upon the communication behavior of another person in order to achieve a desired but uncertain objective in a risky situation'*- it is quite evident that communication precedes trust. Moreover, several studies have tried to establish how effective communication between leaders and followers can build trust in the followers (Conger et al., 2000, Jung & Avolio 2000). Madlock's study (2008), extending the notion of effective communication between leader and followers further, examined and identified the influence of supervisor communicator competence and leadership style on employee communication and job satisfaction. In light of this literature, it is clear that communication satisfaction with the leader and trust in the leader are not only closely related to each other, but both of these variables also predict job satisfaction to a greater extent. Thus, taking a cue from these studies (Giffin 1967, Conger et al., 2000, Jung & Avolio 2000, Gill, 2008, Madlock, 2008) and considering transformational leaders' effective interpersonal communication skills (Yukl, Gordon & Taber 2002), this study assumes that transformational leaders can positively impact follower growth satisfaction in job through follower interpersonal communication satisfaction with the leader and trust in the leader.

Based on this discussion, this research proposes a theoretical model positing that transformational leaders' influence on followers' growth satisfaction in the job may be achieved through two intervening mediators sequentially, i.e., interpersonal communication satisfaction with the leader and follower trust in the leader in the hospitality industry. Hence, the purpose of this study is to investigate the sequential mediation of interpersonal communication satisfaction and trust between

transformational leadership and follower growth satisfaction in job among employees in the hospitality industry. Subsequently, the specific objectives of this study are

1. Determine the relationship between transformational leadership and follower growth satisfaction in job among hospitality employees

2. Examine the mediating role of follower interpersonal communication satisfaction between transformational leadership and follower trust in the leader

3. Evaluate the mediating role of follower trust in the leader between Interpersonal communications satisfaction and follower growth satisfaction in the job

4. Demonstrate the sequential mediation from transformational leadership to follower growth satisfaction in job through interpersonal communication satisfaction with the leader and follower trust

Theoretical background and hypotheses

Transformational leadership (TL) and growth satisfaction in job (FGSJ)

Transformational leadership: As a predominant theory in leadership literature, transformational leadership theory has received enormous attention in both theoretical as well as meta-analytic reviews (Banks et al., 2016; Mhatre & Riggio, 2014). The transformational leader can be understood as "one who looks for potential motives in followers, seeks to satisfy higher needs in followers, and engages the full person of followers" (Burns, 1978, p.4). Bass (1997) established four clear components of TL – idealised influence (charisma), inspirational motivation, individual consideration and intellectual stimulation.

Growth Satisfaction in job: Hackman and Oldham (1980) listed 'Growth Satisfaction' as one of the four personal and work outcomes of the job characteristics theory.

According to Hackman and Oldham (1975), 'High growth satisfaction' is obtained from learning, self-direction and personal accomplishment at work. More specifically, 'growth satisfaction in job' indicates employee satisfaction when they have enriched opportunities for personal learning and growth at work. Therefore, 'growth satisfaction in job' is referred in this paper on the basis of Hackman and Oldham's theory (1980) as one that is characterised by: followers' learning, self-direction, sense of autonomy, self-enhancement, personal growth and development, challenge and worthwhile accomplishment experienced in the job (Hackman and Oldham 1975).

Prior research indicate that the transformational leaders guide the followers towards aforementioned elements of growth satisfaction by articulating an attractive vision of the future, motivating followers by appealing to higher order needs, ideals and moral values, inspiring followers to perform beyond expectations, showing followers their task is worth accomplishing and expressing confidence and making the employees aware of the importance and value of goals to be achieved for the common good of the organizations (Bass et al., 2003; Bartram et al., 2007; Burns 1978, Tepper et al., 2018). Against the backdrop of these studies that have focused on different aspects of growth satisfaction in the job, it is hypothesized in this study:

> **H1** *Transformational leadership is positively related to follower growth satisfaction in the job.*

Transformational leadership (TL) and follower interpersonal communication satisfaction with the leader (IPCSL)

Interpersonal communication satisfaction can be defined as followers' satisfaction with supervisors'/leaders' interpersonal communication, which results in the sense of

inclusion, support, pleasure, affection and relaxation in the followers (Hecht, 1978). Messages sent by leaders contain both affective and cognitive strategies (Hall & Lord, 1995), and through effectively communicating their vision, leaders win the confidence of followers, which in turn aids in communication satisfaction between the leader and follower (Pavitt, 1999). Employee communication satisfaction involves a task and relational dimension that helps employees engage in communication interactions with co-workers and superiors to satisfy interpersonal needs of pleasure and inclusion (Anderson & Martin, 1995).

Quick and Macik-Frey (2004), proposed a two-tiered model of executive communication comprising outer tier – in which the executive engages in functional, organizational communication through a wide variety of channels and mediums, and inner tier – in which the executive engages in much more personal and intimate communication, wherein deep interpersonal communication occurs. Previous studies such as Gillespie and Mann (2004) assert that transformational leaders through idealized influence and inspirational motivation communicate important values and shared sense of purpose and vision to followers (Jensen, Moynihan & Salomonsen, 2018). Hecht (1978) proposed that 'free interaction or open communication' as one of the possible dimensions of followers' interpersonal communication satisfaction. Given that, the transformational leaders often engage in open communication with the followers (Burns, 1978; Yukl, Gordon & Taber, 2002), it is possible that transformational leadership can result in followers' interpersonal communication satisfaction with the leader. Thus, the second hypotheses:

H2 Transformational leadership is positively related to follower interpersonal communication satisfaction with the leader.

