

Fostering employee promotive voice in hospitality: The impact of responsible leadership

Osman Seray Özkan^a, Irene Huertas-Valdivia^{b,*}, Burcu Üzüüm^c

^a Bandırma Onyedi Eylül University (Balıkesir, Turkey), Manyas Vocational School, Private Security and Protection Department, Turkey

^b University Rey Juan Carlos (Madrid, Spain), Faculty of Economics and Management, Department of Business Administration (A.D.O), Spain

^c Kocaeli University (Kocaeli, Turkey), Kocaeli Vocational School, Distance of Education Department, Turkey

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ABSTRACT

Promotive voice refers to employees sharing novel ideas or suggestions aimed at improving the functioning of their work unit or organization. However, in many cases, employees reserve their contribution of constructive ideas for situations where they feel their contributions are acknowledged and appreciated by their managers. The manager's leadership style is therefore of utmost importance in fostering employee voice.

Responsible leadership has thus become desirable in service contexts, where conflicting interests arise among stakeholders, but little is known about this leadership style in hospitality.

Drawing on conservation of resources theory, we explore how and when responsible leadership fosters employee promotive voice. A time-lagged survey collected data from 392 five-star hotel employees in Turkey. Testing a moderated mediation model using partial least squares showed that responsible leadership increases employees' relational energy, generating greater promotive voice in hotel settings; furthermore, prevalent law and code climate strengthens responsible leadership's effect on relational energy.

1. Introduction

Promotive voice is employees' expression of new ideas or suggestions for improving function of their work unit or organization (Van Dyne & LePine, 1998; Yu, Guchait, Achyldurdyeva, & Paşamehmetoğlu, 2021). Customer contact employees are crucial company internal stakeholders as they receive continuous feedback from customers and are a first-hand source of information. As they can thus propose solutions to service failure and ways to improve performance, it is important to encourage employee voice. Nevertheless, "because of the potential personal benefits and risks associated with speaking up, employees often choose to engage in voice only after cognitively calculating costs and benefits" (Liang, Farh, & Farh, 2012: p.72). In many cases, employees only express constructive ideas when they feel validated by their managers (Han & Hwang, 2019; Yu et al., 2021). Han and Hwang (2019) demonstrated the role of psychological capital in the relationship between the leader's secure-base support and promotive voice. These authors highlight that few studies have explored the mechanisms leading to voice behaviors and signaling the need to advance understanding of how and why individuals engage in promotive voice. By identifying leadership styles and contextual factors that

effectively promote desirable employee behavior, we aim to fill this research gap in the hospitality industry.

Hospitality leaders interact daily with varied wide range of stakeholders with potentially conflicting interests: customers, employees, unions, public authorities, etc. Despite the importance of service to the success of hotels, Øgaard, Marnburg, and Larsen (2008) argue that the traditional leadership philosophies that currently dominate in hospitality fail to maximize workforce resources. Arasli, Altınay, and Arici (2020: p.2196) stress that "new industry-specific leadership models are needed for the industry." Some leadership styles are more effective than others in fostering more participative environments and specific behavior in hotel employees (Huertas-Valdivia, Rojo Gallego-Burín, & Lloréns-Montes, 2019). Rooted in social-relational and ethics, responsible leadership establishes and develops sustainable, reliable relationships with stakeholders inside and outside the organization (Tan, 2023; Yildiz, Pless, Ceyhan, & Hallak, 2023). Responsible leadership is a value-based managerial style that adheres to moral-ethical criteria, upholding righteousness in words and actions (James & Priyadarshini, 2021). Responsible leaders see their role as serving corporate stakeholders and monitoring the company's social responsibilities (Waldman, Siegel, & Stahl, 2020), directly or indirectly benefiting the company's

* Corresponding author.

E-mail address: irene.huertas@urjc.es (I. Huertas-Valdivia).

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internal and external stakeholders through the leader's attitudes or behavior. Although such leadership overcomes barriers to good performance in hospitality, [Elkhwesky, Salem, Ramkissoon, and Castañeda-García \(2022\)](#) affirm the need for research on responsible leadership in this sector. A recent bibliographic study by [Huertas-Valdivia, González-Torres, and Nájera-Sánchez \(2022\)](#) calls for further research on novel leadership styles in hospitality, and responsible leadership is one such style. This study responds to their call by exploring the effects of this little-known style on underexplored variables in the hotel context.

Although hospitality workers interact with their supervisor daily, receiving instructions and advice, it remains unclear which leadership style best fosters positive relational energy. Relational energy is "a heightened level of psychological resourcefulness generated from interpersonal interactions that enhances one's capacity to do work" ([Owens, Baker, Sumpter, & Cameron, 2016](#): p.37). Relational energy is especially important for the hospitality industry because customer service depends greatly on teamwork; good relational employee dynamics are crucial to effective service delivery. Law and code climate ([Victor & Cullen, 1988](#)) may inspire responsible leaders to respect employees' needs more, strengthening employees' bonds and outcomes. A subtype of ethical climate, law and code climate is an ethical environment in which the company implements adherence to codes of conduct and professional guidelines ([Victor & Cullen, 1988](#)). In line with conservation of resources (COR) theory ([Fan, Wei, & Ko, 2021](#); [Hobfoll, Halbesleben, Neveu, & Westman, 2018](#)), leader-subordinate interactions help employees gain psychological resources that encourage positive employee performance. Our study thus explores whether managers' responsible leadership helps to build relational energy with subordinates and, if so, translates into more participative employee behaviors, such as promotive voice.

In a nutshell, this study aims to answer the following research questions:

RQ1. Can responsible leadership be an effective leadership style in the hospitality industry?

RQ2. Can the hospitality industry use responsible leadership as a resource to increase relational energy among workers?

RQ3. Does relational energy encourage development of employee voice?

The study objectives are: 1) to advance the nascent literature on responsible leadership; 2) to identify possible linkages between responsible leadership and employee promotive voice; 3) to test whether relational energy mediates in the responsible leadership-promotive voice relationship; and 4) to explore the role law and code climate plays in the relationship between responsible leadership and relational energy. The study also provides useful findings for managers and HR managers in hospitality who wish to adopt a more responsible leadership style.

