UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT OF WORK ENVIRONMENT ON EMPLOYEE WELLBEING AND CYNICISM: INSIGHTS FROM THE HOTEL INDUSTRY

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Abstract

Purpose – The paper aims to deepen the understanding of various psychological and sociological theories that contend that people prefer to work in a healthy environment that provide favorable working conditions, such as affective events theory, well-being theory, leadership theory, and organizational support theory. Therefore, if the hospitality sector does not provide appropriate working conditions and does not support psychological wellbeing, it might be difficult to find motivated and devoted employees.

Methodology/Design/Approach – The study used a self-administered questionnaire and opted for a descriptive-analytical design. Typically, the interviewer or a representative from an official position hands out this kind of questionnaire to the interviewees. The researcher contacted 396 front-line staff members at five-star hotels belonging to a chain in the most popular tourist areas in Egypt. The data were analysed using the Smart PLS statistical program to test the study hypotheses.

Findings – The paper provides insights into how toxic leadership negatively influences employee wellbeing and positively influences behavioural cynicism. In addition, employee silence significantly moderates the relationship concerning toxic leadership and employees' outcomes (wellbeing and behavioural cynicism). These results raise a number of theoretical and practical implications for hospitality practitioners.

Originality of the research – This paper fulfils an identified need to study various psychological and sociological theories in the hospitality context to give more understanding of how employee silence maximizes the negative consequences upon wellbeing. Furthermore, justifies employees' behavioural cynicism as a sign of indulging in a toxic leadership. Additionally, in the academic literature on hospitality, this study is one of the very few that investigated behavioural cynicism consequences and considered employee silence as a moderator.

Keywords Toxic leadership, Employee silence, Employee wellbeing, Behavioral cynicism

INTRODUCTION

The issue of employee wellbeing should be taken seriously by any successful organisation (Rasool et al., 2021). A poor workplace culture could drastically lower employee satisfaction and safety (Rasool et al., 2020). Healthy hospitality businesses actually encourage employee complaints about any undesirable circumstances that occur at work. Without the opportunity to speak up, an employee may occasionally become a victim in the future, which could have a bad impact on the organization's health. Employee well-being is therefore closely linked to organisational health, which is founded on their sense of safety and security (Avey, 2010). Furthermore, the majority of people's primary need, according to Maslow's hierarchy of wants, is a sense of security. At times, the management style can have a significant effect on determining the workplace culture. Some people may find it attractive, but others may not. As a result, it is crucial to give employees the proper direction (Aboramadan et al., 2021). This refers to making the manager a leader. In other words, to set a good example for his staff by helping and mentoring them in a sensible manner (Syed et al., 2020). Such coaching could greatly assist each of them in considerably enhancing their performance. Could also aid in their psychological health and work-life balance improvement (Albashiti et al., 2021).

More specifically, toxic leadership could have a highly harmful effect by jeopardizing such a sense of security. Therefore, it may be evident that psychological requirements come before financial ones for the vast majority of people. As a result, turnover intention percentages have risen recently in a variety of hospitality organizations that ignore such important issues. In order to achieve a good balance between employee and customer satisfaction, the first step is to measure employee satisfaction. This means that managers should also satisfy their staff in order to achieve differentiated performance and lower guest expectations (Karatepe et al., 2020). However, the manager's responsibility is clear in demonstrating respect for employee voice and allowing him to work in a healthy setting to improve his welfare (Kaya & Karatepe, 2020; Wang & Xie, 2020). Actually, the hotel business only briefly discussed the negative aspects of a hazardous atmosphere (Aboramadan et al., 2020). In order to determine how the toxic leadership affects organisational outcomes expressed in employee wellbeing and behavioural cynicism.

Notwithstanding the importance of employee wellbeing in the hospitality domain (Magdy, 2022; Coakley, 2021), very limited studies have concentrated on toxic leadership and its negative consequences. Given the essential role of management support

for personnel (Kaya & Karatepe, 2020), specifically for frontline employees during working pressures, it is crucial to investigate how working during pressure times is managed by hospitality managers (Yao et al., 2020). Accordingly, making groundbreaking progress in this area is the aim of the current study, further exploring employee silence and how its existence could influence the working environment and expected negative outcomes. However, the main attempt of the current research is to deepen the understanding of employee wellbeing and to investigate toxic leadership matters to employee wellbeing and behavioural cynicism in the existence of employee silence, which is not extensively investigated in the hospitality and travel literature (Laguda, 2021).

