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Employee psychological well-being, transformational leadership and the future of hospitality jobs

Laurens Alexander Walbeek* & Georges El Hajal (iD)

Hotel Management School, NHL Stenden University of Applied Sciences, Leeuwarden, The Netherlands
*Correspondence: laurenswalbeek@gmail.com

ABSTRACT: Employee psychological well-being is a central concern for hospitality establishments as it impacts talent retention. This empirical research explores the relationship between transformational leadership and employee psychological well-being. This relationship is tested through a mediation model where transformational leadership is proposed to explain the effect on the psychological well-being of hospitality employees (hedonic and eudaemonic well-being) through the affective mediators thriving at work and employees' amplification of pleasant emotions and employee engagement. The cross-sectional data came from 133 5-star hotel employees in the Netherlands. Analysing the responses showed that eudaemonic well-being had to be split into four new variables: growing and giving, liveliness, self-esteem and managing oneself. Furthermore, thriving at work and employee engagement fully mediated between transformational leadership and hedonic well-being, thriving at work fully mediated between transformational leadership and growing and giving, while thriving at work and employees' amplification of pleasant emotions fully mediated between transformational leadership and self-esteem. A direct relationship was found between transformational leadership and managing oneself. Practical and theoretical implications are discussed in detail.

KEYWORDS: hedonic well-being, eudaemonic well-being, thriving; employee emotions, employee engagement

Introduction

Due to the impact of COVID-19, employee well-being has been a central preoccupation among hospitality professionals. Researchers agree that employees who tend to have higher levels of work stress and a lower self-rated mental health tend to seek employment in other industries (Agarwal, 2021; Bufquin et al., 2021; Chen, 2021; Chen & Chen, 2021; Demirović Bajrami et al., 2021; Yu et al., 2021).

Well-being appears to be studied from many perspectives, mainly because scholars use a variety of definitions for this concept, which makes the literature disjointed (Danna & Griffin, 1999). A recent definition argued that well-being consists of good health, security, happiness, safety and comfort (Mitchell, 2018). The dimensions of employee well-being can be further categorised into physical, negative, hedonic and eudaemonic well-being constructs based on their traits (Inceoglu et al., 2018). Negative well-being encompasses burnout and exhaustion and is reflected in studies by concepts like irritation, emotional exhaustion and job tension. Physical well-being has been described as sleep quality (Trabelsi et al., 2021), stress, strain and somatic symptoms (Inceoglu et al., 2018). Hedonic well-being appears to be characterised by subjective pleasures such as happiness and positive emotions. Eudaemonic well-being relates to human experiences. Its often-used traits are self-acceptance, purpose in life, environmental mastery, positive

relationships, personal growth, autonomy and self-acceptance (Ryff, 2014). Hedonic and eudaemonic are distinct components of psychological (mental) well-being (Inceoglu et al., 2018).

The COVID-19 pandemic and working conditions led to a 31% shortage of hospitality employees in the Dutch hospitality industry, and employers are facing a significant challenge in attracting and retaining employees (Uitvoeringsinstituut Werknemersverzekeringen [Employee Insurance Agency], 2021). As the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic continues to affect employment in the Dutch hospitality industry, the need for a theoretical framework to increase self-reported well-being and the development of new managerial implications are becoming increasingly apparent.

Multiple studies underlined the role of human resource management (HRM) in improving self-reported employee well-being (Chillakuri & Vanka, 2020; Ho & Kuvaas, 2020; Salas-Vallina et al., 2021). Leadership, an essential element of managing human resources, explicitly impacts the different well-being constructs (Inceoglu et al., 2018; Hendriks et al., 2020; Sarwar et al., 2020). Agarwal (2021) argues that HRM practices during the COVID-19 pandemic positively impacted the psychological well-being of hospitality employees and improved staff turnover rates. At the same time, other researchers (Bufquin et al., 2021; Chen, 2021; Chen & Chen, 2021; Demirović Bajrami et al., 2021; Yu et al., 2021) found that the pandemic negatively affected psychological well-being. However, researchers were

reluctant to recommend interventions to improve psychological well-being, thus highlighting a lack of research into leadership styles and affective mechanisms during and after the COVID-19 pandemic in the Netherlands.

Leadership and leadership styles

Leadership is a complex and diverse topic that cannot be easily described, in part due to generational differences, and growing global influences make perceived leadership different from one employee to another. Scholars have long argued about the importance of leadership from different viewpoints. Social thinkers see leadership as the art of liberating people to do the best they can (DePree, 1989). Such leadership thinking is linked to discretionary influence, meaning-making and purposive behaviour (Bass & Bass, 2009). However, organisational effectiveness thinkers see leadership as a way to improve efficiency, stay competitive and stimulate change (Iqbal & Iqbal, 2011). One of the leadership styles that developed in organisations from both a social and organisational effectiveness viewpoint was transformational leadership. Transformational leadership thinkers believe that the followers' needs must be addressed, empowering them, aligning them with the company's visions and helping them grow into leaders themselves (Bass & Riggio, 2005).

Transformational leadership

James MacGregor Burns, a political scientist, was the first to use transformational leadership to describe how political leaders can influence and change followers' values (Burns, 1978). It was Bass (1985), however, who further developed this leadership style in organisations. A transformational leader is defined as someone who "stimulates and inspires followers to achieve extraordinary outcomes and, in the process, develops their leadership capacity" (Bass & Riggio, 2005, p. 3). Recent research, when looking at metrics, new growth, core repositioning and financial performance, argues that transformational leaders tend to pursue two separate journeys strategically, think "inside out", influence cultural change as a way to drive engagement, develop a road map before disruptions occur and communicate strategic narratives for upcoming years (Anthony & Schwartz, 2017)

Since its introduction by Burns (1978), transformational leadership has been linked to positive outcomes in a variety of labour-intensive sectors, such as health care (Boamah et al., 2018), education (Anderson, 2017) and banking (Abouraia & Othman, 2017). Throughout the past decade, the hospitality industry has received attention from leadership scholars, creating a substantial body of literature that suggests that transformational leadership has multiple benefits for the hospitality industry (Tracey & Hinkin, 1994; Erkutlu, 2008; Wang et al., 2014; Slåtten & Mehmetoglu, 2015; Liang et al., 2017; Gui et al., 2020). One positive outcome, which Astuty and Udin (2020) found, is that adopting a transformational leadership style will significantly improve employee creativity, affective commitment and employee performance, all critical for performance in hospitality settings (Enz, 2012; Horng et al., 2013). Another element is the positive effect of transformational leadership in a competitive environment. Yang and Yang (2019) found that transformational leadership improves organisational performance in a moderately competitive environment. Lastly, transformational leadership can be used as a way to improve employee retention (Yamin, 2020), clarify the mission (Tracey & Hinkin, 1994), positively influence

self-efficacy (Wang et al., 2014) and enhance the employees' work engagement and voice (Liang et al., 2017). Contrary to earlier arguments, some scholars claim that transformational leadership might also bring some negative impacts. One idea described by Kark et al. (2003) is that employees might rely too much on the abilities of the transformational leader. Resick et al. (2009) further argue that transformational leaders might be evil or unethical, misusing employees who have a good relationship with the leader. However, while some transformational leaders may be evil or unethical, the authors found no empirical evidence that transformational leaders tend to become evil or unethical, or that evil or unethical people become transformational leaders compared to other leadership styles. Thus, it can be argued that transformational leadership has considerably more benefits than possible disadvantages.