This study makes four important contributions to the literature on responsible leadership and relational energy. First, it identifies responsible leadership as an antecedent of relational energy. Second, it responds to calls ([Elkhwesky et al., 2022](#); [Huertas-Valdivia et al., 2022](#)) for more attention to responsible leadership in hospitality. Our findings help researchers and practitioners understand the utility of novel, more value-oriented leadership styles in traditionally authoritarian workplaces. Third, the study illuminates the mechanisms through which responsible leaders improve hotel employees' participation in work settings (by examining the mediating role of relational energy), as COR theory views relational energy as a valuable resource that facilitates employees' promotive voice. Fourth, to understand the boundary conditions for effective responsible leadership, this study examines the moderating effect of law and code climate, especially in the relationship of responsible leadership to relational energy. The study thus broadens the understanding of the impact of ethics in hospitality settings. Its

integrative model significantly advances the literature on responsible leadership.

2. Hypothesis development

2.1. Responsible leadership and relational energy

Responsible leadership is a stakeholder-oriented leadership style that seeks to satisfy the company's internal and external stakeholders. Considering a wider environment and basing their actions on trust and moral rules ([Özkan & Üzümlü, 2021](#)), responsible leaders weigh and balance all stakeholders' interests, attempting to resolve conflicts and provide equal conditions to benefit all ([Voegtlin, 2011](#)). Responsible leaders' actions are thus collaborative, purposeful, and responsibility based. They usually incorporate all stakeholder-groups into the decision-making process, evaluating all perspectives and seeking consensus ([Voegtlin, 2011](#)).

Responsible leadership focuses on different stakeholders' wellbeing by helping to establish values and bonds. According to COR theory ([Hobfoll, Halbesleben, Neveu, & Westman, 2018](#)), employees experience responsible leadership as a naturally motivating, energizing force. When leaders consider employees' perspectives, they satisfy employees' need for esteem and improve their relationship with their manager. Prior research has associated relational energy with leadership behavior ([Amah, 2018](#); [Owens et al., 2016](#); [Wang, Owens, Li, & Shi, 2018](#); [Yang, Liu, Wang, & Zhang, 2019](#)). For example, [Wang et al. \(2018\)](#) found that leader humility increased employees' relational energy and decreased their emotional exhaustion. [Amah \(2018\)](#) highlighted the role of servant leadership in fueling relational energy.

Defined as greater psychological resourcefulness fostered by interpersonal connections ([Owens et al., 2016](#)), relational energy increases ability to perform tasks. Building on [Baker's \(2019\)](#) argument that social interactions may either generate or deplete relational energy, positive interactions with leaders likely increase employees' energy ([Halbesleben & Wheeler, 2015](#)). When interacting with responsible leaders, employees use the leader's experience and suggestions as a resource to increase their relational energy by developing stronger bonds ([Halbesleben, Neveu, Paustian-Underdahl, & Westman, 2014a](#); [Luu, 2023](#)). [Tan \(2023: p.45\)](#) notes that responsible leaders not only establish "a mutually beneficial relationship between stakeholders" but also cultivate trusting relationships with all parties to "achieve accepted meaningful shared business values." We therefore expect the responsible leader's behavior to influence workplace relational energy positively:

Hypothesis 1. *Responsible leadership is positively related to relational energy.*

2.2. Relational energy and promotive voice

Daily service interactions with hotel employees depend on numerous human actors and varied service characteristics. Good relational energy at work improves productivity and motivates extra-role behavior, such as employees' desire to help their organization by suggesting improvements ([Huertas-Valdivia, Rojo Gallego-Burín, Castillo, & Ruiz, 2021](#)). Relational energy assures employees that they will not be reprimanded unnecessarily or judged, shamed, or scolded for mistakes when recommend a change or handle an issue. Positive relational energy thus encourages individuals to voice at work ([Baker, 2019](#); [Liang et al., 2012](#)).

Promotive voice expresses suggestions and concerns to improve work practices to benefit organizations ([Van Dyne & LePine, 1998](#)). It increases employees' sense of responsibility and constructive attitude toward the organization, motivating innovative solutions that benefit the entire community ([Liang et al., 2012](#)). According to COR theory ([Hobfoll et al., 2018](#)), employees can use relational energy to increase personal resources (self-confidence, relationship, value) for personal development. Relational energy could also contribute to employees'

perception of psychological safety at work, giving them confidence that workmates will not punish them for voicing concerns (Liang et al., 2012). Employees will be more inclined to make their voices heard when they feel respected and valued, increasing voice and constructive contributions to organizational goals.

Hypothesis 2. *Relational energy is positively related to promotive voice.*

2.3. Mediating role of relational energy

Relational energy can be defined as great psychological resourcefulness stemming from interpersonal engagements that increase individuals' ability to perform tasks (Owens et al., 2016). Energy from relational interactions enables employees to perform effectively and achieve goals, improving work outcomes (Xiao, Mao, Quan, & Qing, 2020). COR theory provides a rationale, as experience of scarcity vs. surplus resources determines whether one conserves or uses existing resources (Halbesleben, Neveu, Paustian-Underdahl, & Westman, 2014b). COR theory argues that people replenish or preserve resources, like energy, through other people (Owens et al., 2016). Resources—such as energy, knowledge, and positive attitudes—can then be transferred from one person (a leader) to another (e.g., a follower).

According to Baker (2019), employees' positive perceptions of their relationships with managers (relational energy) produce favorable outcomes. Through collaborative vision and respect for all points of view, responsible leadership offers employees a variety of professional resources, including social and emotional support, to help them cope with challenging workplace situations. According to COR theory (Halbesleben & Wheeler, 2015), a responsible leader thus helps increase employees' personal resources, enabling employees to build relational energy (Amah, 2018; Owens et al., 2016). Employees who believe they can contribute positively to the organization (resource increasing) are more likely to engage in promotive voice (Zhuang, Lee, & Ma, 2021). Resources from responsible leaders can increase employees' resources in the form of relational energy, improving their ability to reinvest these resources in the organization through employee voice (Yang et al., 2019).