In order to achieve the aim of the current study, the researcher adopted a new theoretical model based on widely acknowledged academic theories (affective event theory, well-being theory, leadership theory, and organisational support theory) and tested it. Through that model, the researcher investigated the impact of toxic leadership on employee outcomes' (employee wellbeing and behavioural cynicism) and examined the moderating role of employee silence on the relationship between toxic leadership and the aforementioned outcomes. Regarding the current study model complexity, the researcher applied SEM analysis for analyzing and testing study hypotheses using the SmartPLS statistical program. However, the hospitality literature's claims about toxic leadership are not well supported by actual data. Operational level in molding employee well-being and employee behavioural cynicism (Wang and Xie, 2020). Additionally, employee silence plays a moderating role. It is yet uncertain how current employees are performing. In light of this, the study has three distinct goals: a) to investigate the impact of toxic leadership on employee wellbeing and behavioural cynicism; and b) to scrutinize employee silence moderating roles on the relationship between toxic leadership and employee outcomes' (employee wellbeing and behavioural cynicism) and c) to explore the different notions of organisational support and employee wellbeing through the light of affective event theory, well-being theory, leadership theory, and organisational support theory.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

The affective event theory (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996), which identifies the impact of working circumstances on results, is one of the original hypotheses that the present research theoretical framework is based on. Depending on the type and severity of the encounter, such incidents can have a variety of psychological effects. Additionally, good occurrences involve the psychologically healthy results for employees, whereas bad situations (such as toxic leadership) have negative effects. According to the employee well-being theory (subjective wellbeing), which is based on a person's innate temperament (Diener, 1984), a person's wellbeing is greatly influenced by both their working environment and their personal circumstances. According to leadership theory (House & Shamir, 1993), a leader's primary goal should be to promote others' wellbeing and provide people the freedom to express themselves freely and without restraints. Finally, organisational support theory (Gouldner, 1960), which refers to employees rewarding and satisfying their emotional needs, especially for those exerting significant effort to improve working performance, overall, the current study incorporates the aforementioned theories to further our understanding of the many psychological and sociological theories that claim that individuals want to work in a healthy setting that offers advantageous working conditions.

1.1. Toxic Leadership

It is critical to define the positive or collaborative environment in order to understand the meaning of the hazardous environment (Rasool et al., 2021). A pleasant and joyful work atmosphere fosters an employee's original drive to express himself in the workplace. This is what a collaborative environment means. Employee civic engagement and a sense of community are maximised in such a pleasant work environment. Rasool et al. (2021) claim that leadership narcissism and peer aggression are characteristics of a toxic leadership. Such unfavorable traits may have a deep-seated impact on emotional fatigue and burnout. Laguda (2021) claims that toxic leaders use extreme degrees of aggression and manipulation to coerce followers to follow them. According to Coakley (2021), these managers could exploit victimization and dysfunctional attitudes to hurt workers who do not wish to follow them or their instructions. Although there are numerous studies that concentrate on dark leadership in a substantial way (Yao et al., 2020), there is a glaring study deficit on this topic in the hospitality literature. Toxic leaders can communicate a toxic atmosphere through five key ways: abusive supervision, authoritarian leadership, self-promotion, narcissism, and unpredictable behavior (Coakley, 2021; Laguda, 2021). Coping with these leaders can be challenging due to their drastic mood swings and erratic behavior, making it essential to understand and address these issues (Laguda, 2021). Accordingly, the researcher proposes the following hypotheses:

     H1a: Toxic leadership negatively influences employee wellbeing.
     H1b: Toxic leadership positively influences behavioral cynicism.

1.2. Employee Silence

Employee silence is a sign of repression of one's voice, viewpoint, way of thinking, ideas, and inaction on urgent organisational issues. Employee silence, according to Song et al. (2017), is the antithesis of organisational voice, which denotes a worker's capacity to express his opinions and thoughts in the context of the workplace. According to Reyhanoglu and Akin (2022), the main factor contributing to employee silence is apprehension of receiving backlash or endangering workplace relationships. Actually, there was extensive discussion on the mediating function of employee silence (Guo et al., 2018; Wang et al., 2020a, b; Coakley, 2021; Laguda, 2021). Employee silence was discovered to be a strong negative mediator between a toxic atmosphere,

employee welfare, and creativity, according to Guo et al. (2018). Additionally, according to Mousa et al. (2021), employee silence fosters a lot of organisational cynicism or behavioural cynicism. Employee silence may also be an important indicator of narcissistic leadership. Such management encourages cynicism among employees, which lowers job satisfaction (Zaman et al., 2022). Actually, a worker's silence could affect how engaged they are at work (Rezvani et al., 2016). In fact, a lot of studies think that this kind of silence is a sign of narcissistic leaders' shadow selves (Coakley, 2021; Imam, 2021). Employee silence also mediates the link between toxic workplaces and organisational outcomes, including employee wellness and cynicism in behaviour (Imam, 2021). Accordingly, the researcher proposes the following hypotheses:

H2a: The relationship between toxic leadership and employee wellbeing is negatively moderated by employee silence.

H2b: The relationship between toxic leadership and behavioral cynicism is positively moderated by employee silence.