However, since global beliefs and changes might influence how people see leadership, it could be that transformational leadership might become outdated. The hospitality industry made rapid changes during the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, one might question if transformational leadership will still work in this new era. Zaman et al. (2020) showed that during COVID-19, transformational leaders could significantly affect the readiness for change in employees, something of particular importance during this pandemic. Another exciting outcome, as argued by Yücel (2021), is that transformational leadership is essential since transformational leaders keep employees engaged during the pandemic, thus lowering the turnover of employees. Lastly, transformational leadership and crisis management performance were shown to be significantly correlated, as evident by high correlations between crisis management performance and charisma and vision, two influential attributes of transformational leadership (Ma & Yang, 2020). Although leadership is a topic with many different definitions and styles, transformational leadership will still be an effective way of leading.

Transformational leadership and hedonic well-being

Hedonic well-being stems from *hedonia*, the maximisation of pleasure and the minimisation of pain (Tatarkiewicz, 1976). The phenomenon of hedonic well-being, found in clinical psychology, has been termed as positive affect and negative affect, which are underlying mechanisms that explain happiness or psychological well-being. Well-being occurs when positive affect is predominant, causing a state of joy (Bradburn, 1969). Johnson et al. (2018) described hedonic well-being as subjective pleasures such as happiness and positive emotions. Positive emotions include such traits as enhancing our thinking and acting and improving psychological capabilities. Support is offered by a study that reviewed hedonic well-being while looking at the hierarchical construct, composite and causal systems used in former research, concluding that hedonic well-being can be described in three components: job satisfaction, positive affect and negative affect (Busseri & Sadava, 2011). However, during a review of 71 articles, Inceoglu et al. (2018) found that most papers in organisational studies conceptualise hedonic well-being as job satisfaction. As such, this research article will use the latter conceptualisation.

Job satisfaction has been linked to many positive outcomes. For instance, higher job satisfaction has been linked to a better quality of care and patient outcomes in health care settings (Asif et al., 2019). Among bankers, higher job satisfaction has also led to improved customer perceptions which, in turn, allow

banks to make their customer service stand out against those of competitors (Charni et al., 2020). Similar to the health care and banking sectors, hospitality is known for being people-intensive, with many encounters between employees and guests (Ford & Sturman, 2019). Hence, higher job satisfaction is also essential in hospitality since higher job satisfaction will lead to better service quality, eventually leading to organisational success (Díaz-Carrión et al., 2020).

Demirović Bajrami et al. (2021) argued that during the COVID-19 pandemic, job security and working under new circumstances harmed employees' job satisfaction. They further argued that job satisfaction is also a strong predictor of turnover intentions. Likewise, Yan et al. (2021) argue, based on the transactional theory of stress and coping, that the COVID-19 risk perception in hospitality employees is linked to the experience of depressive symptoms. They further argued that higher job satisfaction could significantly weaken this relationship.

The relationship between transformational leadership and psychological well-being has emerged rapidly in social sciences over the last decade (Tafvelin et al., 2011; Chuang et al., 2012; Nielsen & Daniels, 2012; Braun et al., 2013; Gillet et al., 2013; Hetland et al., 2015; Choi et al., 2016). More than 70 papers in academic journals with an impact factor of at least 1.0 prove the validity of leadership's effect on employee psychological well-being. The basic premise is simple: transformational leadership can markedly improve the psychological well-being of employees in hospitality organisations. Furthermore, employees with transformational leaders are more productive, work in a better organisational climate and are more satisfied with their jobs (Gui et al., 2020).

Hedonic well-being, conceptualised as job satisfaction (Inceoglu et al., 2018), is likely to be positively influenced by transformational leadership. Transformational leaders tend to show concern for the needs and feelings of employees (Bass & Riggio, 2005), which may enhance positive affect and job satisfaction. Furthermore, transformational leaders improve intellectual stimulation such as creativity and innovation in employees, (Bass & Riggio, 2005), linked to the claim that hedonic well-being consists of traits about the way that people think (Johnson et al., 2018). Braun et al. (2013) found a positive relationship between transformational leadership and hedonic well-being. Subsequent studies have shown a significant relationship, such as Choi et al.'s (2016) investigation among nursing staff (see also Chuang et al., 2012; Kovjanic et al., 2013; Arnold et al., 2015).

Today, based on the significant advantages experienced in the hospitality industry pre- and post-COVID-19, hedonic well-being has proven to be of particular importance among hospitality employees.

Transformational leadership and eudaemonic well-being
Eudaemonic well-being stems from the Greek *eudaimonia*, a term Aristotle introduced to refer to a life one thinks is best, most worthwhile and most desirable. Some debate in clinical and humanistic psychology has centred on how to best describe these human experiences (e.g. Jung, 1933; Maslow, 1943; Rogers, 1961; Frankl, 1985). Defining eudaemonic well-being, particularly human experience, has proven to be difficult precisely because there has been an absence of measurement tools with which human experiences can be measured.

However, according to Ryff and Keyes (1995) and Waterman (1993), eudaemonic well-being means having a sense of personal identity, an internal locus of control, self-actualisation and principled moral reasoning. Ryff (2014) made eudaemonic well-being quantifiable by blending different perspectives into one core conceptual dimension, suggesting that eudaemonic well-being consists of self-acceptance, a purpose in life, environmental mastery, positive relationships and personal growth, autonomy and self-acceptance. This understanding provides direction for how eudaemonic well-being can be conceptualised and measured. Since then, eudaemonic well-being has been linked to multiple positive outcomes. For example, Freire et al. (2019) found that a higher level of eudaemonic well-being predicts university students' ability to cope with stress. In another diary-questionnaire study in which white collar employees filled in their eudaemonic well-being scores twice a day for four consecutive working days, higher levels of daily eudaemonic well-being significantly improved the daily performance of employees (Kożusznik et al., 2019). In hospitality settings, eudaemonic well-being can predict higher levels of loyalty (Guzzo et al., 2022). Moreover, specific dimensions of eudaemonic well-being, such as purpose and meaning in life, can predict the creative performance of employees (Bayighomog & Arasli, 2022).

During the COVID-19 pandemic, fulfilling autonomy and affiliation needs among hospitality employees has proven vital since it improved role performance (Agarwal, 2021). Furthermore, researchers argue that positive relationships with the manager would lower the job demands experienced, even when employees face perceived unfairness during these times. A study among health care workers found that eudaemonic well-being was linked to a lower turnover intention (Yücel, 2021). Finally, lower levels of eudaemonic well-being during the COVID-19 pandemic have been related to more economic stress and higher levels of neuroticism among employees (Alessandri et al., 2021). In summary, eudaemonic well-being is of significant importance to the hospitality industry. Even though less research focused on eudaemonic well-being in hospitality organisations, other sectors report positive outcomes when higher levels of eudaemonic well-being occur. Therefore, these outcomes are expected to be somewhat the same in hospitality.

Eudaemonic well-being is a less widely used and a limited validated concept in relation to transformational leadership. Nevertheless, evidence suggests that the transformational leadership/eudaemonic well-being construct can be mostly accounted for by social cognitive influences (Nielsen & Munir, 2009; Gillet et al., 2013) and motivational influences (Nielsen et al., 2008; Gillet et al., 2013).

Individualised consideration is an attribute of transformational leadership (Bass & Avolio, 1994); when applied correctly, it allows transformational leaders to behave in a coaching role, leading to employee personal development (Bass & Riggio, 2005). Another effect that is likely to influence this relationship positively is inspirational motivation. Inspirational motivation refers to communicating a vision while setting expectations for followers. Also, communicating a clear vision provides motivation, inspiration and a challenge to achieve (Bass & Riggio, 2005). Individualised considerations and inspirational motivation may be linked to eudaemonic well-being traits such as having a purpose in life, positive relationships, personal growth and autonomy.

A longitudinal study from Nielsen and Munir (2009) showed a significant link between transformational leadership and eudaemonic well-being. They concluded that health care workers are positively influenced by their self-reported work-life balance and psychological well-being. Also, later studies such as Hetland et al. (2015) showed a direct relationship where eudaemonic well-being was phrased as daily dedication, an attribute of engagement. Meng and Badri (2021) tested if transformational leadership benefits millennial workers, and a direct link was established between transformational leadership and eudaemonic well-being. Thus, transformational leadership is expected to contribute to higher eudaemonic well-being in hospitality organisations.