The scientific literature has demonstrated that relational energy mediates between leadership and employee outcomes. For example, Yang et al. (2019) discovered that relational energy mediated the positive relationship between spiritual leadership and job performance. Walumbwa and Schaubroeck (2009) found that psychological safety partially mediated the impact of ethical leadership on employee voice. Based on these findings and on COR theory, we expect workers inspired and energized by their managers to perform better. Relational energy is thus a key force linking responsible leadership and employee promotive voice:

Hypothesis 3. *Relational energy mediates the positive relationship between responsible leadership and promotive voice.*

2.4. Moderating role of law and code climate

A company's ethical climate signals that all its stakeholders—including employees, partners, clients, the general public, and society—adhere to a set of standards (Victor & Cullen, 1988). The organization's ethical atmosphere gives its members clues about how to act in particular situations. Organizational context thus strongly influences employees' behavior. Because individuals who perceive the organization as following ethical practices and procedures are more inclined to ethical actions, personnel's perception of the company's ethical practices creates their image of what is moral (Zoghbi-Manrique-de-Lara & Guerra-Baez, 2016).

Victor and Cullen (1988) argue that ethical work climate comprises the general impressions of normal organizational behaviors and procedures with ethical substance, and such organizations' normative systems guide employees' ethical behavior. Identifying law and code as one

ethical climate subtype, these authors define law and code together as the degree to which workers are expected to follow legal or professional standards strictly and comply with the law and professional standards over other considerations (Victor & Cullen, 1988). Deshpande's (1996) findings indicate that law and code (or "professionalism") is the highest-rated type of ethical climate in an organization. In it, employees make decisions based on external law or professional codes of conduct. Their understanding of moral obligation may increase because the company sets clear ethical guidelines.

Castañeda García, Rey Pino, Elkhwesky, and Salem (2023: p.3) affirm that "responsible leadership is critical to the ability of contemporary hospitality to deal with the ethical challenges that may arise." To be responsible, leaders must thus follow the guidelines established by the organization and align their ethical standards with their moral principles (Shi & Ye, 2016). "Laws or professional codes are the dominant considerations used by employees in solving ethical dilemmas" (Hefny, 2021: p.6). We thus expect responsible leaders to uphold significant norms, acting in compliance with ethical standards.

The literature has explored the moderating role of dimensions of ethical climate. Zagenczyk, Purvis, Cruz, Thoroughgood, and Sawyer (2021), for example, found that perceived ethical climate moderated the relationships between perceived organizational support and three cognitive and affective employee outcomes. These authors also noted that ethical climate strengthens the employer-employee relationship. Zoghbi-Manrique-de-Lara, and Guerra-Baez (2016: p.612) discovered that ethical climate perceptions encourage hospitality employees to be compassionate at work; "these perceptions inspire psychological processes from a compassionate approach, such as empathic concern, mindfulness, kindness, and common humanity." We thus predict that responsible leaders who adhere to professional codes of conduct will create a fairer, more equitable work environment, strengthening relational energy at work.

COR theory (Halbesleben et al., 2014b; Hobfoll et al., 2018) defines resources as elements, individual attributes, contextual workplace conditions, and other personal assets that help employees achieve goals or tasks. Responsible leadership is thus a contextual resource that enhances employees' personal resources (relational energy). Individuals with more personal resources generate more resources from contextual ones, increasing probability of future resource gains. Responsible leadership thus has a ripple effect, generating additional resources, (e.g., personal) that employees can invest in enhancing their future resource reserves. Because employees employ internal resources based on contextual factors (Halbesleben et al., 2014b; Hobfoll et al., 2018), an organization's law and code climate can help or hinder the relationship between leadership and relational energy. We thus argue that the impact of responsible leadership (a contextual resource) on relational energy may vary between contexts. We also propose that the organization's law and code climate can account for these varying impacts. Low levels of law and code can weaken the positive effects of responsible leaders' behavior on construction of relational energy.

Because responsible leaders recognize all stakeholders' points of view and seek the best solution for all, they create a supportive environment that validates employees' opinion. A shared sense of responsibility encourages workers to use their special abilities to address organizational issues. Martin and Cullen (2006) demonstrated that internalizing norms such as professional codes in the company motivates employees to achieve favorable outcomes. We thus propose the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 4a. *Law and code moderates the relationship between responsible leadership and relational energy, such that the relationship is stronger when law and code climate is more prevalent.*

Hypothesis 4b. *Law and code climate moderates the indirect relationship between responsible leadership and promotive voice through relational energy, such that the relationship is stronger when law and code climate is more prevalent and weaker when law and code climate is less prevalent.*

Drawing on COR theory, we conceptualize responsible leadership as a contextual resource that enhances followers' resources (e.g., relational energy). Followers then invest their resources in activities such as promotive voice, hoping to accumulate more resources. Fig. 1 presents the research model based on the proposed hypotheses.

3. Method

3.1. Instrument and data collection procedures

Turkey is among the top ten global tourism destinations, receiving 40% of visits worldwide (Karatepe, Saydam, & Okumus, 2021). Data were collected between June and August 2022 from five-star hospitality workers at one of the most popular destinations in Turkey (Bodrum district, Muğla). Bodrum was chosen for its significant tourism activity and potential, availability of direct domestic and international flights, presence of hotels with the level of organization and management appropriate to the research, and hotel prominence in quantity and quality. The research population thus consists of service employees in five-star hotel businesses certified as "Tourism Operation Licensed Facilities" by the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism.

Data collection was performed in two rounds two months apart to reduce common method bias (see common method variance [CMV] section below). Attention-screening questions (e.g., "My birthplace is Mars." Please answer this question as "Strongly Disagree") were also added to the questionnaire to minimize CMV (Dong & Zhong, 2022). As in Karatepe et al. (2021), the survey was shared via a WhatsApp group created for employees by HR supervisors in the hotels that agreed to participate in the study. As in Tuan (2022), managers only forwarded the survey link to their employees and did not have access to the results.

An online questionnaire (<https://www.onlineanketler.com>) was designed using scales validated from prior studies. These included the Turkish adaptation of responsible leadership (Özkan & Üzüüm, 2021) and relational energy scales (Özkan & Üzüüm, 2022) and a back translation process for the other scales (Brislin, 1980). To ensure comprehensibility of the final instrument, we tested it on a pilot sample of seven academic experts in the field and hospitality workers. Minor wording changes were made.

The survey explicitly ensured participants of anonymity and informed them that participation was voluntary. An initial filter question about job tenure was included to ensure that respondents had worked at least a year at their hotel and could evaluate the behavior they observed in their superior. At the end of the questionnaire (in Time 1 and Time 2), participants created a personal code used only to match responses. The code consisted of the first letter of their names and surnames, and their year of birth (e.g., Thomas Smith, born in 1971: code TS1971) (See supplementary material). No data were lost, as the questionnaire required that respondents answer all questions.