Transformational leadership (TL) and follower trust in the leader (FTL)

In hospitality literature, trust has been defined as the level of confidence an individual has in another's competence and expectations regarding the likelihood that he/she will act in a fair and ethical manner (Brownell, 2010). For delivering a high-quality customer experience in the hospitality industry, it is important to build multi-respectful, trustful, and fair leader-follower relationships (Hon & Lu, 2013). Previous studies have established a strong and predictive relationship between transformational leadership and trust in the leader (Jung & Avolio, 2000; Podsakoff et al., 1990; Le & Lei 2018). Transformational leaders through idealized influence (exhibition of exemplary behavior and a willingness to put group goals over personal benefits), intellectual stimulation (by stimulating and encouraging creativity), inspirational motivation (creation of a common vision) and individualized consideration (acting as a coach or mentor) elicit higher levels of trust in their followers (Avolio & Bass, 1995; Jung & Avolio, 2000). Moreover, various studies have noted the intervening role of trust with respect to the relationship between transformational leadership and various outcomes such as organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) (Podsakoff et al., 1990), task performance (Bartram & Casimir, 2007; Lee et al., 2010) and satisfaction with the leader (Jung & Avolio, 2000).

Given the competitive nature of hospitality industry and the growing need for leaders who can facilitate employee care, trust and respect (Brownell, 2010), it seems appropriate to explore the notion of trust in the context of transformational leadership. Thus, the following hypothesis:

> **H3** *Transformational leadership will be positively related to follower trust in the leader.*

Mediating role of follower interpersonal communication satisfaction with the leader and Follower trust

Communication plays a predominant role in assisting leaders to understand the follower's individual needs, developing their individual strength and serving their needs, which has been further assumed to build up the trust levels between leader and followers (Conger et al., 2000; Jung and Avolio, 2000). Trust can be considered as both an input as well as a proximal outcome depending on the context (see Burke et al.., 2007). In the context of this study, the follower trust in the leader is envisioned as proximal outcome based on follower's interpersonal communication satisfaction with the leader. Three factors (accuracy of information, the explanation for decision and openness) have been identified to affect the perception of trustworthiness by communication researchers (Whitener et al., 1998). Moreover, Giffin's seminal study (1967), supported the hypothesis that interpersonal trust is based upon a listener's perceptions of a speaker's expertness, reliability, intentions, activeness, personal attractiveness, and the majority opinion of the listener's associates. Specifically, Lolli's study (2013), in the context of the hospitality industry, pointed out that six attributes (degree of professionalism, credibility, confidentiality, truthfulness, motivation, and sincerity displayed in leaders' conduct) impact the trust of followers.

Whitener (1998), Giffin (1967) and Lolli's (2013) studies assert the fact that communication becomes a key factor for the followers to place their trust in the leaders. Transformational leaders have been found to use effective communication to encourage followers to achieve organisational goals (McShane & Von Glinow, 2005). Yukl, Gordon & Taber (2002) researching on transformational leadership propagated that open communication (Jensen, Moynihan & Salomonsen, 2018) between leaders

and followers build mutual trust and high levels of commitment in the followers. Hence, it is hypothesised that:

H4 Interpersonal communication satisfaction with the leader mediates the relationship between Transformational leadership and follower trust in the leader.

Past research suggests clearly that there is a strong relationship between communication satisfaction, personal feedback, supervisory communication, effective communication and job satisfaction (Requena, 2003, Vermeir et al., 2018). Mutual influence, openness and the free flow of information from leaders' part are also found to be playing a key role in bringing job satisfaction for the employees (Kellerman, 1998). Hence, it is obvious that communication satisfaction can lead to growth satisfaction in a job which is characterised by personal growth, development, challenge and accomplishment in the job. When followers perceive their leaders to be constantly providing constructive feedback, the followers do get a sense of understanding that their work is being assessed and appreciated. Through frequent and open communication, the leaders not only challenge the followers constructively but also make followers believe that they are doing a job that is worthwhile and thus a sense of personal development and accomplishment is felt by the followers. Interestingly, there hasn't been much attention to the research concerning variables that can possibly play an intervening role between communication satisfaction and growth satisfaction in the job.

Given that early researchers have asserted that leaders' adequate explanations, frequency and open communication build trust in the followers (Conger et al, 2000; Jung & Avolio, 2000), it is a possibility that trust may play an intervening role in

communication satisfaction and growth satisfaction in job. Giffin (1967) also observed that interpersonal trust is based on a listener's perceptions of a speaker's expertness, reliability, intentions, activeness and personal attractiveness of the leaders. Therefore, on the basis of the literature, it can be assumed that this trust which is brought about by communication satisfaction, lead followers to truly believe in their personal growth and worthwhile accomplishment in the job. Bartram and Casimir (2007) also affirmed that follower growth satisfaction in job arguably requires trust in the leader. The generation of follower trust through recognizing and responding to each followers' abilities, aspirations, and needs (Walumbwa et al., 2005), through inspirational motivation (Chun et al., 2009), and listening to follower concerns (Liu et al., 2010) can ensure follower's satisfaction with personal growth, development, accomplishment and challenge in the job. Hence, it is hypothesized that:

H5 Follower trust in the leader mediates the relationship between interpersonal communication satisfaction and growth satisfaction in the job.