1.3. Employee Wellbeing

According to Magdy (2022), a great organisation that values its workers and recognizes their contributions would have a high employee well-being rate. These businesses see them as partners in success rather than as simple task-accomplishing machines. Additionally, Rasool et al. (2021) thought that poor employee wellness had a number of harmful effects. Headaches, melancholy, sickness, and muscular aches are examples of such negative outputs. As a result, every organisation should focus on developing a successful wellness programs that aim to boost workers' initial vigor. They could greatly improve their job-creating abilities with such a stimulus (Magdy, 2022). The link between a hostile workplace and poor employee wellness is supported by additional research. Zeng et al. (2020) found that a toxic workplace could predict a considerable decline in employees' performance as a result of their initial experience of illness. Additionally, Magdy (2022) thought that bullying in the workplace and low levels of employee wellbeing were strongly and significantly related. Rajalingam (2020) noted that workers who experienced poor wellbeing showed high levels of discontent and the intention to leave their jobs. This stress, which is brought on by low wellbeing levels, greatly increases general stress as well as mental and psychological stress (Dos-Santos, 2020). Moreover, ostracism is considered a negative factor in lessening employee wellbeing as it increases job tension and increases employee emotional dissonance and exhaustion (Chung, 2020).

1.4. Behavioral Cynicism

Employee cynicism, also known as behavioural cynicism, is a pejorative attitude that is brought on by a variety of unfavourable emotions, including discontent, difficulty, desperation, and disenchantment (Abugre & Acquaah, 2022). According to Ouedraogo and Ouakouak (2021), workplace rudeness considerably affects employees' contentment and raises the unpleasant perception of bias and injustice at work. Actually, cynicism is a type of protective strategy that is employed to quickly flee dangerous situations (Baker & Kim, 2021). Additionally, forceful management results in behavioural cynicism, which initially gives workers a sense of unease and uneasiness regarding their workplace. Due to their low levels of self-efficacy, this behaviour encourages workers to look for alternative employment (Bufquin, 2020). Numerous aspects in Hwang et al. (2021) point to some form of unfairness on the part of the firm. From those considerations, it follows that when a corporation does not value the tremendous efforts of its employees, it does not necessarily mean that it does so solely monetarily. Verbal praise could energise someone's personality in a professional setting (Arslan, 2018). Actually, the presence of behavioural cynicism portends the advent of turnover intention's next stage (Erkutlu & Chafra, 2017). Thus, a clear emphasis should be placed on enhancing and expanding their overall and psychological welfare in order to win over employees' loyalty and lessen their propensity to flee the workplace (Kuokkanen & Sun, 2020).

Figure 1: **Hypothetical Model**
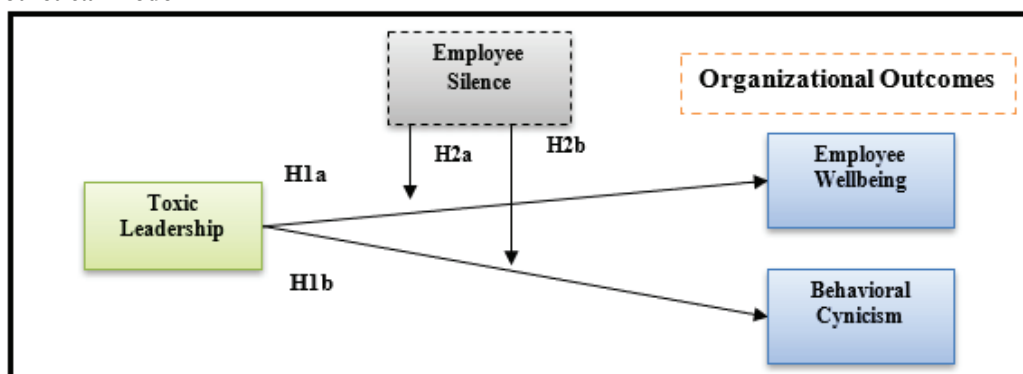
2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. Sampling Setting

The demographic surveyed is made up of front-line personnel at Egyptian chained, five-star hotels. However, more than 30% of the aforementioned hotels are situated in well-known tourist areas, according to the 37th edition of the Egyptian Hotel Directory (2018–2019). There are a total of 154 hotels to choose from. Therefore, selecting 46 hotels corresponds to approximately 30% of the total number of available hotels. It should be noted that the researcher had the specific goal of selecting a stratified random sample from among all the specified-chained hotels. Since Egypt's five-star hotels draw a diverse clientele, including both national and international residents, the researcher was competent to scrutinize them. Front-line staff members are also at the front line of contacts with customers, which makes them vital in determining the quality of the customer experience. Consequently, choosing this particular group can offer useful insights into the difficulties, driving forces, and perspectives of staff in a high-end hospitality environment.

2.2. Data Collection

The research's questionnaire was regarded as being self-administrated. Typically, the interviewer or another person in a position of authority will present the interviewees with this kind of questionnaire. After outlining the investigation's goals, the respondent was given some time before collecting it far ahead. December 2021 through May 2022 saw the distribution of the final questionnaire form. However, employees were required to complete the questionnaire in their available time to be collected or sent later. Meetings with the researcher were set up with each of the 46 hotels that expressed interest in the project. Nevertheless, the researcher assigned each returned questionnaire a special number, and the responses were entered into an SPSS database (V26). Additionally, using the statistical application SmartPLS, structural equation modeling was used to assess hypotheses (V3).