3.2. Sample

3.2.1. Sample and data collection

Due to work intensity, and in line with prior studies in a hospitality context (Dai, Zhuang, Hsu, & Huan, 2019; Huertas-Valdivia et al., 2019; Rescalvo-Martin, Gutierrez, & Llorens-Montes, 2022; Tabrizi, Karatepe, Rezapouraghdam, Rescalvo-Martin, & Enea, 2023), convenience sampling was based on availability and volunteerism. First, we contacted the HR managers of five-star hotels in Bodrum (Ohunakin & Olugbade, 2022). Although ten hotels initially affirmed verbal support for the research, three reversed this decision during implementation. The study was thus performed on seven five-star hotels in the region. According to the information provided by these hotels' HR departments, full-time permanent staff members in the seven hotels totalled 1458.

In the first period, 1243 participants from various departments (front office, reservations, housekeeping, food and beverage, etc.) were contacted, and 912 participated in the study (response rate 73%). In the second period (one month later), the remaining survey questions (see Fig. 1) were sent to 912 participants; 418 answered the questions (response rate 46%). Codes from 18 questionnaires did not match, and 8 questionnaires showed incorrect control question answers. These questionnaires were excluded from the dataset, yielding 392 valid responses. The G*Power 3.1.9.7 program was used to calculate appropriate sample size (Faul, Erdfelder, Lang, & Buchner, 2007). As obtaining 95% statistical power, $\alpha = 0.05$ significance level, and 0.15 effect size required a sample of 166 (with 9 predictors [responsible leadership, relational energy, one interaction term responsible leadership*law and code, and 5 control variables], 0.95 reliability, 0.05 sampling error) (Cohen, 1992), the total of definitive 392 participants was sufficient (Anasori, Bayighomog, De Vita, & Altinay, 2021; Bougie & Sekaran, 2019; Vo-Thanh, Nguyen, Ngo, Vu, Nguyen, & Sueur, 2022). The sample shows that most participants were male (63.5%), 58.4% were single, and 41.1% had graduated from vocational school; average age was 31 and average length of professional experience 9 years.

3.2.2. Variable measurement

All study scales were rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree).

3.2.2.1. Responsible leadership. The five-item unidimensional scale by Voegtlin (2011), adapted to Turkish by Özkan and Üzüüm (2021), was used to measure responsible leadership (e.g., "my direct supervisor demonstrates awareness of the relevant stakeholder (employees/customers/shareholders/suppliers) claims").

3.2.2.2. Relational energy. The scale by Owens et al. (2016), adapted to Turkish by Özkan and Üzüüm (2022), determined relational energy levels. Since participants were asked to evaluate their supervisors on the statements in the scale, the term "this person" in the original questionnaire was changed to "my supervisor." The scale consisted of five items

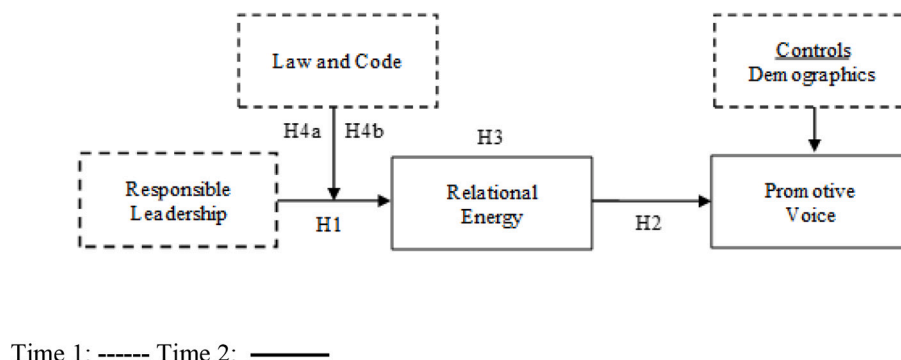


Fig. 1. Proposed research model.

Table 1
Means, standard deviations, and correlations for relevant variables.

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Age	31.00	4.89	1								
2. Tenure	9.11	4.98	0.89**	1							
3. Gender ^a	1.36	0.48	0.07	0.06	1						
4. Marital status ^b	1.58	0.49	0.03	0.04	0.01	1					
5. Education ^c	2.21	0.83	0.18**	0.11*	-0.002	-0.03	1				
6. Responsible leadership	3.05	0.79	0.02	0.006	0.01	0.05	0.03	1			
7. Relational energy	3.20	0.81	0.02	0.03	0.07	-0.007	0.03	0.44**	1		
8. Law and code	2.98	0.83	-0.07	-0.08	-0.008	-0.06	-0.004	0.30**	0.23**	1	
9. Promotive voice	2.99	0.78	0.05	0.02	-0.03	-0.04	0.06	0.26**	0.24**	0.26**	1

n = 392; *p < .05; **p < .01.

a, b, c = Dummy variable; M = Mean; SD=Standard deviation.

and a single factor.

3.2.2.3. *Promotive voice.* The five-item unidimensional scale developed by Liang et al. (2012) was used to measure promotive voice.

3.2.2.4. *Law and code climate.* We chose the scale by Victor and Cullen (1988), which has four items and a single factor.

3.2.2.5. *Control variables.* As in Safavi and Bouzari (2020) and Ohunakin and Olugbade (2022), the survey included five questions to obtain descriptive information on the participants—age, gender, marital status, educational status, and professional experience. Prior research demonstrated that these variables significantly affect promotive voice (Wang, Zhang, & Jia, 2020).

4. Findings

This study used SPSS 25 for descriptive statistics and correlational

relations. Version 4.0.8.3 of the SmartPLS program was used to test the measurement and structural models (reflective approach) (Ringle, Wende, & Becker, 2017).

4.1. Descriptive analysis

The skewness and kurtosis coefficients of the variables ranged from [-0.052] to [-0.222]. The kurtosis coefficients ranged from [-0.260] to [-0.408]. The dataset thus shows normal distribution (Kline, 2015). Table 1 displays the means, standard deviations, and correlations for study variables.

4.2. Test of the measurement model

To test internal consistency, we checked the α and CR values; all were above the threshold of ≥ 0.70 (Hair, Hult, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2017). Factor loadings (≥ 0.70) and AVE coefficients (≥ 0.50) of items measuring constructs for convergent validity were calculated and

Table 2
Results of the measurement model.