In light of the various studies discussed herein, it is evident that transformational leaders are effective communicators and provide great depth in interpersonal relationships (Yukl, Gordon & Taber, 2002). Hence, there is all likelihood that followers of transformational leaders can be satisfied with their leaders' interpersonal communication. Past research also evidence that communication precedes trust and followers who sense open, honest and free communication from leaders are the ones who trust their leaders more (Conger et al., 2000; Engelbrecht, Heine & Mahembe, 2017).

The assumption that trust originates from interpersonal communication satisfaction with the leader has the potential to create a genuine sense of accomplishment in the

job for the followers, thus enhancing their growth satisfaction in the job. The open and free communication on the part of leaders with followers not only build communication satisfaction but also develops trust which gives self-assurance to followers that their leaders are interested in the welfare of their personal growth and development in the job, thus potentially enhancing growth satisfaction in the job. Therefore, it is predicted that while transformational leadership positively influences follower growth satisfaction in job, this effect is indirect and occurs through the influences of interpersonal communication satisfaction with the leader and follower trust in the leader. Thus, the final hypothesis:

> **H6** *Transformational leadership is indirectly related to growth satisfaction in job through the sequential mediating influence of follower interpersonal communication satisfaction with the leader and follower trust in the leader.*

Conceptual Model

The conceptual research model, showing the relationships among the study's constructs, is described in Figure 1. Transformational leadership (TL) is reflected in the contextual factors that affect growth satisfaction in the job. The interpersonal communication satisfaction with the leader (IPCSL) and follower trust in the leader (FTL) are mediators between transformational leadership and follower growth satisfaction in the job (FGSJ).
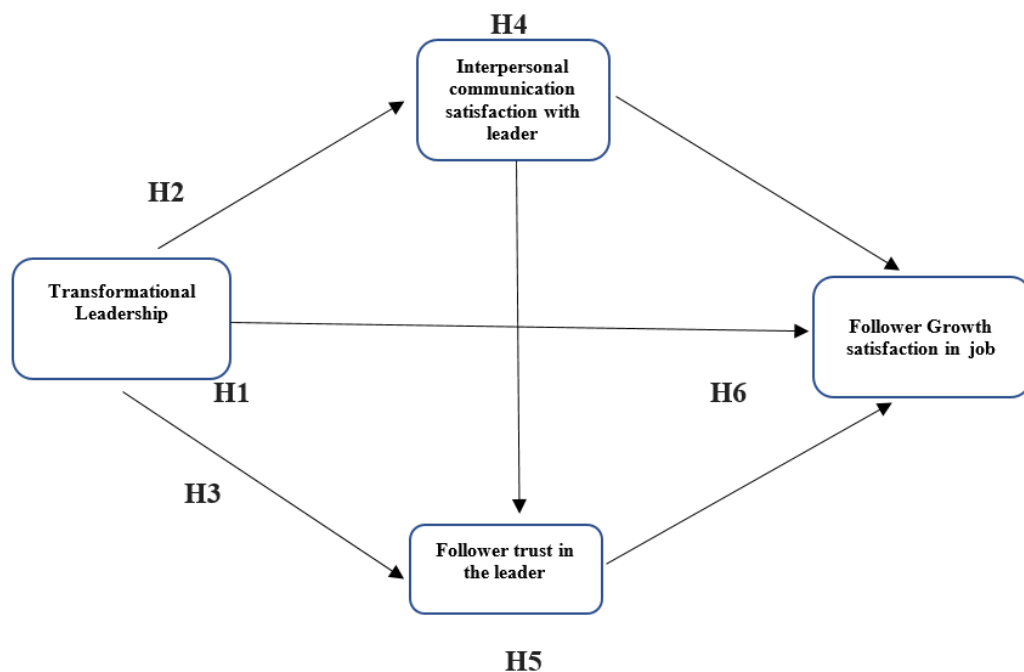
Figure 1. Conceptual model

Methodology

Sample

An exploratory study was conducted to identify the suitability of the hotels and the respondents to participate in the survey. As there were no human resources and leadership policies in 3 star and 2 star rated hotels, the study considered 4-star and 5 star rated hotels only as potential participants. Key informants were expected to have worked for over a year in the hotel and at least 5 years in the industry to be eligible to participate in the study. A list of registered 5 star and 4-star hotels were received from the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India. The sampling frame consisted of 346 and 327 hotels in 5 star and 4 star categories located in Southern India. The

researchers have randomly chosen 7 hotels each from 5 star and 4 star categories to assure equal distribution. In total, 14 hotels (approximately one in every 50 hotels) were chosen for the study through stratified sampling approach. Then, the research team approached the human resource managers of each hotel and requested their approval to proceed with the data collection and requested the contact details of potential respondents. The human resource management provided a list of employees having at least one year of experience in the hotel and five years of experience in the industry. Employees not fulfilling these criteria were not considered. From the list of 315 employees provided by human resource managers, 15 were not available to participate in the survey because of various reasons.