2.3. Measures

Actually, seven items from Rasool et al. (2021) are used to gauge toxic leadership. Employee silence is operationalized using five items from Zaman et al. (2021). Furthermore, five items from Rasool et al. (2021) were used to gauge employee well-being. Moreover, seven questions from Aboramadan et al. (2020) were used to gauge behavioural cynicism. Additionally, responses were graded on a five-point scale, with 1 representing the most disagreement and 5 representing the strongest agreement.

3. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

3.1. Demographic Profile

Males and females participated in this study; the first represented 63.6% of the sample, while others made up 36.4%. A further age range between 18 and less than 25 years is followed by that between 25 and less than 40 years by the majority of employees (54.6%) (33.3%). 57.9% of them hold a college degree, which is the majority, as shown in Table 1. Regarding organisational tenure, the majority of employees (66.7%) had tenures of less than one year. Those who worked for one year to five years or less came in second (21.2%). In actuality, it is possible to view these high rates of tenured workers as a factor in the high turnover rate. Additionally, there were differences in the length of time that employees had spent in their careers. The majority (36.4%) of them had experience that ranged between one year and less than five years, then 30.3% with experience that spanned five to less than 10 years, and merely 9.1% with experience that lasted more than fifteen years. They were mostly unmarried (54.5%), with only 21.2% of them having previously been married as shown in Figure (1).

Table 1: **Sample characteristics**

Characteristics	N= 396	%
Gender		
Male	252	63.6
Female	144	36.4
Age		
18- less than 25	120	30.3
25- less than 40	228	57.6
40-50	12	3
Over 50	36	9.1

Educational Level		
High school	60	15.2
College	228	57.6
Professional	84	21.2
Post graduate	24	6.1
Organizational Tenure		
Less than 1 year	264	66.7
1- less than 5 years	84	21.2
5- less than 10 years	24	6.1
10-15 years	24	6.1
Career Experience		
Less than 1 year	96	24.2
1- less than 5 years	144	36.4
5- less than 10 years	120	30.3
10-15 years	0.0	0.0
over 15 years	36	9.1
Marital Status		
Single	216	54.5
Married	48	12.1
Divorced/Separated	84	21.2
Widowed	48	12.1

3.2. The Measuring Model's Psychometric Properties

According to Liu et al. (2020), confirmatory factor analysis is a method used to assess the psychometric qualities of the supplied items in each research dimension. According to Jung and Yoon (2020), CFA is a type of statistical and mathematical investigation that aids the researchers in determining the dependability of the measured items. As a result, as indicated in figure (2), the researcher first performed a confirmatory factor analysis on the variables TL (toxic leadership), ES (employee silence), EW (employee wellbeing), and BC (behavioural cynicism). Confirmatory factor analysis is a technique used to evaluate the psychometric properties of the given items in each study dimension, according to Liu et al. (2020). CFA is a form of statistical and mathematical study that helps researchers determines the dependability of the assessed things (Jung and Yoon, 2020). This led the researcher to conduct the aforementioned analysis on the variables TWE (toxic leadership), ES (employee silence), EW (employee welfare), and BC (behavioural cynicism) first, as depicted in Table 2. Table 2 demonstrates that the majority of standardized estimates are greater than the rule of thumb of 0.6 (Chin et al., 2008). As a result, the standardized estimates varied from 0.872 to 0.937 at a significance level of 1% (p <.001). All of the CR scores over the cutoff value of 0.6 (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988) are signs of internal dependability. Additionally, average variance extracted values above the threshold of 0.50, which, according to Hair et al. (2019), indicates that the dimension explains at least 0.5 of the component variation, demonstrated that each dimension exhibited convergent validity.
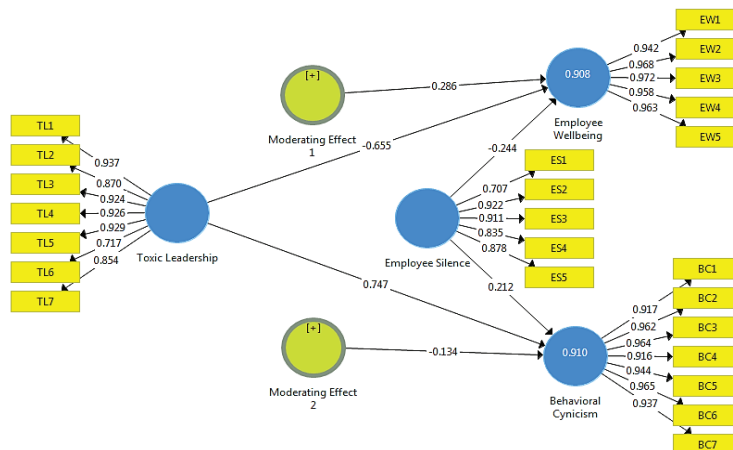
Figure 2. **The measurement model**