Latent variables	Items	Standardized loadings	α	CR/AVE
Law and code	LC1	0.87	0.88	0.88 / 0.66
	LC2	0.82		
	LC3	0.57		
	LC4	0.94		
Promotive voice	PV1	0.82	0.87	0.87 / 0.58
	PV2	0.77		
	PV3	0.72		
	PV4	0.69		
	PV5	0.79		
Relational energy	RE1	0.77	0.90	0.90 / 0.64
	RE2	0.78		
	RE3	0.92		
	RE4	0.74		
	RE5	0.75		
Responsible leadership	RL1	0.73	0.86	0.86 / 0.56
	RL2	0.70		
	RL3	0.77		
	RL4	0.77		
	RL5	0.76		
	Law and code	Promotive voice	Relational energy	Responsible leadership
Fornell-Larcker criterion				
Law and code	(0.81)	–	–	–
Promotive voice	0.29	(0.76)	–	–
Relational energy	0.27	0.28	(0.80)	–
Responsible leadership	0.34	0.30	0.51	(0.75)
Heterotrait-monotrait ratio criterion				
Law and code	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Promotive voice	0.30	0.00	0.00	0.00
Relational energy	0.26	0.28	0.00	0.00
Responsible leadership	0.35	0.30	0.51	0.00

α = Cronbach's alpha; CR = Composite reliability; AVE = Average variance extracted.

Table 3
Results of structural equation analysis.

Model summary	R ²	f ²	VIF	VIF for random
RE	0.27	–	–	LC → Random = 1.11
PV	0.08	–	–	PV → Random = 1.00
RL → RE	–	0.28	1.13	RE → Random = 1.27
RE → PV	–	0.08	1.00	RL → Random = 1.28
LC → RE	–	0.01	1.15	
Effects	β	t-value	p-value	Hypotheses/Decision
RL → RE	0.42	8.53	0.000***	H1 = Supported
RE → PV	0.24	5.33	0.000***	H2 = Supported
Mediation effect	β	t-value	p-value	Hypotheses/Decision
RL → RE → PV	0.10	4.31	0.000***	H3 = Supported
Moderation effect	β	t-value	p-value	Hypotheses/Decision
LC*RL → RE	0.12	2.22	0.02*	
RL → RE conditional on LC (– 1 SD)	0.32	4.67	0.000***	H4a = Supported
RL → RE conditional on LC (Mean)	0.42	8.53	0.000***	
RL → RE conditional on LC (+ 1 SD)	0.52	8.33	0.000***	
Conditional indirect effect	β	t-value	p-value	Hypotheses/Decision
RL → RE → PV conditional on LC (– 1 SD)	0.07	3.31	0.000***	
RL → RE → PV conditional on LC (Mean)	0.10	4.31	0.000***	H4b = Supported
RL → RE → PV conditional on LC (+ 1 SD)	0.12	4.38	0.000***	

*p < .05; ***p < .001; R² = Explained variance; f² = Effect size; VIF=Variance inflation factor; RL = Responsible leadership; RE = Relational energy; PV=Promotive voice; LC = Law and code; Coefficients are standardized (β).

deemed satisfactory (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, & Tatham, 2014). The factor loadings on Items LC3 (law and code variable) and PV4 (promotive voice) were 0.57 and 0.69, respectively. Although these values were below the threshold, we did not exclude them from the measurement model because the structures' CR and AVE coefficients were above the threshold (Rasoolimanesh & Ali, 2018).

To determine discriminant validity, we examined the criteria proposed by Fornell and Larcker (1981) and the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) criterion proposed by Henseler, Ringle, and Sarstedt (2015). All criteria were met; Table 2 shows that the square root of the AVE is higher than the correlation coefficients with other structures and the HTMT is below 0.85.

4.3. Assessing common method variance

As collecting data on research variables from the same source in management studies can lead to CMV error (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003), our method included two-stages of procedural and statistical remedies to minimize CMV.

Firstly, we kept the questionnaires short and ensured confidentiality of answers on procedural remedies (Jordan & Troth, 2020). The data were collected from the same participants at two separate times, and two control questions were included between the scales to determine whether answers were sincerely and to increase reliability of the research.

We also controlled for possible CMV through the “random dependent variable” statistical remedy (Kock & Lynn, 2012). The research variables included in the model were below 3.3—Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) coefficients of the random dependent variable added to the model (Table 3). As significant interactive effects were not adversely affected by CMV, CMV does not significantly affect the relationships between the model variables (Kock, 2015).

4.4. Hypothesis testing

The study model was tested through PLS-SEM, based on 5000 subsamples. Significance of mediator and moderator effects was tested through the bootstrap method at a 95% confidence interval (CI). For effects to be meaningful, CI values should not include zero (MacKinnon, Lockwood, & Williams, 2004).

As the VIF coefficients range from 1.00 to 1.15, collinearity is not a problem between the research variables (Hair et al., 2017). Since there is no significant relationship between the control variables in the model

and promotive voice, Table 3 does not include the results of the control variables.

The results (see Table 3 and Fig. 2) demonstrate that responsible leadership has a positive effect on relational energy (β = 0.42; CI [0.327, 0.520]; p < .001) and relational energy has a positive impact on promotive voice (β = 0.24; CI [0.151, 0.325]; p < .001), supporting Hypotheses 1 and 2. Responsible leadership also has a positive effect on promotive voice (β = 0.31; CI [0.202, 0.419]; p < .001). The indirect effect of responsible leadership on promotive voice through relational energy is significant (β = 0.10; CI [0.059, 0.149]; p < .001), supporting Hypothesis 3.

Table 3 shows that the variable law and code climate plays a significant moderating role (β = 0.12; CI [0.006, 0.212]; p < .05) in the relationship between responsible leadership and relational energy. This relationship is weaker when law and code is less prevalent (β = 0.32; CI [0.194, 0.469]; p < .001) and stronger when law and code is more prevalent (β = 0.52; CI [0.392, 0.638]; p < .001). This finding supports Hypothesis 4a.

Table 3 also shows that law and code climate moderates the conditional indirect effect of responsible leadership on promotive voice through relational energy. The results show that this effect is weaker when law and code is less prevalent (β = 0.07; CI [0.037, 0.128]; p < .001) and stronger when law and code is more prevalent (β = 0.12; CI [0.072, 0.181]; p < .001), supporting Hypothesis 4b (for moderating effects, see Figs. 3 and 4).