Measures

The survey consisted of 4 parts. Part 1 measured transformational leadership using Singh and Krishnan's (2007) transformational leadership scale which consisted of 23 items. The respondents were asked to rate their leaders' transformational leadership qualities using a five-point likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) using items such as 'My supervisor is sensitive to my personal needs' and 'My supervisor works with a smile'. Part 2 measured follower growth satisfaction in job using three items subscale of Job diagnostic survey (JDS) (Hackman & Oldham, 1980), requiring a response on a seven-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (extremely dissatisfied) to 7 (extremely satisfied). Sample items are 'The amount of personal growth and development I get in doing my job' and 'The amount of challenge in my job'. Part 3 measured follower interpersonal communication satisfaction with the leader using 11 items from Hecht's (1978) Interpersonal communication satisfaction scale. The respondents were to rate their satisfaction with their supervisors' interpersonal communication using items such as 'very satisfied with our

conversations', 'he/she lets me know that I am communicating effectively' on a 5-point Likert-type scale (5 – strongly agree to 1 – strongly disagree). Finally, Part 4 measured followers' trust in the leader using 5 items scale designed by Podsakoff et al. (1990). The respondents were asked to rate their agreements with items such as 'I feel quite confident that my leader will always try to treat me fairly' and 'I feel strong loyalty to my supervisor' etc on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 'strongly disagree 1 to strongly agree 5.

Results and Discussion

A total of 300 employees were contacted in 14 hotels in Southern India. Given the limited access to hotel employees during the work hours, the researcher along with research assistants personally contacted the supervisors in these hotels for arranging a convenient time for administering the survey questionnaire to the respondents. The respondents filled the paper and pen survey and returned the survey questionnaires to the research team. From a total of 300, 180 completed responses were returned with 159 usable responses, yielding the response rate of 53%. The overall response rate was considered as satisfactory due to the low response rates experienced in similar hospitality studies (Keegan & Lucas, 2005) and the studies that are specifically focusing 5 star and 4 star hotel management. Every questionnaire contained information regarding the nature of this study and a paragraph clearly explaining the confidentiality of the data being collected. The respondents' age ranged from 18 years to 55 years (mean = 28.68), and 126 of the respondents (79.2%) were males while only 33 were female respondents (20.8%). The respondents' years of experience ranged from 1 year to 31 years in which the highest 17% of the respondents had a minimum of 2 years of experience. The participants' reporting to present supervisor ranged from 2 months to 7 years. In the sample, 41% of the respondents reported to

present supervisors for around four months, 47% reported for around two years and 40% for about three years. This was considered acceptable given that the previous researches have indicated the quality of the relationship between the manager and the employee is established within the first two months (Graham & Witteloostuijn, 2010). Finally, regarding educational qualification of the participants, 95 respondents (59.7%) had a diploma education, 64 respondents (40.3%) had a bachelor's degree and above.

Descriptive statistics and correlation

Table 1 also portrays mean, standard deviation and the correlation coefficients between the study variables. On a scale of 1 to 7, mean value of follower trust in leader and growth satisfaction in the job was 5.22 and 5.20, respectively. On a scale of 1 to 5, the mean value of interpersonal communication satisfaction and transformational leadership was 3.48 and 2.96, respectively. As predicted, the correlation coefficient of the variables used in the study ranged between 0.45 and 0.58 and found significant.

Table 1. Evaluation analysis of measurement models and the correlation coefficients between variables

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4
1. Transformational leadership	2.96	0.46	-			
2. Interpersonal communication Satisfaction with leader	3.48	0.47	0.57**	-		
3. Follower trust in the leader	5.22	0.87	0.58**	0.51**	-	
4. Growth satisfaction in job	5.20	0.93	0.45**	0.50**	0.56**	-

Note: ** p < 0.01

Direct effects among variables in the theoretical model

The direct effects of transformational leadership on follower growth satisfaction in the job and the indirect effect through the follower trust in the leader, and interpersonal communication satisfaction were tested through regression analysis using SPSS supported PROCESS software while AMOS was used for confirmatory factor analysis to find the measurement model fit for the instruments used in the study.

Measurement model evaluation

By conducting preliminary data screening checks, such as missing variables, normality and outliers, the data validity was assured. For overcoming the issue of multicollinearity (Mason and Perreault, 1991), the correlation coefficient value for the key variable was checked. The correlation coefficient value for the key variable ranged between .444 and .726, and none of the variables had a variance inflation factor (VIF) above 4, (ranged between .161 and .177), thus ruling out the issue of multicollinearity. Content validity of the measurement items were assessed through a comprehensive review of the literature and by conducting pretest with experts and the samples. The measurement items that were not suitable for the hospitality industry were removed and/ or reworded (Nunnally, 1978). The convergent and discriminant validity of the measures used in the study were assessed by performing confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) using AMOS and SPSS (Gerbing & Anderson, 1988). The measurement items used in the study were simultaneously loaded on to the corresponding latent constructs, and the model fit was assessed using CFA (Mueller & Hancock, 2010). The overall measurement model showed acceptable model fit (χ^2 =1629; *df* = 985) (p < .001); RMSEA = 0.07; GFI = 0.92; CFI = 0.92; NFI = 0.901). All observed indicators were statistically significant (p < .05), the standardized factor loadings of the measurement items were all above .50 and loaded on their corresponding latent factors (Steenkamp & Van Trijp, 1991). The average variance extracted for each

measures are TL = AVE= .41; IPCSL = AVE= .40; FTL = AVE= .56; FGSJ = AVE= .54.