Table 2: **Confirmatory factor analysis (PLS approach)**

Construct	Mean	SD	Loadings	P-value	Skewness	Kurtosis
Toxic Leadership (TL)						
TL1. My supervisor often appreciates my physical appearance.	3.251	0.954	0.92	<0.001	-0.254	0.021
TL2. My supervisor spoke rudely to me in public.	3.547	1.009	0.87	<0.001	-0.694	-0.214
TL3. My supervisor often tries to be frank with me and shares dirty jokes with me.	3.694	0.952	0.92	<0.001	-0.647	0.694
TL4 My supervisor assigns me work that is not of my competence level.	3.964	0.954	0.93	<0.001	-0.985	0.647
TL.5 My supervisor often tries to talk about my personal and sexual life.	3.025	1.009	0.93	<0.001	-0.471	-1.24
TL.6 My supervisor tries to maintain distance from me at work.	3.001	0.952	0.71	<0.001	-0.961	0.364
TL.7 My supervisor does not answer my greeting.	3.478	0.954	0.85	<0.001	-0.987	0.694
Employee Silence (ES)						
ES1. I choose to remain silent when I have concerns	3.694	1.105	0.70	<0.001	-0.642	0.647
ES2. Although I have ideas for improving my work unit, I do not speak up	4.284	0.975	0.92	<0.001	-0.332	0.624
ES3. I say nothing to co-workers about problems I notice	3.694	1.079	0.91	<0.001	-0.847	0.362
ES4. I keep silence instead of asking questions when I want to get more information	3.478	1.044	0.83	<0.001	-0.964	0.147
ES5. I remain silent when I have information that might help prevent an incident	3.047	1.069	0.87	<0.001	-0.147	0.251
Employee Wellbeing (EW)						
EW1. I generally feel positive toward work at my organization.	3.964	1.121	0.94	<0.001	-0.984	0.694
EW2. My supervisor and co-worker check in regularly enough with how I am doing.	3.147	1.006	0.96	<0.001	-0.631	0.169
EW3. When I am stressed, I feel I have the support available for help.	3.569	1.049	0.97	<0.001	-0.425	0.447
EW4. Our organizational culture encourages a balance between work and family life.	3.987	1.063	0.95	<0.001	-0.694	-0.251
EW5. Our organization provides aid in stress management.	3.456	1.004	0.96	<0.001	-0.147	0.694
Behavioral Cynicism (EW)						
BC1. I talk with other employees about how work is being carried out in the hotel	3.114	1.121	0.91	<0.001	-0.554	0.694
BC2. I feel aggravated when I think about top management	3.964	1.006	0.96	<0.001	-0.998	0.647
BC3. I criticize top management's practices and policies with others	3.874	1.049	0.96	<0.001	0.147	0.994
BC4. When management says it is going to do something, I wonder if it will really happen	3.695	1.063	0.91	<0.001	-0.694	-0.544
BC5. I experience anxiety when I think about top management	3.652	1.004	0.94	<0.001	-0.624	0.964
BC6. Top management expects one thing of its employees, but rewards another	3.129	1.006	0.96	<0.001	-0.369	0.224
BC7.I feel tension when I think about top management	3.347	1.007	0.93	<0.001	-0.471	0.694

The researcher examined the common technique bias using a principal component analysis (CMB). The common technique bias, according to Podsakoff et al. (2003), is not a significant problem with this data. In order to investigate multicollinearity, the researcher also looked at the Variance Inflation Factors (VIF). The Variance Inflation Factors were more than 3.3, according to Kock (2015). The cut-off shows multicollinearity and the bias of the widely used method. All of the inner VIF values in this study fell below the threshold of 3.3, ruling out multicollinearity and providing more proof that the common method bias is absent as shown in Table 3. Actually, all elements met the normalcy criterion with a kurtosis below 0.3 and a skewness below -0.3. (Kline, 2011). As a result, all of the survey items had acceptable values according to the skewness and kurtosis statistics. The analysis also followed the two proposed procedures for SEM, starting with measurement model evaluation, moving on to structural model evaluation, and finishing with hypotheses testing (Hair et al., 2019).

Table 3: **Reliability and convergent validity**

Variable	Composite reliability	Cronbach's alpha	AVE	VIF
Toxic leadership	0.983	0.979	0.891	2.15
Employee silence	0.931	0.906	0.730	3.51
Employee wellbeing	0.984	0.979	0.923	3.31
Behavioral cynicism	0.912	0.844	0.674	2.78

However, the study used the heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratio of correlations to assess discriminant validity. The results showed that the majority of study constructs had values less than 0.85, indicating satisfactory discriminant validity. This approach was proposed to address the critique of the Fornell and Larcker (1981) measures, which may not identify a lack of discriminant validity in regular study samples as depicted in Table 4.

Table 4: **Discriminant Validity and Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) Ratios of Correlation**

Construct (Discriminant validity)	1	2	3	4
1. Toxic leadership	(0.943)			
2. Employee silence	0.743	(0.854)		
3. Employee wellbeing	0.765	0.717	(0.960)	
4. Behavioral cynicism	0.732	0.560	0.732	(0.820)
Construct (HTMT)	1	2	3	4
1. Toxic leadership	0.839			
2. Employee silence	0.783	0.845		
3. Employee wellbeing	0.635	0.530	0.866	
4. Behavioral cynicism	0.648	0.610	0.706	0.863

Note. Values on the diagonal (bold) are square root of the average variance extracted
Note. HTMT ratios are good if < 0.90, best if < 0.85.