Purpose and conceptual framework

As evidenced by the available literature, there are clear links between transformational leadership and the affective mediators, transformational leadership and psychological well-being. Nevertheless, (1) no studies looked at thriving, employees' amplification and employee engagement in a fully mediated model, and (2) no distinction was made between the two types of psychological well-being (hedonic and eudaemonic well-being) when looking at affective mediational pathways (Table 1).

The research assesses the three affective mechanisms: thriving, employees' amplification of pleasant emotions and employee engagement). The central idea implicit in this research is that the relationship between transformational leadership and psychological well-being is partially or fully mediated through affective constructs. This relationship, in turn, might provide a valuable way to enhance psychological employee well-being in the hospitality industry during and post-COVID-19. This central idea aims to explain the relationship between transformational leadership and psychological well-being with three mediation mechanisms that integrate the affective part of transformational leadership. The hypothesis is that transformational leaders will significantly influence affective mediational pathways and psychological well-being, leading hospitality through and beyond the pandemic. Subsequently, this research will contribute to the literature and academic understanding of the transformational leadership/well-being relationship by demonstrating the importance of affective mediational pathways. The full conceptual model can be found in Figure 1.

Problem statement and research questions

The problem statement for this research is: To what extent is transformational leadership related to the psychological well-being of hospitality employees, and is this relation mediated by affective mediators? Three research questions (RQ) were developed to answer the problem statement:

- RQ1: What effect does transformational leadership have on the three affective mediators?;
- RQ2: What effect do the three affective mediators have on psychological well-being?; and
- RQ3: What role do the three affective mediators have between transformational leadership and psychological well-being?
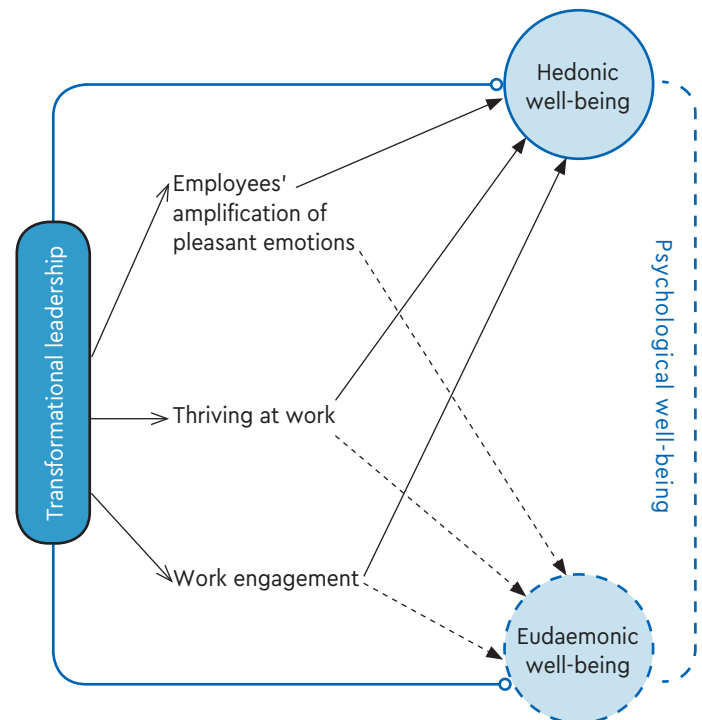

FIGURE 1: Hypothesised conceptual model

Methodology

Sample and participants

Data were obtained from a random sample of workers employed in five-star hotels in the Netherlands. Using Booking.com, a total of 48 five-star hotels were identified. This study aimed to collect a minimum of 125 respondents based on Cohen's (1992) power primer. Convenience sampling was used to select respondents for this research by looking at LinkedIn listings of all five-star hotel employees and contacting potential respondents with a connection request. A technique known as snowball sampling was employed to expand the number of respondents. Employees were requested to distribute the questionnaire to two or three co-workers. Informed consent was arranged by supplying information in the questionnaire. A total of 1 071 potential respondents were contacted. The final data set consisted of 133 respondents to analyse.

Design, procedure and measurements

This research was conducted with a positivist research philosophy, which assumes that variables such as transformational leadership, affective mechanisms and psychological well-being can be observed and measured. A cross-sectional survey design was adopted, as described by Swetnam (2000). The questionnaire adopted a 7-point Likert scale. To test relationships, we chose an interval scale combining scores from different items to create mean values and standard deviations (Joshi et al., 2015). The questionnaire included 49 items covering the transformational leadership style of their leader and a self-assessment of thriving, employees' amplification of pleasant emotions, employee engagement, hedonic well-being and eudaemonic well-being. Because the research included established indicators from the empirical literature, the constructs were validated. The survey concluded with six questions on demographics and information on tenure.

TABLE 1. Mediators between transformational leadership and employee well-being

Mediator	Findings	References
Thriving	• Thriving employees are in a psychological state where a sense of learning and vitality is experienced. Learning is the observable change in an employee's behaviour due to an environmental aspect, and vitality can be attributed to more sustained levels of performance and functioning. • There are proven links between thriving and retention-related outcomes in hospitality organisations during COVID-19. • Research shows that thriving is related to hedonic well-being. However, no recent research has been done on thriving and hedonic well-being in hospitality. • Transformational leadership leads to thriving by promoting an exciting vision, giving autonomy to employees, supporting innovation, supporting experimentation and creating a challenging environment, thus influencing vitality and continuous learning. • The effect of transformational leadership on eudaemonic well-being is less conclusive, and in that regard, the underlying mechanism of thriving still needs to be explored.	Abid et al. (2020) Abid et al. (2021) Cain et al. (2021) Chang & Busser (2019) Houwer & Hughes (2020) Huo (2021) Khan et al. (2020) Kleine et al. (2019) Lin et al. (2020) Ryff (2014) Sarkar & Fletcher (2014) Spreitzer et al. (2005)
Employee amplification of pleasant emotions	• This refers to regulating and expressing positive emotions boosting one's experience of optimistic emotions, regardless of whether one faces emotional labour. • Employees' amplification of pleasant emotions is also believed to play a significant role in the performance and well-being outcomes where emotions of hospitality employees have consequences on employees' behaviours, attitudes and intentions and, as such, impact performance outcomes such as innovation behaviour and job performance. • Transformational leadership positively affects deep acting, the changing of emotions where the expressed emotions (i.e. amplification of emotions) are according to the organisational display rules. This style predicts significant positive emotions such as attention, inspiration, hope, pride and job satisfaction. • The relevant contributions of employees' amplification of pleasant emotions in the relationship between hedonic and eudaemonic well-being have not been explored enough. • There is a mediating effect of employees amplifying pleasant emotions between transformational leadership and hedonic well-being.	Barrett-Cheetham et al. (2016) Côté (2005) Chuang et al. (2012) Di Fabio & Kenny (2019) Hwang et al. (2021) Izard (1977) Lee et al. (2011) Luo et al. (2019) Ortner et al. (2018) Radic et al. (2020) Xu & Wang (2020) Zineldin (2017)
Employee engagement	• Many definitions exist for employee engagement, however, measurement tools for this construct are lacking. • Research on transformational leadership and engagement relationships is still lacking. • The correlation between transformational leadership and engagement in hospitality has yet to be explored. • Less is known about the correlation between eudaemonic well-being and engagement. • The mediating effect of employee engagement in the relationship between transformational leadership and eudaemonic well-being has not been assessed.	Albrecht et al. (2015) Ampofo (2021) Bakioğlu & Kiraz (2019) Bass and Riggio (2005) Goswami et al. (2016) Han et al. (2021) Hayati et al. (2014) Kahn (1990) Maslach and Leiter (1997) Mazzetti et al. (2021) Rahmadani et al. (2020) Ruisoto et al. (2021) Schaufeli et al. (2002) Tian et al. (2019)