5. Discussion

Understanding the characteristics and consequences of new leadership styles is very important for researchers and practitioners, as leaders may consciously or unconsciously encourage certain follower behaviors through role modeling (Huertas-Valdivia et al., 2022). This study analyzes how and when responsible leadership impacts employees' promotive voice in the hospitality context. Utilizing COR theory, it tested the role of one important underlying mechanism (relational energy) and one boundary condition (law and code climate) in the relationship between responsible leadership and hotel employees' promotive voice. Our time-lagged study obtained support for all proposed hypotheses: direct and indirect effects, and moderated-mediated associations highlighting the importance of responsible leadership for both relational energy and employee voice. These findings add significantly to research on the processes that connect responsible leadership to underexplored employee outcomes.

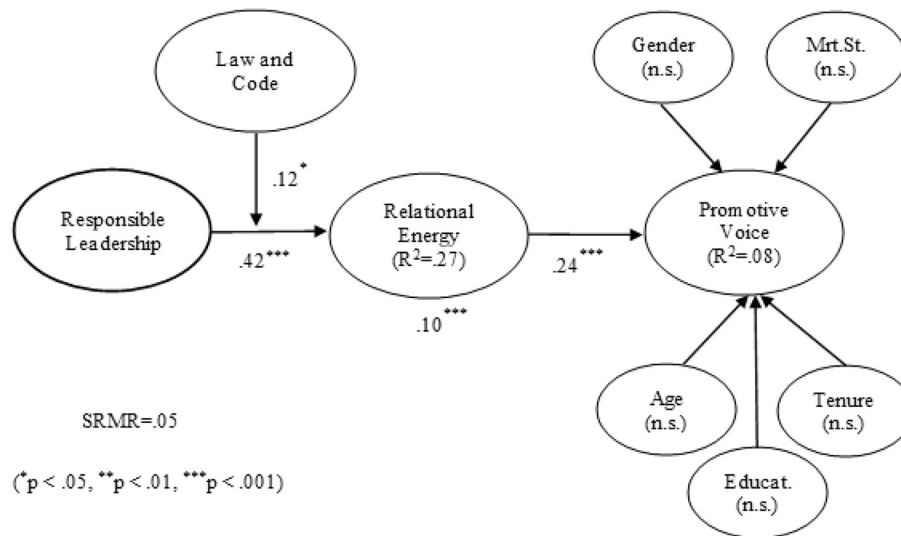


Fig. 2. Research model and results of test of hypotheses.

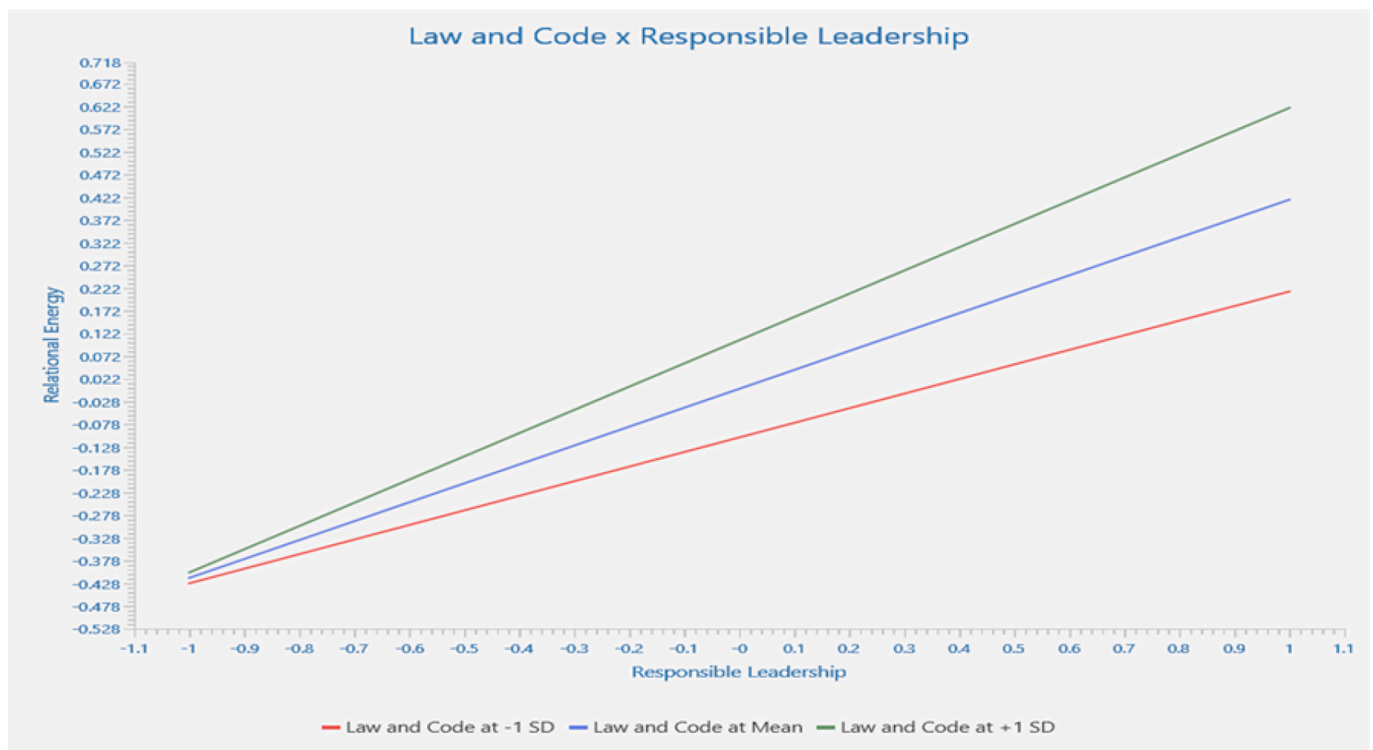


Fig. 3. Moderating effect of law and code climate on relationship between responsible leadership and relational energy.