CFA was used to test the convergent and discriminant validity of the multi-item measures used in the study (Gerbing & Anderson, 1992). The average variance extract (AVE) of two constructs (Fornell and Larcker, 1981) was tested by checking whether the AVEs for any two constructs or latent variables were greater than the square of the correlation of the constructs or latent variables (Gerbing & Anderson, 1988; Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The average variance extracted values (AVEs) for the constructs were above .40 which is less than 0.5 threshold suggested by Fornell & Larcker (1981). However, given the AVE value of 0.4 and the composite reliability value of higher than 0.6 as noted earlier, the convergent validity of the construct is acceptable (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Huang et al., 2013). Discriminant validity was tested by checking whether the AVE for two constructs or latent variables were greater than the square of the correlation of the constructs or latent variables (Gerbing & Anderson, 1988). Additionally, all inter-construct correlations were significantly less than one at p = .05 level (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988), providing evidence for discriminant validity. Therefore, the results indicate that the variables used in the model were distinctly different from each other and did not correlate with variables measuring other constructs.

The composite reliability value exceeded the threshold of 0.7, confirming the internal consistency of the constructs used in the study. Composite reliability of the constructs transformational leadership, interpersonal communication satisfaction, trust in the leader and growth satisfaction in job were .94, .91, .86 and .82, respectively (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994).

Assessment of Common Method Variance

To counter common method variance (CMV) problems, procedural remedies were taken while developing and administering the questionnaire. During the questionnaire development stage, each measurement item was systematically examined to reduce ambiguity and vagueness (Malhotra, Kim & Patil, 2006; Podsakoff et al., 2003). Some questions were reverse-coded as advised by Podsakoff et al., (2003). Ex-ante approaches were also used in the data analysis process as suggested by Chang, Wittelootujin and Eden (2010) to counter common method bias. Harman's single factor test (Varimax rotation) in an aggregated exploratory factor analysis model was used to assess CMV (Harman, 1976). The results indicated that the first factor explained < 50% of the total variance providing further evidence that CMV did not distort the inferences made in the current study.

Direct effects among variables in the model

Figure 2 illustrates the proposed relationship between key variables used in the study. The values indicated in the figure are pathway coefficients and standardised values. Given the sample size and the normality assumption, the study used Preacher and Hayes (2008) bootstrapping procedure. As per Preacher and Hayes (2008), 10,000 bootstrap samples were used to test the mediating effects in this study. Before testing the mediation effect, Baron and Kenny's (1986) pre-condition of mediation was assessed. The results indicated significant correlation between the independent and dependent variable (step 1), and mediating variable and dependent variable (step 2) as well as between mediating variable and outcome variable (step 3). Therefore Baron and Kenny's (1986) precondition of mediation was achieved. Table 2 below

decomposes and explains the direct, indirect and total effects on the potential variables within the conceptual model (see Figure 2).

Hypothesis 1 states: Transformational leadership is positively related to follower growth satisfaction in the job.

The relationship between transformational leadership and follower growth satisfaction in job was tested in this research. The results revealed that transformational leadership (TL) did not have significant direct relationship with follower growth satisfaction in job (FGSJ) as evident from Table II (the direct influence of TL on FGSJ was only 0.15 and did not meet the level of statistical significance (t = 0.90, p > 0.05)) and hence hypothesis 1 was not supported. Although there is no direct influence of TL on FGSJ, the significant correlation between TL and FGSJ as evidenced from table I (r = 0.45) further strengthened the intent of another major objective of this study which is to examine the intervening mechanisms that might be influencing the indirect relationship between transformational leadership and follower growth satisfaction in job. Therefore, it can be concluded that there may be other intervening mechanisms that might be responsible for the indirect relationship between transformational leadership and growth satisfaction in the job among hospitality employees.

Hypothesis 2 states: Transformational leadership is positively related to follower interpersonal communication satisfaction with the leader.

Secondly, the regression analysis tested the relationship between transformational leadership (TL) and the mediator, i.e., follower interpersonal communication satisfaction with the leader (IPCSL). As portrayed in Table II, the value of TL's direct and positive influence on IPCSL with the leader was 0.57 (t = 8.71, p < 0.05), which was statistically significant, thus supporting hypothesis H2. This result successfully

purports the presumed notion (H2) that transformational leaders through *'deep interpersonal communication'* (Quick & Macik-Frey, 2004) and, *'free interaction or open communication'* (Hecht, 1978), influence communication satisfaction in followers.

Hypothesis 3 states: *Transformational leadership will be positively related to follower trust in the leader.*

This study also tested the relationship between transformational leadership (TL) and follower trust in the leader (FTL) which is another mediator in the study. As shown in Table II,TL had a direct and positive influence on FTL, and the effect was 0.79 (t = 5.53, p < 0.05), which was also statistically significant, thus supporting hypothesis H3. In other words, transformational leaders are able to promote greater trust in their followers in the hospitality industry through their individualized consideration and care. Further, the positive influence of TL on FTL as evidenced in this study (H3) also concur with earlier literature in this field (Bartram and Casimir, 2007; Braun et al., 2017; Jung & Avolio, 2000; Podsakoff et al., 1990).

Additionally, the results in table 2 revealed that the Interpersonal communication satisfaction with the leader (IPCSL) had a positive and significant direct influence on Follower trust in the leader (FTL) (with a value of 0.96 (t = 7.47, p < 0.05)) and Follower growth satisfaction in job (FGSJ) (with a value of 0.59 (t = 4.02, p < 0.05). This means that interpersonal communication satisfaction with the leader is key to building trust in the follower. The results also mean that those who are satisfied with their leaders' interpersonal communication understand that their leaders are authentic in their communication which helps the employees to have good exchange of ideas freely with their leader about the job, thus enabling them to arrive at conclusions that their job is

worthwhile because their opinions and ideas are respected and acknowledged by the leader. Similarly, the results indicated a positive and significant direct influence of FTL on FGSJ with a value of 0.59 (t = 8.37, p < 0.05). This result means that those hospitality employees who see their leaders as trustworthy genuinely believe that their leaders are not manipulative and their feedback helps them grow and develop personally which makes their job meaningful and worthwhile. This trust in the leader gives a sense of assurance that leaders are not extracting work but are interested in the growth of followers which may be the reason why followers who trust in the leader consider their job to be not only challenging but worthwhile and meaningful.