Analysis

A reliability analysis using Cronbach's alpha was carried out on the concepts. The required alpha (α) score is 0.7 (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). All items appeared internally consistent and had a good (>0.7), excellent (>0.8), or even a too good (>0.9) reliability. The means of the new scales were computed. Second, construct validity was assessed using the average variance extraction (AVE) statistical indicator. According to Fornell and Larcker (1981), an instrument is said to have construct validity if its AVE score is 0.50 or higher. All constructs except for one showed good construct validity. Hence, exploratory factor analysis was applied to show a better fit of the data for the variable. New constructs appeared and were used for further research. The mediating effect of thriving at work, employees' amplification of pleasant emotions and employee engagement were tested in a three-step procedure. First, correlation analysis was applied to reveal the relationship between variables in the data (Navarro & Foxcroft, 2022). A significant relationship between the adjusted scales and dependent variables was discovered. As a result, the relationship between transformational leadership (X) and the mediators (M), as well as the mediators (M) and hedonic and eudaemonic well-being (Y), was described. Second, the strengths of these relationships were determined using regression analysis. The first two research questions were addressed through regression analysis. Linear regression was used to analyse direct relationships. As previously said, transformational leadership is the independent variable in the regression with the dependent mediators. The mediators were used as independent variables for the dependent variables, hedonic and eudaemonic well-being. An adjusted r was used to measure the amount of variance on the dependent variable if we derived the prediction equation in the population from which the sample was taken (Pituch & Stevens, 2015). Third, a full mediation model was tested using a general linear model mediation analysis. Moreover, the mediation pattern of Baron and Kenny (1986) and the z-test of Sobel (1982) were applied to test mediation. The three mediators in the model were simultaneously running in parallel. To compare differences in the

TABLE 2. Demographic characteristics of respondents (*N* = 133)

	Number	Per cent
Sex		
Female	68	51.1
Male	60	45.1
I prefer not to answer	5	3.8
Age (years)		
18–26	75	56.4
27–34	33	24.8
35–42	11	8.3
43–50	3	2.3
51 and older	11	8.3
Organisational level		
General manager	3	2.3
Assistant general manager	2	1.5
Department manager	19	14.3
Other supervisorial level	34	25.6
Employee	60	45.1
Employment status		
Full-time	94	71.2
Part-time	38	28.8
Department		
Front office	31	23.3
Accounting	8	6.0
Human resources	12	9.0
Sales and marketing	21	15.8
Food and beverages	47	35.3
Housekeeping	3	2.3
Public relations	3	2.3
Other (security, laundry, technical)	8	6.0
Education		
Secondary education	9	6.8
High school	32	24.1
Associate	7	5.3
College	56	42.1
Graduate	29	21.8

means of the data and to find out whether there are different outcomes between certain groups, a one-way ANOVA test was applied. The differences in the means between groups were measured using the demographic variables. All statistical tests were done at the alpha level of 0.05, except that a direct effect in the general linear mediation model required an alpha level of 0.10. All findings were rounded to two decimal places after being calculated.

Results

Descriptive statistics

Descriptive statistics of the sample (Table 2) shows that 45.1% of the respondents were male (*n* = 60), 51.1% were female (*n* = 68), and 3.8% preferred not to answer this question (*n* = 5). Most respondents were between 18 and 34 years old (81.2%). Furthermore, they worked in food and beverages (F & B) (35.3%), front office (23.3%) and various other departments. There was a good balance between employees (45.1%) and employees with a supervisory level (54.9%). According to the overall sample profile, various hotel employees participated in this research.

There is one dependent variable (transformational leadership), three mediators (thriving, employees' amplification of pleasant emotions and employee engagement) and two independent variables (hedonic well-being and eudaemonic well-being).

When it comes to the respondents' perceptions of transformational leadership, the data reveals that transformational leadership is generally perceived positively, with mean scores falling between 4.89 and 5.55. Additionally, the standard deviation for each item is relatively low, between 1.32 and 1.84, showing slight variation in responses and suggesting that respondents generally agree on what constitutes transformational leadership. Overall, these findings provide evidence that the respondents had similar understandings of the concept of transformational leadership.

As for the respondents' perceptions of learning, the data reveals that the mean scores fell between 5.36 and 5.20. Additionally, the standard deviation for each item is between 1.43 and 1.51, showing slight variation in responses and suggesting that respondents generally agree on what constitutes learning.

The subscale *vitality* shows lower mean scores of between 4.67 and 5.15, and the standard deviation is more spread out, with scores between 1.49 and 1.71. In general, the mean score for vitality was lower than that for the other subscale, and the standard deviation for vitality was also greater than for learning, suggesting that there is more variability in how respondents experience vitality than there is for the other subscales. Additionally, the mean score for vitality is lower than for the other subscales, suggesting that people generally have more negative experiences with vitality than they do with learning.

The study's findings showed that the scale used to assess thriving at work had mean values between 4.67 and 5.36, with a standard deviation ranging from 1.43 to 1.71. This scale had slightly lower mean values than the one used to assess transformational leadership, but the standard deviations were less spread out, suggesting that while thriving at work may not be as high as transformational leadership, it is a more stable construct. In other words, employees who feel they are thriving at work are more likely to have consistent experiences, while those who report transformational leadership may have more fluctuating experiences.

The concept of employees' amplification of pleasant emotions scored considerably lower than the earlier concepts, with mean values between 4.54 and 4.73. However, with standard deviations from 1.59 to 1.65, the scores were not spread out over an extensive range, suggesting that participants may have some underlying agreement on this concept, despite the relatively low scores. The concept of employee engagement had a relatively positive score between 4.74 and 5.33. Moreover, the standard deviation scored between 1.50 and 1.52.

The respondents' perceptions of hedonic well-being revealed that the concept is generally perceived positively, with mean scores falling between 4.89 and 5.36. Additionally, the standard deviation for each item is relatively low, between 1.53 and 1.64, indicating slight variation in responses and suggesting that respondents generally agree on what constitutes hedonic well-being. Overall, these findings show similar results to previous concepts.

As for the respondents' perceptions of the different subscales for eudaemonic well-being (Table 3), the data reveals that the mean scores for *autonomy* fall between 4.52 and 5.67, *environmental mastery* between 4.65 and 5.53, *personal growth* between 5.57 and 5.96, *positive relations with others* between 5.11 and 5.76, *purpose in life* between 5.00 and 5.60 and *self-acceptance* between 5.64 and 5.71. These results suggest that respondents generally perceived the subscales positively,

TABLE 3. Descriptions of eudaemonic well-being

Eudaemonic well-being	Number	Mean	Standard deviation
Autonomy			
I tend to be influenced by people with strong opinions	133	4.52	1.65
I have confidence in my own opinions, even if they are different from the way most other people think	133	5.67	1.15
I judge myself by what I think is important, not by the values of what others think is important	129	5.29	1.43
Environmental mastery			
The demands of everyday life often get me down	133	4.65	1.60
In general, I feel I am in charge of the situation in which I live	132	5.31	1.35
I am good at managing the responsibilities of daily life	133	5.53	1.17
Personal growth			
For me, life has been a continuous process of learning, changing, and growth	133	5.85	1.16
I think it is important to have new experiences that challenge how I think about myself and the world	133	5.96	1.09
I gave up trying to make big improvements or changes in my life a long time ago	133	5.75	1.50
Positive relations with others			
Maintaining close relationships has been difficult and frustrating for me	133	5.11	1.66
People would describe me as a giving person, willing to share my time with others	132	5.69	1.14
I have not experienced many warm and trusting relationships with others	132	5.76	1.17
Purpose in life			
Some people wander aimlessly through life, but I am not one of them	133	5.60	1.40
I live life one day at a time and do not really think about the future	133	5.23	1.57
I sometimes feel as if I've done all there is to do in life	133	5.00	1.73
Self-acceptance			
I like most parts of my personality	133	5.68	1.12
When I look at the story of my life, I am pleased with how things have turned out so far	133	5.71	1.15
In many ways I feel disappointed about my achievements in life	133	5.64	1.38

with means scores falling mainly in the upper half of the scale range.