However, as can be seen in Table 5, the findings of the measure modification indices are validated. To assess how well the overall model fits, this study applies the following criteria: The standardized root mean square residual normed fit index (SRMR), the root mean square theta (RMSTheta), and the NFI are all less than or equal to 0.08. (Hu & Bentler, 1999). In order to test hypotheses, the measurement model is regarded as sufficient to be employed with SEM statistical method as shown in Table 5.

Table 5: **Structured model criteria**

Research Constructs	R^2	R^2 Adjusted	Q2	SRMR	NFI	RMS^{Theta}
Toxic leadership						
Behavioral cynicism	0.635	0.631	0.554	0.056	0.904	0.10
Employee silence	0.632	0.628	0.384			
Employee wellbeing	0.535	0.530	0.581			

R^2= determination coefficient, Q^2= Predictive relevance, SRMR= standardized root mean squared residual, NFI= normed fir index

3.3. Structural Equational Modeling and Hypotheses Testing

Since the measurement model met all of the criteria, the structural equational modelling is currently being assessed. As shown in table (5), the researcher actually evaluated the structured model using a number of criteria, such as the determination coefficient (R^2), the predictive relevance (Q^2), the standardized root mean squared residual (SRMR), the NFI (normed fit index), and the effect size (f^2) (Hair et al., 2019).

The researcher started by looking at the research constructs' path coefficients. However, the results indicated that toxic leadership negatively influences employees' wellbeing ($\beta = -0.65$, $f^2 = 0.262$, p < .000). The bell-shaped path coefficient histogram of toxic leadership's effect on wellbeing demonstrates the regularity of the research data. Additionally, results indicated that toxic leadership positively influences behavioral cynicism ($\beta = 0.59$, $f^2 = 0.028$, p < 0.001). However, as shown in Table 6, the results support the second hypothesis because they show that the negative correlationship between toxic leadership and employee wellbeing is moderated by employees' silence ($\beta = -0.13$, $f^2 = 0.002$, p < .005) and the positive relationship between toxic leadership and behavioural cynicism is significantly moderated by employees' silence ($\beta = 0.74$, $f^2 = 0.064$, p < .005).

Table 6: **Hypothesis-testing summary**

NO	Hypothesis	Beta	t	P-value	Decision	f^2	Confidence intervals 2.5%	97.5%
H1a	TL → EW	-0.65	6.45	0.000	Supported	0.262	0.240	0.566
H1b	TL → BC	0.59	13.44	0.000	Supported	0.028	0.211	0.074
H2a	TL * ES → EW	-0.13	1.34	0.015	Supported	0.002	0.251	0.496
H2b	TL * ES → BS	0.74	4.57	0.003	Supported	0.064	0.145	0.354

* Moderation interaction, TL= toxic leadership, EW= employee wellbeing, BC= behavioural cynicism, ES= employee silence

Table 6, also displays the statistical test that uses the SEM test. The results confirm the first hypothesis in terms of the R^2 of the endogenous variable, since it was shown that the independent variable or exogenous predictor (toxic leadership) accounted for almost 65% of the variation in employee wellbeing and 59% of the variation in behavioral cynicism. The observed variability (toxic leadership) consequently had an unfavorable impact on employee wellbeing. Accordingly, the first hypothesis was therefore fully supported.

3.4. Employee Silence Moderation Interaction Analysis

According to this study, an employee's findings (employee wellbeing and behavioural cynicism) are moderated by employee silence, which is thought to be a result of a toxic work environment. Studies on moderating effects were also employed to evaluate the second hypothesis. However, the results shown in Table 4 provide credence to the acceptance of this hypothesis. As seen in Figure 3, the negative correlation between toxic leadership and employee wellbeing is moderated by employees' silence. Additionally, as demonstrated in Figure 4, the positive relationship between toxic leadership and behavioural cynicism is significantly moderated by employees' silence. Employee silence exacerbated the adverse association between toxic leadership and employee wellbeing, according to an analysis of the beta coefficients ($\beta = -0.13$, $f^2 = 0.002$, p < .005), as illustrated in figure 3. Employee silence strengthened the link between toxic leadership and behavioural cynicism, as demonstrated in figure 4 and according to a beta coefficient analysis ($\beta = 0.74$, $f^2 = 0.064$, p < .005). However, H2a and H2b were supported, as shown by the regression coefficient values in Table 6. By including the interaction variables in the equation, the researcher used the product indicator approach for the moderator analysis. It was crucial to adhere to the employee-silence engagement's requirements. The results of the moderation analysis were expressed using the interaction plot. This is seen in Figures 3 and 4.