Crises can affect relational energy (Sumpter & Gibson, 2022), requiring special emphasis on interpersonal workplace relations during difficult times, such as the recent pandemic. Drawing on COR theory (Halbesleben et al., 2014a; Hobfoll et al., 2018), this study identified responsible leadership as an antecedent of relational energy in hospitality. Prior research had outlined the role of leaders in constructing relational energy at work (Baker, 2019), exploring the role of servant leadership (Amah, 2018) and leader humility (Wang et al., 2018) in fueling relational energy. To the authors' knowledge, this is the first empirical study to define responsible leadership as an antecedent of relational energy in hospitality settings. The collaborative approach and integration of all stakeholders' views in responsible leaders' decision-making processes stimulates positive relational energy at work.

Exploring the effects of paternalistic leadership styles on hospitality workers' voice in Taiwan, Zhuang et al. (2021) concluded a negative influence of supervisors' moral and authoritarian leadership and a positive influence of benevolent leadership on hotel employees' voice. More recently, Tabrizi et al. (2023) found that green human resource management practices (GHRM), through job embeddedness, impact green promotive and green prohibitive behaviors in a sample of restaurant workers in Cyprus (full mediation); those authors also found that GHRM practices do not promote directly green promotive voice behavior and green prohibitive voice behavior. In the food safety context, Yu et al. (2021) identify authentic leadership as a contextual factor moderating the relationship between food handlers' food safety consciousness and prohibitive voice. This moderating effect was not,

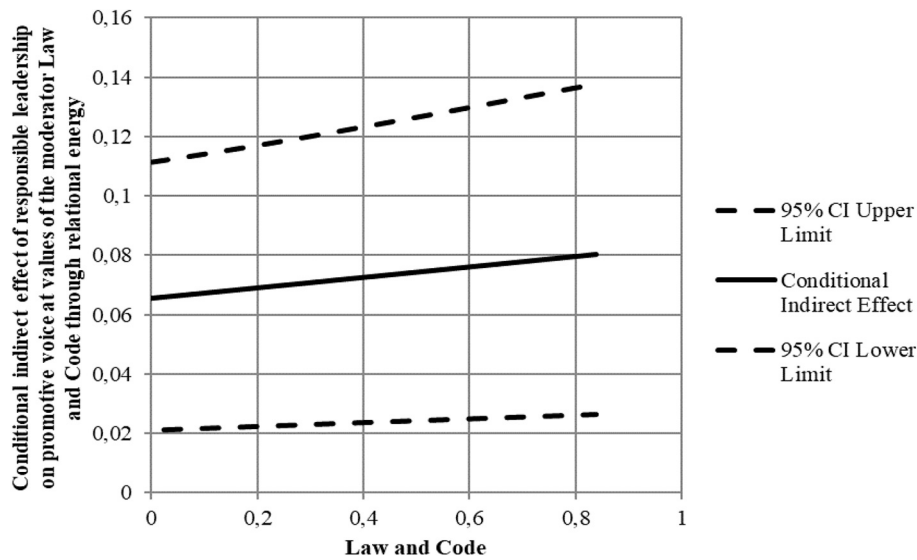


Fig. 4. Moderating role of law and code in conditional indirect effect of responsible leadership on promotive voice through relational energy.

however, significant for promotive voice. In their study of Taiwanese hospitality workers, Han and Hwang (2019) found that psychological capital mediated the relationship between leaders' secure-base support and employees' promotive voice. Their study also explored the moderating role of promotion focus.

Research has observed that leader humor in the hospitality industry encourages employees to engage in customer-oriented organizational citizenship behavior (CO-OCB) (Cheng, Dong, Kong, Shaalan, & Tourky, 2023) and proactive behavior when leaders express gratitude to their followers (Chen, Zhu, Guo, & Liu, 2023). These findings partially supported the impact of relational energy on promotive voice. Our findings add to the literature on employee voice by confirming that responsible leaders (Voegtlin, 2011) create an atmosphere enabling workers to voice and that relational energy is crucial in this process. COR theory (Hobfoll et al., 2018) helps to explain efforts to obtain and preserve all resources, shedding light on how employees use resources (relational energy) most effectively. In hospitality, responsible leaders function as a resource that contributes to followers' improvement (He, Morrison, & Zhang, 2019; Luu, 2022, 2023). The best way to enhance productivity in labor-intensive industries is thus to increase relational energy in work settings. The more followers see opportunities for self-development, the more they voice, encouraged by responsible leaders to create value (Voegtlin, 2011).

This study also examined a boundary condition (law and code climate) that illuminates the effects of responsible leadership on relational energy, advancing understanding of the complex interrelations among these constructs. An ethical climate (measured by presence of law and code) (Victor & Cullen, 1988) encourages responsible leaders to take their mission beyond legal requirements by transferring an ethical vision of responsibility to their followers (Owens et al., 2016).

Like Yildiz et al. (2023), our findings indicate the need for a new kind of leadership in tourism and hospitality that prioritizes cooperation and a commitment to accountability. Only in this way can the hospitality industry inspire change and build more adaptable, resilient businesses that deliver value to different stakeholders in business and society. Responsible leadership would meet this need.

6. Implications

6.1. Theoretical implications

Very few studies in the hospitality literature have investigated responsible leadership (He, Morrison, & Zhang, 2019; Luu, 2022, 2023).

Existing studies demonstrate that this leadership style enhances employees' task performance (He, Morrison & Zhang, 2019) and reduces their unethical behavior (Luu, 2022). Many authors call for further research to better understand the impact of this emergent leadership style (Castañeda García et al., 2023; Elkhwesky et al., 2022; Huertas-Valdivia et al., 2022). In response to these recent calls, our study increases knowledge of the effects of responsible leadership in hospitality, signaling this style as an antecedent of relational energy and of hotel employees' promotive voice. Our study is original in investigating the effects of a leadership style underexplored in hospitality on variables understudied in the hotel sector.

This study makes several original contributions to the existing literature. Most importantly, it suggests ways to foster promotive voice among hotel employees and advances the understanding of how to build relational energy in hospitality settings. These findings increase desired behaviors, as frontline employees are a valuable source of information and feedback to improve operations and service. Our results also extend the knowledge on responsible leadership in hotel settings, showing that responsible leaders' use of relational energy provides consistency, and consistency enables followers to use their voice (Zhuang et al., 2021), increasing the potential for the expression of useful suggestions.

Finally, this study reveals that responsible leaders generate powerful change in ethical climate. Such leaders establish their mission and vision by comparing their standards to law and code (Victor & Cullen, 1988), enabling followers to reach "responsible" levels of behavior (promotive voice).