Overall, the mean scores for autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life and self-acceptance are all quite positive. However, there are some notable differences between the different subscales. For example, personal growth has the highest mean score of all the subscales, while positive relations with others have the lowest score. These findings suggest that respondents feel particularly good about their personal growth and development, but somewhat less so about their relationships with others. Nonetheless, the mean scores for all subscales fall within a relatively tight range, indicating that respondents generally have positive perceptions of all aspects of their eudaemonic well-being.

The mean scores for the full scale of eudaemonic well-being fall between 4.52 and 5.96, with a standard deviation between 1.09 and 1.73; this scale had the most widely spread scores of all concepts. The high scores show that individuals with eudaemonic well-being experience a greater sense of purpose and meaning in their lives. In contrast, the low scores suggest that some struggle to find such fulfilment. Given the extensive range of scores, it seems that eudaemonic well-being is a complex concept that means different things to different people. However, overall, the data suggest that eudaemonic well-being is a positive force in people's lives, one that can lead to greater happiness and satisfaction.

The mean value of all items of this study varies from 4.52 to 5.96. Meanwhile, the standard deviation of those variables differs from 1.09 to 1.84. This study showed a relatively low standard deviation, showing that the collected data is reliable and can be used to support the research questions.

Correlation analysis

The results have shown a significant positive correlation between transformational leadership and thriving at work ($r = 0.655$, $p < 0.001$), employees' amplification of pleasant emotions ($r = 0.222$, $p < 0.05$), and employee engagement ($r = 0.551$, $p < 0.001$). Equally, hedonic well-being is significantly positively correlated with thriving at work ($r = 0.845$, $p < 0.001$) and employee engagement ($r = 0.852$, $p < 0.001$).

However, employees' amplification of pleasant emotions is not significantly correlated with hedonic well-being ($r = 0.140$, not significant [ns]). Growing and giving positively correlate with thriving at work ($r = 0.242$, $p < 0.01$). To the contrary, it does not correlate with employees' amplification of pleasant emotions ($r = 0.137$, ns) and is negligibly correlated with employee engagement ($r = 0.193$, $p < 0.05$). Self-esteem is significantly positively correlated with thriving at work ($r = 0.452$, $p < 0.001$), employees' amplification of pleasant emotions ($r = 0.330$, $p < 0.001$) and employee engagement ($r = 0.441$, $p < 0.001$). Surprisingly, liveliness does not correlate with any mediator.

Statistical support found that transformational leadership is significantly positively correlated to hedonic well-being ($r = 0.520$, $p < 0.001$), growing and giving ($r = 0.249$, $p < 0.01$), self-esteem ($r = 0.318$, $p < 0.001$) and managing oneself ($r = 0.250$, $p < 0.01$). Surprisingly, it does not correlate with liveliness ($r = 0.108$, ns).

Correlations between the set of mediating variables and between the set of dependent variables were examined. The mediating variables show significant positive correlations between employee engagement and thriving at work ($r = 0.832$, $p < 0.001$) and employee engagement and employees' amplification of pleasant emotions ($r = 0.254$, $p < 0.01$). Surprisingly, thriving at work and employees' amplification of pleasant emotions do not significantly correlate ($r = 0.158$,

ns). There were also some positive relations between the dependent variables. Hedonic well-being correlates significantly with growing and giving ($r = 0.220$, $p < 0.05$) and self-esteem ($r = 0.363$, $p < 0.001$).

Regression analysis

Statistical support was found for the causal path between transformational leadership and employee engagement ($\beta = 0.66$, $p < 0.001$), meaning that transformational leadership predicts employee engagement. Furthermore, the study results show that transformational leadership significantly predicts employees' amplification of pleasant emotions ($\beta = 0.22$, $p < 0.05$); hence, we conclude that transformational leadership affects employees' amplification of pleasant emotions. Similarly, the predictive influence of transformational leadership on employee engagement is also supported ($\beta = 0.55$, $p < 0.001$).

The data equally supported the predictive influences of thriving at work on hedonic well-being ($\beta = 0.47$, $p < 0.001$), growing and giving ($\beta = 0.33$, $p < 0.05$) and self-esteem ($\beta = 0.35$, $p < 0.05$). The study results also showed the influence of employees' amplification of pleasant emotions on self-esteem ($\beta = 0.25$, $p < 0.01$). Employee engagement only showed a significant predictive influence on hedonic well-being ($\beta = 0.47$, $p < 0.001$).

General linear model and mediation analysis

The mediation analysis revealed that transformational leadership's total effect on hedonic well-being was significant ($\beta = 0.51$, $p < 0.001$). With the inclusion of the mediating variables, the impact of transformational leadership on hedonic well-being was found to be insignificant ($\beta = -0.08$, $p = 0.259$). The indirect effect of transformational leadership on hedonic well-being through thriving at work was found to be significant ($\beta = 0.37$, $p < 0.001$). Through employees' amplification of pleasant emotions it was found to be insignificant ($\beta = -0.01$, $p > 0.05$) and through employee engagement it was found to be significant ($\beta = 0.29$, $p < 0.001$). The results show that the relationship between transformational leadership and hedonic well-being is fully mediated by thriving at work and employee engagement, not by employees' amplifying pleasant emotions.

The results also revealed that the total effect of transformational leadership on hedonic well-being was significant ($\beta = 0.25$, $p < 0.01$). With the inclusion of the mediating variables, the impact of transformational leadership on growing and giving was found to be insignificant ($\beta = 0.13$, $p > 0.05$). The indirect effect of transformational leadership on growing and giving through thriving at work was found to be significant ($\beta = 0.17$, $p < 0.05$), through employees' amplification of pleasant emotions it was found to be insignificant ($\beta = 0.01$, $p > 0.05$) and through employee engagement it was found to be insignificant ($\beta = -0.07$, $p > 0.05$). Results show that the relationship between transformational leadership and hedonic well-being is fully mediated by thriving at work and not by employees' amplification of pleasant emotions and engagement.

The results reveal that the total effect of transformational leadership on liveliness was insignificant ($\beta = 0.09$, $p > 0.05$). With the inclusion of the mediating variables, the impact of transformational leadership on managing oneself was found to be insignificant ($\beta = 0.21$, $p > 0.05$). The indirect effect of transformational leadership on managing oneself through thriving at work was found to be insignificant ($\beta = -0.04$,

$p > 0.05$), through employees' amplification of pleasant emotions it was found to be insignificant ($\beta = 0.02$, $p > 0.05$) and through employee engagement it was found to be insignificant ($\beta = 0.03$, $p > 0.05$). These results show that the relationship between transformational leadership and managing oneself has a significant total effect, but is not mediated by any of the three mediators.

ANOVA analysis

ANOVA was used to assess if differences in demographic variables significantly affected the respondents' opinions on each scale. The demographic variables included are gender, age, role, department, employment status and education.