Table 2. Decomposition and explanation of the effects in the theoretical model of this study

variables		IPCSL					FTL					FGSJ				
		Effect	*t*	*SE*	*LLCI*	*ULCI*	*Effect*	*t*	*SE*	*LLCI*	*ULCI*	*Effect*	*t*	*SE*	*LLCI*	*ULCI*
TL	*Direct effect*	0.57**	8.71	0.06	0.441	0.700	0.79**	5.53	0.14	0.509	1.070	0.15	0.90	0.17	- 0.179	0.485
	Indirect effect	-	-	-	-	-	0.29	-	0.08	0.137	0.476	0.73	-	0.12	0.508	1.007
	Total effect	00.57**	8.71	0.06	0.441	0.700	1.08**	8.87	0.12	0.839	1.319	0.88**	6.24	0.14	0.607	1.169
IPCSL	*Direct effect*						0.96**	7.47	0.13	0.703	1.209	0.59**	4.02	0.15	0.301	0.881
	Indirect effect						-	-	-	-	-	0.41	-	0.10	0.227	0.637
	Total effect						0.96**	7.47	0.13	0.703	1.209	1.00**	7.30	0.13	0.732	1.274
FTL	*Direct effect*											0.59**	8.37	0.07	0.452	0.732
	Indirect effect											-	-	-	-	-
	Total effect											0.59**	8.37	0.07	0.452	0.732

Note: TL – Transformational leadership; IPCSL – Interpersonal communication satisfaction with the leader; FTL – follower trust in the leader, ** $p < 0.05$

Table 3. RMediation test

No.	Path	Lower	Upper
1	TL → IPCSL → FGSJ	0.392**	0.777**
2	TL → FTL → FGSJ	0.437**	0.869**
3	TL → IPCSL → FTL	0.366**	0.751**
4	IPCSL → FTL → FGSJ	0.380**	0.780**

Note: TL – Transformational leadership; IPCSL – Interpersonal communication satisfaction with the leader; FTL – follower trust in the leader, ** $p < 0.05$

Hypothesis 4 states: *Interpersonal communication satisfaction with the leader mediates the relationship between Transformational leadership and follower trust in the leader.*

The current study tested the mediating effect of interpersonal communication satisfaction with the leader (IPCSL) on the relationship between transformational leadership (TL) and follower trust in the leader (FTL). The result indicated (Bias-corrected 95 per cent CI as shown in Table 2 (LLCI = 0.137 - ULCI = 0.476) that TL exerted an indirect effect on FTL (value of 1.08 (t = 8.87, p < 0.05) through the mediating variable IPCSL, thus supporting hypothesis H4. Apparently, the total effect size of TL on FTL increased from 0.79 to 1.08 when the mediator (IPCSL) was included in the model, thus signifying that effective interpersonal communication of the transformational leaders can play a signfiicant role in followers' communciation satisfaction which in turn increases the trust in the leaders. This also means that effective and authentic communication on the part of leaders is key to building trust. This result extends the notion of Burke et al., (2007) study further by claiming that follower trust in transformational leader may be viewed as a proximal outcome of the IPCSL. Similarly, the presumption that Giffin's (1967) five communication dimensions, which are instrumental for developing follower trust also gets approval in the light of empirical evidence of mediating effect between TL and FTL.

Hypothesis 5 states: *Follower trust in the leader mediates the relationship between interpersonal communication satisfaction and growth satisfaction in the job.*

The results as evident in table 2 confirmed the mediating effect of follower trust in the leader (FTL) between interpersonal communication satisfaction with the leader (IPCSL) and follower growth satisfaction in job (FGSJ). The result (Bias-corrected 95

per cent CI as shown in Table 2 (0.41, LLCI = 0.227 - ULCI = 0.637) revealed that FTL exerted an indirect effect on FGSJ (value of 1.00 (t = 7.30, p < 0.05) through the mediating variable IPCSL, thus supporting hypothesis H5. The total effect size of IPCSL on FGSJ increased from 0.59 to 1.00 when the mediator (FTL) was included in the model, thus signifying that commuication satisfaction with leaders build trust and this in turn is to an extent increases the hospitality employees' growth satisfaction in job. This also means that trust is a key element in enabling follwers to percieve their job to be worthwhile, challenging and meaningful. This result re-establishes a connection among the previous studies that have separately dealt with impact of communication on trust levels (Conger et al., 2000; Giffin, 1967; Jung and Avolio, 2000) and the studies which noted a direct link between follower trust and growth satisfaction in job (Walumbwa et al, 2005; Chun et al., 2009; Liu et al., 2010).