Figure 3: **The moderating role of employee silence between toxic leadership and employee wellbeing**
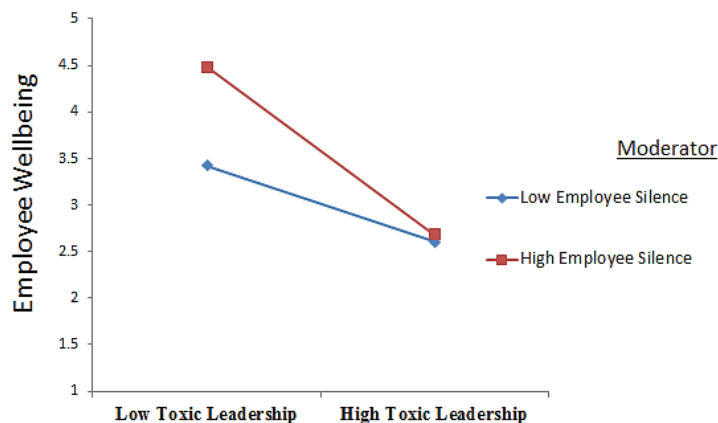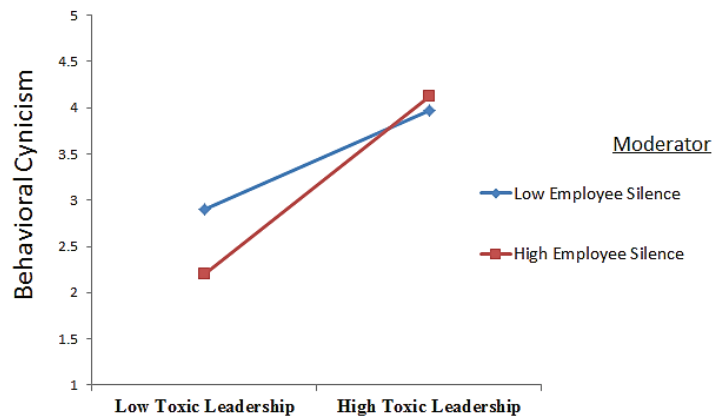
Figure 4: **The moderating role of employee silence between toxic leadership and behavioural cynicism**

CONCLUSION

Fundamentally, the current study objectives were a) to investigate the impact of toxic leadership on employee wellbeing and behavioural cynicism; b) to scrutinize employee silence moderating roles on the relationship between toxic leadership and employee outcomes' (employee wellbeing and behavioural cynicism); and c) to explore the different notions of organizational support and employee wellbeing through the light of affective event theory, well-being theory, leadership theory, and organizational support theory. However, to achieve those objectives, the researcher hypothesized an integrative theoretical framework to be applied upon frontline employees on chained Egyptian hotels.

Theoretical Implications

This study explores the negative impact of toxic leadership on employee wellbeing in chain-affiliated five-star hotels in Egypt. It reveals a structural connection between toxic leader behavior, employee silence, and organizational consequences. The study supported the negative influence of toxic leadership on employee wellbeing. These findings were consistent with a number of previous researches. Naeem and Khurram (2020) discovered that toxic leadership raised turnover intentions, which had a negative influence on psychological well-being and employee engagement. Similarly, Mathieu et al. (2014) found a direct and negative link between reported psychopathic tendencies in supervisors and employee work satisfaction. Kilic and Gunsel (2019) underlined the tremendous detrimental impact of toxic leadership on organisational performance, productivity, and employee well-being. Tran et al. (2013) validated these findings by demonstrating a significant negative link between disruptive leadership and employee happiness (Laguda, 2021; Rasool et al., 2021). These studies jointly demonstrate the ubiquitous and negative influence of toxic leadership on employee well-being.

There is a persistent positive association between toxic leadership and behavioural cynicism. According to Dobbs and Do (2018), self-promotion, a trait associated with toxic leadership, significantly predicts cynicism. According to Aboramadan et al. (2020), narcissistic leadership, a type of toxic leadership, has a favourable impact on behavioural cynicism in the hospitality business. Polatcan and Titrek (2014) discovered a negative relationship between organisational cynicism and leadership conduct, implying that toxic leadership may contribute to higher levels of cynicism. Pelletier (2010) offered empirical evidence for the behavioural and rhetorical characteristics associated with toxic leadership, bolstering the relationship between toxic leadership and behavioural cynicism.

According to the findings, employee silence had a negative moderating influence on the relationship between toxic leadership and employee well-being. Several research validated our findings, revealing that toxic leadership, defined by destructive, narcissistic, and authoritarian behaviour, is inextricably linked to employee silence (Coakley, 2021; Wu, 2018; Wang et al. 2018; Guo et al, 2018). This quiet is typically produced by role stress, negative expectations, anxiety, and defensive silence, all of which are exacerbated by toxic leadership (Wu et al., 2018; Wang, 2018; Guo et al, 2018). This silence aggravates the negative impact of toxic leadership on employee well-being by limiting the open communication essential for discussing and resolving concerns (Coakley, 2021). Additionally, there is a persistent positive association between toxic leadership and employee quiet (Coakley, 2021). Employee silence exacerbates this, moderating the association between toxic leadership and behavioural cynicism (Aboramadan, 2020). Ethical leadership, on the other hand, has a positive effect on employee silence, with organisational identification mediating the relationship and power distance orientation moderating it (Zhuang, 2023).