Results showed that working full-time produced a significantly more significant effect on transformational leadership ($M = 0.523$, $p = 0.029$). People with a college degree were significantly more engaged in the work than graduates ($M = 1.21$, $p < 0.001$). Eudaemonic well-being was significantly higher for females compared to those who did not prefer to answer ($M = 2.53$, $p < 0.001$) and for males compared to those who did not prefer to answer ($M = 2.35$, $p < 0.001$). Self-esteem was significantly higher for employees working in food and beverage ($M = 0.345$, $p < 0.05$). Employees with an associate degree have significantly higher levels of managing oneself than employees with secondary education ($M = 1.81$, $p < 0.01$). Finally, there was a significant difference between the age groups in managing oneself (Mean difference = -0.532, $p < 0.5$).

Discussion

Hedonic well-being

Based on the literature review, we can see that transformational leadership behaviours are related to hedonic well-being through affective mediators. The affective mediators in this study (i.e. thriving at work, employees' amplification of pleasant emotions, employee engagement) were examined in the context of a general linear model. The model showed a significant total effect of 0.51 and an insignificant direct effect. Therefore, it can be concluded that the relationship between transformational leadership and hedonic well-being is fully mediated.

Thriving at work and employee engagement appear to be the two significant mediators in the relationship between transformational leadership and hedonic well-being. The results provide support for the positive effect of transformational leadership on thriving at work (Kovjanic et al., 2013; Arnold et al., 2015; Choi et al., 2016) and the predictive effect of thriving at work on hedonic well-being (Kleine et al., 2019; Abid et al., 2020), although not in a hospitality setting, and thus contribute to the growing literature about instilling good practices into these topics.

However, the mediating role of thriving has not been explored before. As transformational leadership is likely to give autonomy, employees would feel more open to learning and vitality in the organisation. The results contradict the results of Kleine et al.'s (2019) meta-analysis, where only weak associations exist between transformational leadership and thriving. The reason being that the meta-analysis does not make a distinction between industries. These results align with the findings of Khan et al.'s (2020) study, which empirically demonstrated a strong relationship between the two concepts in hospitality organisations. Moreover, it reaffirms the direct effect of thriving at work on hedonic well-being (Abid et al., 2020).

The study additionally showed that the influence of transformational leadership on hedonic well-being could be explained by thriving at work. Because transformational leadership promotes an exciting vision, supports innovations and experimentation and creates a challenging environment, employees are likely to feel more vital and experience more significant learning opportunities, increasing their hedonic well-being.

Another explanation for why this relationship is significant might lie in the post-COVID-19 period. For instance, recent studies have shown that growth and learning opportunities became increasingly important during COVID-19 to improve career commitment and reduce regret (Agarwal, 2021; Bufquin et al., 2021; Chen & Chen, 2021; Yu et al., 2021). However, these studies have not yet examined how transformational leadership and thriving played a role in improving well-being. This study thus proves the statements in these studies.

Second, the study's results revealed a significant, favourable influence of transformational leadership on employee engagement. This finding is essential since the effect of transformational leadership on employee engagement in research is lacking. In line with Mazzetti et al. (2021), the direct relationship between employee engagement and hedonic well-being is reaffirmed. However, the relationship between transformational leadership and hedonic well-being was not fully understood. Mainly, that engagement that mediates this effect has not been studied before.

The study results align with the findings of Rahmadani et al. (2020), who argue that leadership plays a vital role in employee engagement. Influential leaders can connect with their employees, inspire them and help them feel competent and autonomous. These factors address the basic needs of employees, such as relatedness, competence and autonomy, which are known to be important drivers of engagement. However, it is essential to note that engaging leadership, as studied by Rahmadani et al. (2020), is distinct from transformational leadership, although the two concepts are related. Transformational leaders can create lasting organisational change by motivating and inspiring employees to reach their full potential. While engaging leaders also look to motivate and inspire employees, they do so within the organisation's existing goals and objectives. As a result, engaging leadership may be more effective in the short term, while transformational leadership is more likely to lead to long-term change. Therefore, the importance of this direct effect is good to know.

The predictive effect of employee engagement on hedonic well-being is also in line with a meta-analysis done by Mazzetti et al. (2021), which found that employee engagement is a stronger predictor of attitudinal outcomes such as job commitment and job satisfaction, as opposed to behavioural and intentional outcomes such as health, turnover intention and performance. On the other hand, the meta-analysis also found that these constructs were moderately to highly correlated and that the sector plays a significant moderating role. However, the hospitality sector was not included. In line with Ampofo (2021), who found that engagement is related to higher life satisfaction among hospitality employees, this study adds to the existing knowledge that employee engagement significantly improves hedonic well-being in the hospitality industry.

The study additionally showed that the influence of transformational leadership on hedonic well-being could be

explained by employee engagement. The entire construct where engagement mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and hedonic well-being was unknown. One explanation could lie in Goswami et al.'s (2016) study, which says that leaders who tend to have an enthusiastic personality could inspire employees to become more engaged in their work roles. Moreover, they argued that more positive forms of leadership, such as transformational leadership, positively affect productivity. They say that employee dedication is enhanced because the entire workforce experiences the pleasant emotions of the group, thereby influencing hedonic well-being. In general, it seems that if a leader has a good impact on their subordinates' emotions, it could lead to increased employee engagement, which would then have a knock-on effect of positively affecting hedonic well-being.

The current study found that employees' amplification of pleasant emotions did not mediate the relationship between transformational leadership and hedonic well-being, contradicting previous findings linking positive emotions in the workplace to higher job satisfaction and well-being (Lee et al., 2011; Radic et al., 2020). However, this contradicting result could be because both studies measured positive emotions, not how these are amplified for guests. Moreover, this study provides evidence that contradicts the mediating role of employees' amplifying pleasant emotions in the relationship between transformational leadership and hedonic well-being, as found in Chuang et al.'s (2012) study. In this study, they found that when negative affectivity was high, transformational leadership was more strongly related to customer outcomes than when negative affectivity was low. This difference in findings could be attributed to the different setups of our two studies. While Chuang et al.'s study focused on the mediating role of employees' amplification of pleasant emotions when moderating negative affectivity, our study did not emphasise this. Our findings suggest that the mediating role of employees' amplification of pleasant emotions is not as vital as previously thought. It is possible that more respondents had high negative affectivity, thus resulting in an insignificant mediation result similar to Chuang et al.'s.

The study did show that transformational leadership has a weakly significant effect on employees' amplification of pleasant emotions, indicating that employees will show more positive emotions to guests when they have a transformational leader. These results are aligned with Luo et al.'s (2019) findings, where transformational leadership has a positive effect on deep acting, the changing of emotions where the expressed emotions (i.e. amplification of emotions) are according to the organisational rules. It is also in line with Chuang et al.'s (2012) significant effect of transformational leadership on employees' amplification of pleasant emotions in service workers with high negative affectivity, while opposed to the insignificant effect for low negative affectivity. Luo et al. (2019) mention that constantly amplifying pleasant emotions leads to better performance which, in turn, could lead to a trade-off effect in psychological well-being. Both Chuang et al.'s (2012) and this study confirm that this trade-off effect does not exist.

Eudaemonic well-being
The results revealed that eudaemonic well-being consists of four independent scales rather than a single higher-order factor. In psychology studies, eudaemonic well-being consists of the following components: self-acceptance, environmental mastery,

purpose in life, positive relations with others, personal growth and autonomy (Ryff & Keyes, 1995). However, confirmatory factor analyses with data from Dutch hospitality employees did not support this multidimensional structure. The model that best fit the data in this study was one of four independent factors: growing and giving, liveliness, self-esteem and managing oneself. This model showed a significant improvement in fit over the single higher-order factor of eudaemonic well-being. The theoretical formulation of eudaemonic well-being was therefore not supported. As Ryff and Keyes (1995) already said, the psychological well-being domain consists of many dimensions which must be further examined.

One explanation for the discrepancy between the theory and the data might be due to the self-reporting techniques, and reporting oneself on a psychological well-being scale might include self-presentation bias. However, another explanation might be that eudaemonic well-being consists of other factors which have not been studied before.