Hypothesis 6 states: *Transformational leadership is indirectly related to growth satisfaction in job through the sequential mediating influence of follower interpersonal communication satisfaction with the leader and follower trust in the leader.*

RMediation Test of Tofighi and MacKinnon (2011) was used to examine the sequential mediating effect of interpersonal communication satisfaction with the leader and trust in the leader on TL and FGSJ. Table 3 shows the CI of the four pathways comprising four variables. Pathways 1, 2, 3 and 4 did not contain 0 in the lower and upper confidence interval, thus indicating the presence of mediating effects. More importantly, these results show that TL influenced FTL through the mediating effect of interpersonal communication satisfaction with the leader and that interpersonal communication satisfaction with the leader influenced FGSJ through the mediating

effect of FTL. Therefore, hypothesis 6 was supported. Hence, basing on the results of this study it can be ascertained that TL cannot positively influence FGSJ directly without the intervening mechanisms of interpersonal communication satisfaction and trust in the leader. Hence, with the embodiment of suggested mediational mechanism based on interpersonal communication satisfaction with the leader and follower trust, the influence becomes significant. This result empirically proved the proposition that TL is indirectly related to growth satisfaction in the job through the sequential mediating influence of IPCSL and FTL (H6) and veritably extended this proposition further by observing that there is a joint mediation effect in this all-important relationship. Thus, IPCSL and follower trust (FTL) were found to be key variables that jointly and sequentially mediate the relationship between TL and FGSJ. Hence, it can be concluded that leaders in hospitality sector who are transformational in nature impact follower growth satisfaction in the job (personal growth, development, worthwhile accomplishment) by communicating interpersonally well and building good interpersonal trust.

As evident from the results, the direct effect of TL on FGSJ was 0.15, while the overall influence and effect through the mediation effects, i.e. TL→IPCSL →FTL→ FGSJ, provided a value of 0.88 (0.57 × 0.96 × 0.59 + 0.79 × 0.59 + 0.57 × 0.15 = 0.88), clearly indicating that TL has significant implications for FGSJ through these significant mediators in the hospitality industry.
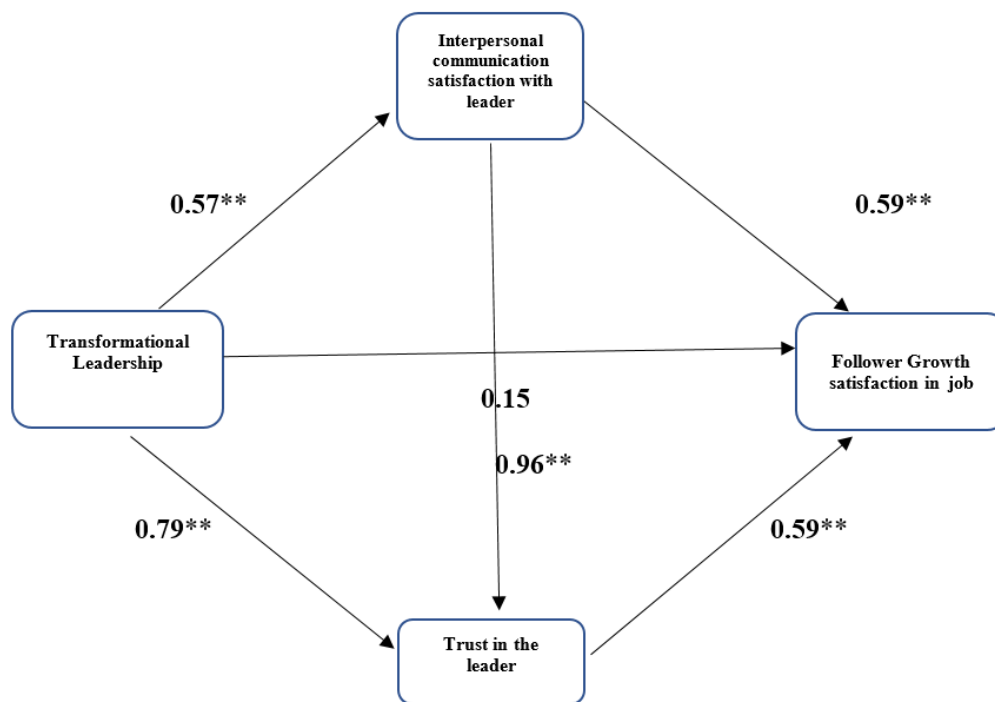
Figure 2. Research model
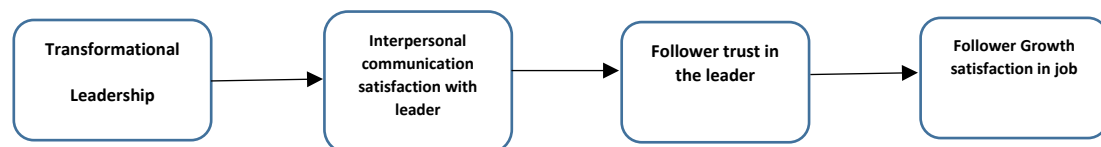
Figure 3. Relational Pathway of the variables

Conclusions

The main purpose of this research is to obtain empirical evidence about the mediating role of interpersonal communication satisfaction and trust between transformational leadership (TL) and follower growth satisfaction in the job (FGSJ) among hospitality employees. For our first research objective regarding the examination of the relationship between transformational leadership and follower growth satisfaction in job among hospitality employees, the result did not show significant support for the

direct relationship between TL and FGSJ. However, for the second and third research objectives, the results from the analysis showed significant mediation of interpersonal communication satisfaction with the leader between TL and trust in the leader, as well as the follower trust in the leader significantly mediated between interpersonal communication satisfaction and follower growth satisfaction in the job among hospitality employees. Finally, for the fourth objective regarding the demonstration of the sequential mediation from transformational leadership to follower growth satisfaction in job through follower interpersonal communication satisfaction and trust, the results from the analysis provided evidence to support a joint and sequential mediation of interpersonal communication satisfaction and trust between TL and FGSJ.