Basically, the current research highlights a weakness in the management hiring process, suggesting that strong curriculum vitae don't guarantee competence in managing people. The study also confirms that employee silence moderates the link between toxic workplace conditions and organizational outcomes, contradicting previous research that does not show moderation in this relationship. The literature on employee silence in the hospitality and travel sectors focuses on its impact on work satisfaction and turnover intention (Guo et al., 2018; Wang et al., 2020a, b; Coakley, 2021; Laguda, 2021). However, this study also examines

employee wellbeing and behavioral cynicism. The findings suggest that silence maximizes the negative impact of toxic leadership on employee wellbeing, as silent employees do nothing towards toxic leaders, leading to rude behavior and emotional exhaustion (Magdy, 2022). This contradicts previous studies that suggested silence does not mediate the relationship (Skogstad et al., 2017).

Furthermore, this study reveals a considerable detrimental effect on their behavioural cynicism (Magdy and Elmakkawy, 2024). As the results indicate that employee silence maximizes the positive impact of the toxic leadership on behavioural cynicism. This is in line with earlier research that showed that employee silence positively influence the interaction effect upon behavioural cynicism (Erkutlu and Chafra, 2017: Abugre & Acquaah, 2022). Consequently, employee act towards such toxic leaders by doing sarcasm and cynicism, which makes him, feel satisfied to gain a kind of fake victory upon their leaders. Eventually, the findings of this study are in agreement with those of Kline's (2011), Erkutlu and Chafra's (2017), and Ouedraogo and Ouakouak's (2021) earlier research. More particularly, this study confirms the primary influence of management techniques that considerably affect employee emotional characteristics and wellness. Ge (2020) adds that careful thought should be given to leader selection in order to enhance employee wellness.

Managerial Implications

According to the study's theoretical findings, the following managerial implications might be drawn: Hotels should seek to foster a work atmosphere that avoids toxic leadership behaviours while promoting employee well-being. This can be accomplished by cultivating an environment of respect, open communication, and support. Providing services and support systems to assist employees in dealing with the negative impacts of toxic leadership can be beneficial. As a result, by fostering a supportive work environment, businesses can reduce the detrimental impact of toxic leadership on employee well-being. Furthermore, management should actively encourage employees to speak up and provide criticism on leadership practices. Creating open communication channels, such as regular feedback meetings, anonymous reporting tools, or suggestion boxes, can help employees share their issues.

Hotels that encourage employee voice can help detect and resolve toxic leadership behaviours, resulting in better employee well-being and less behavioural cynicism. Thus, it is critical for organisations to foster a culture of psychological safety in which employees feel comfortable expressing their thoughts and concerns without fear of repercussions (Magdy, 2024). This can be accomplished by encouraging open and transparent communication, highlighting the importance of varied opinions, and assuring fair and just treatment of staff. Organisations can reduce employee silence and effectively moderate the negative association between toxic leadership and staff well-being by cultivating a psychological safety culture.

Essentially, management should spend in leadership development initiatives aimed at cultivating strong leadership behaviours and competencies. Organisations may provide leaders with the tools they need to effectively manage and encourage their teams by offering chances for training and development. This can help to reduce the prevalence of toxic leadership behaviours and their detrimental influence on employee well-being and behavioural cynicism. Thus, hotels should conduct regular assessments and evaluations of leadership behaviours in order to identify and eradicate toxic leadership tendencies. This may include 360-degree feedback, leadership assessments, and performance reviews. Organisations that routinely monitor leadership practices might take proactive efforts to lessen the negative consequences of toxic leadership and promote a better work environment. Finally, by implementing these management implications, businesses can reduce the harmful impact of toxic leadership on employee well-being and behavioural cynicism. Fostering a healthy work atmosphere, fostering open communication, and investing in leadership development will help to create a healthier and more productive organisational culture.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

This study contains a number of limitations. First, using a self-report method that would have been subject to response bias, the researcher assessed the toxic atmosphere, silence, wellness, and behavioural cynicism of frontline personnel. Second, the study's cross-sectional methodology precluded assertions of cause-and-effect connections. To verify the causal linkages in this study, longitudinal research would be necessary. Third, the conclusions of this study may not be broadly applicable to other businesses because it exclusively examines hotel front-line service staff. Additionally, one of the major limitations for researching the impact of toxic leadership on the well-being and behavioural cynicism of employees in the hotel industry is the sample itself, which consists exclusively of first-line employees. The researcher suggests that future studies look into these subjects in other sectors of the travel business, such airlines or tour companies. To develop a more thorough knowledge of employees' cynical behaviour in the hospitality business, conducting an interview and/or field observations might be beneficial. Future studies, for instance, can address the obstacles and limitations preventing frontline staff members from participating in the decision-making process by listening to their opinions and comprehending their grievances. A qualitative method might be useful for developing theories in the literature on harmful environments.

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