6.2. Practical implications

Voegtlin (2011) argues a need for new understanding of leadership to address future challenges of globalization. This study advises hospitality businesses to invest in training and development to improve managers' understanding of the value of responsible leadership, as embracing this stakeholder-oriented style improves personnel's relational energy and promotive voice. As Kim and Jeong (2018) affirm, it is crucial to educate hospitality and tourism students, not merely to work but also to lead in specific segments of the industry. To nurture more responsible leaders, university instructors must also teach students more socially- and environmentally-oriented leadership styles through case studies and experiential learning methodologies such as role-play (Huertas-Valdivia, 2021). Responsible behavior is fundamental in appraising and developing leadership in hospitality HRM practices (Tuan, 2022). In the hospitality context, HRM should provide support

through training and development programs to create ethical perceptions of managerial responsibility among responsible leaders (Bouichou, Wang, & Feroz, 2022).

Amah (2018) recommends that the human resources department of hospitality companies periodically monitor the level and nature of relational energy in the workplace. Whereas both are contagious, positive relational energy enhances work atmosphere but negative relational energy depletes employees' motivation to participate in organizational processes. As people are energized by interactions to which they can contribute meaningfully, Sumpter and Gibson (2022) highlight the role of HR departments in engaging personnel in perspective-taking and interpersonal work adjustment, especially during crisis-recovery work. HR departments and managers should plan "energy-building experiences" through formal and informal socialization practices that promote closer contact among workmates (Hefny, 2021). For example, outdoor activities, employee events, and weekly briefings can help build and sustain stronger bonds with relational energy. Leaders can also improve communication channels and skills to motivate voice and generate such bonds with employees. Leaders must know their workers very well (e.g., through increased face-to-face interaction) to develop differentiated strategies to create relational energy at work.

The results can also guide hospitality managers in promoting a law and code climate, as these practices play an influential boundary role in responsible leadership's relationship to relational energy. Companies must make their ethical rules available in a transparent manner (Victor & Cullen, 1988). For example, "reporting on CSR activities (...) increases transparency and encourages a dialogue between companies and stakeholders that helps to legitimize firms' behavior" (Pérez & García De Los Salmenes, 2023: p.1). Responsible leadership can spread the philosophy of corporate social responsibility from followers to customers and even society (Coles, Fenclova, & Dinan, 2013), and publication of social responsibility reports in hotels can strengthen the power of this style (<https://esg.hilton.com/social-impact/>). We recommend that companies establish clear written ethical rules and share them with all employees.

7. Limitations and future research

This study has limitations that should be addressed in future research.

First, as in Han and Hwang (2019), its design is cross-sectional, although data were collected in two rounds (time1-time2) to eliminate CMV error during analysis. Second, data based on employees' perceptions were collected to measure leaders' responsible leadership behavior. Future studies could confirm the results using information from multiple sources. Furthermore, while responsible leadership conduct goes beyond dyadic leader-follower interaction to include all stakeholders (Voegtlin, 2011), our study examined only employees' perceptions. Future studies should assess responsible leadership from multiple stakeholders' perspectives.

To ensure confidentiality and increase participant's motivation to answer the survey questions, this study did not ask employees' position. Because position can be an important control variable in the model, future research could include it as a control variable.

Coles et al. (2013) argue that responsible leadership is a strategic instrument supporting corporate social responsibility in the tourism sector. Whereas tourism covers a wide range of activities, from travel agencies to transportation, our study examined the impact of responsible leadership in hotels only. Discussing the results of the same model in other tourism organizations would help to identify the model's shortcomings/contributions to the concept. It would also be interesting to analyze the role of HRM practices (e.g., green HRM), as in Tuan (2022), since these practices are a key contextual antecedent of supervisors' responsible leadership behaviors.

The hospitality industry depends greatly on human capital to provide service quality, and workers have different backgrounds, expectations,

needs, and personality traits. Future research could investigate the types of individuals for whom responsible leadership is more vs. less effective. Liang et al. (2012), for example, identified three antecedents of promotive voice in employees: psychological safety, felt obligation to constructive change, and organization-based self-esteem. Future research could also investigate how these psychological factors in employees moderate the effects of responsible leadership. Further, evaluating responsible leadership's outputs from a broader perspective could expand this leadership style's contribution to tourism. Finally, our study focuses on intermediate variables and does not measure responsible leadership's impact on the company's financial performance—an output that deserves more attention in research on leadership styles in hospitality (Huertas-Valdivia et al., 2022).

Credit authorship contribution statement

Osman Seray Özkan: Conceptualization, Data curation, Formal analysis, Methodology, Software, Writing – review & editing. **Irene Huertas-Valdivia:** Conceptualization, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing, Resources. **Burcu Üzüüm:** Writing – original draft.

Declaration of Competing Interest

None.

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Appendix A. Supplementary data

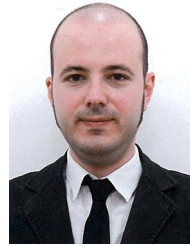
Supplementary data to this article can be found online at <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tmp.2023.101186>.

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Osman Seray Özkan received his Ph.D. from Turkish Aeronautical Association University in 2018, following a ten-year public service career. He subsequently gained further specialization through study at Griffith College, Dublin. Since January 2021, Özkan has taught as Assistant Professor at Bandırma Onyedi Eylül University, in the Vocational School's Private Security and Protection Programme. He has published various articles focusing primarily on organizational behavior, with emphasis on leadership.



Irene Huertas-Valdivia, Ph.D. is a Lecturer in Business Administration at the University Rey Juan Carlos, Madrid. From 2012 to 2014, she served as Lecturer in Tourism and Hospitality Management at the University of Guadalajara (Mexico). For over nine years, she worked as a middle-manager in leading hospitality corporations. Her main research focuses on human resources management, engagement, empowerment, and leadership in the hospitality industry. Her research has been published in *Tourism Management*, *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, and other top journals (irene.huertas@urjc.es)



Burcu Üzüm received her Ph.D. in Management and Organization from Sakarya University in 2017. She joined the staff at Kocaeli University in 2011 and received the title of Associate Professor in March 2021. Üzüm is a researcher and teaching professor in the Distance Education Department at Kocaeli Vocational School. Her research focuses on human resources management and organizational behavior. Her most recent article, on crab barrel syndrome, was published in *Frontiers in Psychology*. Prior to entering academic, Üzüm pursued a career in the automotive sector (1999-2005).