This result also conflicts with a study by Nielsen and Munir (2009), who established a significant link between transformational leadership and eudaemonic well-being which fit the data. An explanation for the conflicting finding in the current study can be found in the measurement choice. For example, Nielsen and Munir (2009) assessed eudaemonic well-being in terms of health, well-being, satisfaction, insecurity and coping. Our study assessed eudaemonic well-being by other subscales, such as autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life and self-acceptance. While both studies used self-reporting measures, the current study used a more comprehensive list of subscales to assess eudaemonic well-being. It is possible that the different subscales tapped into various aspects of eudaemonic well-being, leading to conflicting results.

Similarly, using the job-related affective well-being scale, Meng and Badri (2021) measured eudaemonic well-being, where the data also fit the model. However, this method only investigates affective responses to stressors at work. As far as we know, hospitality research has not measured eudaemonic well-being in combination with Ryff and Keyes's scale.

Growing and giving
It appears that thriving at work is the only significant mediator in the relationship between transformational leadership and growing and giving. The general linear model showed a significant total effect of 0.25 and an insignificant direct effect. Therefore, it can be concluded that the relationship between transformational leadership and growing and giving is fully mediated.

Earlier research about the effect of thriving on eudaemonic well-being is lacking. Research has not yet shown direct relationships between thriving at work and growing and giving. Hence, no mediating roles exist. This finding thus implies that thriving at work in the hospitality industry could enhance the continuous learning process of an employee and make them more willing to give and to share warm, trusting relationships with others. Transformational leadership's influences on growing and giving could be explained by transformational leaders that set expectations for employees and give them opportunities to have warm and trusting relationships with others, which are transferred through thriving at work. The hospitality industry is known for low-paying jobs. However, research has shown that

positive relationships and growth could be more important to employees (Katkus, 2007), a possible underlying reason for the mediated effect.

Employees' amplification of pleasant emotions and employee engagement did not mediate the relationship between transformational leadership and growing and giving. For employees' amplification of pleasant emotions, Di Fabio and Kenny (2019) showed that more positive emotions have a positive effect on eudaemonic well-being. However, the results in this study concerning the mediating effect of employees' amplification of pleasant emotions cannot be compared to their results since amplification of emotions differs from having intrinsic positive emotions. Employees who only extrinsically enhance their positive emotions will, thus, not have more feelings of growing and giving. Employee engagement also did not mediate in this relationship. There has not been any research on the effect of employee engagement on eudaemonic well-being. It is, however, surprising that having high energy levels, feeling dedicated and experiencing a flow state do not lead to growing and giving. A plausible explanation is that hospitality employees are guest-oriented, and the selection of five-star hotel employees may genuinely make an employee too focused on the guest. The prideful, intensely concentrated components of employee engagement may lead employees to be too narrowly focused and isolate them from their colleagues, which explains its non-significant relationship to growing and giving.

Liveliness
This study did not find any significant relationships between transformational leadership and liveliness. One explanation for this outcome may involve a social desirability constraint, in which one may not want to express an honest opinion concerning these factors. However, this effect was minimised by making the questionnaire anonymous. Another possible explanation could be in the way the items were interpreted. All items in this construct were reverse engineered, including items such as "The demands of everyday life often get me down". A possibility is that the reverse-coded items in the scale confused some respondents. However, it is also possible that the relationships do not exist, and other factors are more significant predictors of liveliness.

Given that research has shown transformational leadership to have a positive effect on reducing depression, it is surprising that no studies have been done to investigate its impact on liveliness. While more work needs to be done in this area, the existing literature provides some clues as to why this might be the case. First, as both Munir et al. (2010) and Perko et al. (2014) found, transformational leadership only explains a small part of the variance regarding depressive symptoms, which suggests that there are other factors at play that are more important in predicting liveliness. Second, both studies used a cross-sectional design, meaning that the data's causality cannot be inferred. Depressed people may be more likely to gravitate toward transformational leaders rather than the other way around, and this possibility may explain the non-significant relationship to liveliness. On the other hand, employees might not have the opportunity to choose their manager, and future research should explore these possibilities in more detail.

Self-esteem

The third variable that came from the eudaemonic well-being construct was self-esteem. Thriving at work and employees' amplification of pleasant emotions appear to be mediators in the relationship between transformational leadership and self-esteem. According to the general linear model, the model had a total effect of 0.31 and an insignificant direct effect. It can therefore be concluded that there is full mediation. Moreover, self-esteem was significantly higher for employees working in F & B ($M = 0.345$, $p < 0.05$).

Although research on the topic is scarce, previous research has already demonstrated that transformational leadership is predictive of self-esteem (Matzler et al., 2015; Afzal et al., 2016). However, the mechanism by which this relationship runs is still not fully understood. Transformational leaders may be role models for their followers, instilling a sense of pride and self-worth. Additionally, transformational leaders may create trust and respect, leading followers to feel good about themselves. Another possibility is that transformational leaders convey a message of hopefulness and possibility, inspiring their followers to believe in themselves. Whatever the mechanism, there is a strong relationship between transformational leadership and self-esteem. The current study adds to the evidence supporting the link between transformational leadership and self-esteem, and it highlights the importance of this type of leadership for promoting positive individual outcomes. The ANOVA analysis also highlights that self-esteem is higher in F & B employees than in other departments.

It has been shown that there is full mediation in the relationship between transformational leadership and self-esteem through thriving at work and employees' amplification of pleasant emotions. This result suggests that transformational leaders contribute to higher self-esteem by promoting employee thriving and the amplification of positive emotion. Transformational leaders inspire followers to achieve more than expected and empower them to reach their fullest potential. These qualities instil a sense of pride and accomplishment in employees, leading to higher self-esteem. In addition, transformational leaders create a positive work environment where employees feel supported and valued, possibly leading to increased levels of employee thriving and higher self-esteem.

Finally, transformational leaders encourage their followers to amplify positive emotions, helping employees in the following way: When an employee in the hospitality industry amplifies pleasant emotions, such as a smile, it can result in a positive feedback loop. The service receiver, or guest, sends positive feedback on the employees' amplification of pleasant emotions by sending facial and bodily feedback such as a smile, thus creating multiple loops where the service receiver, a hospitality employee, has more pleasant interactions. This study looked to understand how this process works and impacts eudaemonic well-being. The findings suggest that amplifying pleasant emotions does result in increased self-esteem.

Employee engagement did not mediate the relationship between transformational leadership and self-esteem. The results do not align with Costantini et al.'s (2019) earlier study on the relationship between employee engagement and organisation-based self-esteem. An explanation for this conflicting result may be found in the measurement choice. Costantini et al. looked at organisation-based self-esteem, which means self-esteem was only measured in the company. In contrast, this study looked at self-esteem in one's entire life.

Furthermore, this is the first study to add employee engagement as a mediator in the transformational leadership/self-esteem relationship. The results suggest that employee engagement does not affect how employees view themselves, and employees who feel more engaged at work do not tend to have higher self-esteem.

The results of this study suggest that thriving at work and employees' amplification of pleasant emotions are the only significant mediators in the relationship between transformational leadership and self-esteem, in contrast with the expected model, which posited that employee engagement would also contribute to the indirect effect. These results suggest that thriving at work and employees' amplification of pleasant emotions are sufficient for predicting self-esteem, and employee engagement does not play a role beyond these two factors.

Managing oneself

Thriving at work, employees' amplification of pleasant emotions and employee engagement did not mediate the relationship between transformational leadership and managing oneself. These mediators have not previously been added as mediators in the transformational leadership/managing oneself relationship, so the result of this study cannot be compared to other studies. However, the finding that these three variables did not mediate the relationship is still essential, and it suggests that other factors may influence the relationship between transformational leadership and managing oneself. Furthermore, a significant difference in managing oneself between the age groups (Mean difference = -0.532, $p < 0.5$) suggests that younger people are less able to manage themselves than older people.