Although the analysis did not find statistical support initially for the direct linkage between transformational leadership and follower growth satisfaction in the job, the positive relationship of interpersonal communication satisfaction and trust with growth satisfaction in job and the significant sequential mediation evidenced in this study strongly suggests that the influence of transformational leadership on follower growth satisfaction in job is achieved through interpersonal communication satisfaction and trust. In conclusion to summarize all the findings, it is evident in this study that these two, namely interpersonal communication satisfaction with the leader and trust served as the mechanisms that explain why transformational leaders in hospitality sector are able to significantly enhance higher growth satisfaction in the job (personal growth, development, worthwhile accomplishment) among employees. In addition, the overall findings are consistent with similar prior research, which found the evidence regarding the influence of transformational leadership on follower job satisfaction (Hamidifar 2009; Nielsen et al., 2009; Bushra et al., 2011; Zahari and Shurbagi 2012; Boamah et

al., 2018). Similarly, the results confirming the significant relationship between interpersonal communication satisfaction and trust in this study corroborated with earlier studies of Massey and Kyriazis (2007), Alsayed et al. (2000), Sharma and Bajpai (2010) and Engelbrecht, Heine & Mahembe 2017). Likewise the results in this research also confirmed similar findings of earlier studies on interpersonal communication satisfaction and job satisfaction (De Nobile and McCormick, 2008, Malik, 2011; Vermeir et al., 2018). Finally, the relationship between trust and growth satisfaction in job as evidenced in this study also echoed other studies' findings such as Driscoll (1978), Podsakoff et al., (1990), Yang & Mossholder, (2010) and Nasra & Heilbrunn (2015).

Practical Implication

The study proposes practical implications for the hospitality industry. Firstly, given the importance of interpersonal communication satisfaction in creating trust and growth satisfaction in the job, organisations in hospitality industry need to focus on effective upward communication. The upward communication can be facilitated using internet and intranet platforms such as hotelkit app and other portable operations and communication technologies that enable employees to share operational and confidential information with the managers and employers. Second, employee satisfaction survey using online review questionnaires can be conducted at regular intervals to allow employees to voice their concerns, feedback, and recommendations anonymously. Pulse surveys is another effective approach to capture employees' workload, happiness, motivation, and real-time sentiment. Moreover, management can organise retreats and focus groups to allow employees to engage in a discussion about their work and come up with accurate and valuable feedback to the management. Using this anonymous and confidential employee survey information,

managers' need to organise a one-on-one follow-up meeting with employees to resolve their immediate concerns and listen to their suggestions and recommendations for further improvement. As listening on the part of managers is key to create a sense of belief and trust in employees, HURIER listening model can be used by managers to actively listen, focus, understand, evaluate and respond to the message, ideas and feedback.

Secondly, considering the impact of transformational leaders in enhancing follower growth satisfaction in the job, hospitality organisations are encouraged to recruit and promote employees with transformational leadership characteristics and skills. In addition to administering leadership assessment measures and psychometric tests in the recruitment stage, asking interview questions such as How do you define leadership and your leadership quality? or How would you explain your management approach? can reveal the interviewees' transformational leadership qualities such as shared vision, humility, passion, emphasis on interpersonal communication, integrity and emotional maturity. Organisations can set up 'ad hoc auditions' by giving managerial type duties to evaluate the current employees' transformational leadership characteristics and their potential to become managers or supervisors. With the further enhancement of transformational leadership skills through onsite or offsite training and professional development programs, the management can suitably promote those employees with transformational leadership characteristics and skills to managerial positions.

Finally, this study highlighted the importance of trust as a mediating mechanism for promoting employees' growth satisfaction in the job. Trust can be built in the employees by leading with integrity, meaning, saying 'what you'll do and then do what you say'. Secondly, being honest and supportive in communicating facts as they are,

without being judgemental can build trust as well as create a realistic understanding of the nature of the job. Managers can also cultivate a culture of accomplishment by rewarding employees' hard work by showcasing exceptional employee contributions. For example, simple exercises like 'Perkbox Recognition' which lets users set polls to reward and incentivise each other's accomplishments can be used effectively to develop a sense of worthwhile accomplishment in the job.

Limitations

The data sample from the Indian hotel industry constraints direct applicability and extrapolation into the hospitality, tourism or other service industries of different cultures. Given the key role played by interpersonal communication satisfaction (IPCSL) and trust in the leader (FTL) between TL and Follower growth satisfaction in job (FGSJ) as evidenced in this study, it is recommended that future studies replicate this model across other cultures for greater generalization of results. By establishing followers' trust in the leader as a proximal outcome of interpersonal communication satisfaction with a leader in this study, the future research could explore how different dimensions of interpersonal communication individually impact the perception of trustworthiness of a leader. The survey data were collected based on a cross-sectional basis and therefore the direction of the causality to an extent could have been difficult to be inferred. It is suggested that future studies collect data from multiple sources to reduce problems arising from common-method bias. Finally, future studies can use large sample sizes and include large measures to study the sub-factors of the study variables in view of further advancement of research in this area.

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