Nevertheless, a direct effect of transformational leadership on managing oneself has been found. This effect is weak, but it is significant. While the finding that transformational leadership has a weak effect on managing oneself may seem trivial, it is essential to consider the implications. Transformational leaders have been shown to encourage their followers to manage themselves effectively, and this is likely because transformational leaders emphasise individual growth and development. As a result, followers of transformational leaders are more likely to take responsibility for their performance and development.

Although the findings showed that transformational leadership styles could help promote effective self-management among employees, it is worth noting that this only accounts for a small proportion of the variance, suggesting that other factors should be considered when fostering self-management skills in the workplace. For example, it could be that employees who are more intrinsically motivated are more likely to be self-managers, regardless of their leader's style. Alternatively, it could be that employees who have had earlier experience in managing themselves are more likely to be successful self-managers.

We present an adjusted conceptual model based on the findings of this research. The model builds on current thinking in the field by incorporating several critical new insights (Figure 2).

Conclusion

Although the Dutch hospitality industry has been through considerable upheaval in recent years, with COVID-19 causing
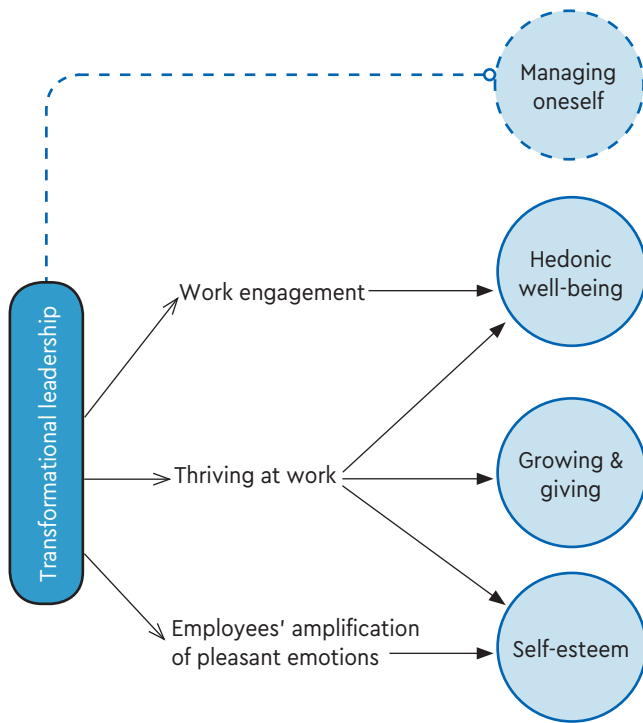
FIGURE 2. An adjusted conceptual model

many restaurants and hotels to close, employees in this industry continue to be dedicated to their jobs (FNV Horeca, 2021). Despite the difficult working conditions – heavy loads, repetitive arm movements, managing emotions and dealing with angry and complaining people – employees remain committed to providing excellent customer service (Ariza-Montes et al., 2019). Even now, amid a national staff shortage caused by COVID-19, they are working hard to ensure that guests can still enjoy food and drinks out on the town (FNV Horeca, 2021).

COVID-19 has been a challenge for employers in attracting and retaining employees (Uitvoeringsinstituut Werknemersverzekeringen, 2021). It was known that the pandemic harmed the psychological well-being of employees, which in turn would lead to them leaving their jobs (Bufquin et al., 2021; Chen, 2021; Chen & Chen, 2021; Demirović Bajrami et al., 2021; Yu et al., 2021). This study found that the leader is paramount to Dutch hospitality workers' psychological well-being during and after COVID-19.

In conclusion, the primary purpose of investigating how transformational leadership and psychological well-being relate to each other through affective mechanisms has been achieved. The expected model that presented three affective mechanisms between transformational leadership and hedonic well-being was not supported in this research. Thriving at work and employee engagement are the only mediators in the transformational leadership/hedonic well-being relationship. Employees' amplification of pleasant emotions did not contribute to the indirect effect beyond thriving at work and employee engagement, so thriving at work and engagement were sufficient for predicting hedonic well-being. This study contributes to the existing body of knowledge by providing novel insights into how transformational leadership affects hedonic well-being.

The model that presented three affective mechanisms between transformational leadership and eudaemonic well-being was also not supported. Eudaemonic well-being was split between growing and giving, liveliness, self-esteem and managing oneself. Liveliness was not related to transformational leadership and the mediators. Only a weak direct effect was found between transformational leadership and managing oneself. Full mediation appeared to exist between transformational leadership and growing and giving, where thriving at work was sufficient for predicting the relationship. Finally, full mediation appeared to exist between transformational leadership and self-esteem, where thriving at work and employees' amplifying pleasant emotions were enough to mediate this relationship. This study thus contributes to the existing body of literature by providing a novel insight into how transformational leadership affects the new dependent variables derived from eudaemonic well-being.

Practical implications

Hospitality organisations should be aware that transformational leadership positively affects hedonic and parts of eudaemonic well-being, especially since psychological well-being is essential for hospitality workers. In this study, transformational leadership was found to increase self-reported hedonic well-being, managing oneself, growing and giving and confidence, supporting that hospitality organisations should train and develop their managers into transformational leaders. Moreover, transformational leaders are needed since a considerable part of the variance in thriving and engagement can be explained by transformational leadership. Besides, it can partly improve the amplification of pleasant emotions among the employees. Understanding how transformational leadership influences thriving at work, employees' amplification of pleasant emotions, employee engagement and psychological well-being in the hospitality industry should empower hospitality organisations to create the best working environment where transformational leaders exist. Higher psychological well-being levels should lead to more career commitment and reduce employee turnover during these troubled times. In the hospitality industry, where employee turnover is notoriously high, understanding the role of transformational leadership can be critical in creating a sustainable workforce. Additionally, transformational leadership's importance becomes even more apparent during economic turmoil, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Organisations that can create a working environment where transformational leaders exist are more likely to weather the storms and emerge stronger than ever.

Limitations and future research

We would also like to emphasise the following regarding the study's limitations and future research. First, it only covers transformational leadership. Future research should examine the role of other dimensions of leadership, such as transactional styles, to see if they show similar patterns of effects. Second, the study used a cross-sectional design, and thus it is not possible to comment on causality. Future research should draw on longitudinal designs that may help further understand the complex relationships between the variables. Third, a potential pitfall to the validity of this research is common method variance. A confirmatory factor analysis was employed to check for

common method bias, revealing that the eudaemonic well-being concepts were distinct. Future research on other group differences (e.g. by social class, type of hotel that employees work in, or culture) would further inform understanding of the new structure. Given the importance of eudaemonic well-being in hospitality settings, researchers must continue exploring this variable's nuances and complexities. Fourth, although respondents were well spread across demographic variables, the number of participants was insufficient to suggest that their findings in the ANOVA test would represent the whole of the Dutch hospitality industry. Future research should address this issue by assessing other mean differences more likely to yield further interesting results. One possibility would be to include a question about the gender of the leader of the respondent, which would allow for a comparison between male and female leaders. There is a probability that the sample is not generalisable to the five-star hotel employees in the Netherlands. Future research should conduct a more comprehensive probability sample to improve generalisability. Furthermore, the model should be tested in other hospitality organisations outside the Netherlands. Finally, it is worth noting that a particular indirect effect via a mediator in the multiple mediations is distinct from the indirect effect of that mediator alone (Preacher & Hayes, 2008), implying that there may be a significant intervening impact of, for example, work engagement on growing and giving when this mediator is investigated in a basic mediating model. Future research could examine whether the effect differs depending on the type of affective mediator. The research could be done using simple mediation models.

ORCID ID

Georges El Hajal – https://orcid.org/0000–0001–7929–8943

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